



Elections (Keys & Local Authorities) (Amendment) Bill 2025
Results of Public Consultation
Published September 2025

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Introduction

The Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Act 2020 was utilised for the first time at the 2021 House of Keys Election and following feedback from stakeholders several areas were identified that needed addressing, some of which required legislative amendment.

A delegation of international observers contributed to a Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) report on the 2021 General Election.

In March 2024 an Electoral Commission report to Tynwald was submitted following consideration of specified electoral matters.

After considering both the CPA and Electoral Commission reports Tynwald issued instructions, the implementation of which requires some amendment of the Act and will be addressed by this Bill.

This Bill will amend several provisions of the Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Act 2020, which are:

- Section 3 – Definitions - election regulations
- Section 22 – Powers to make regulations about the publishing of declarations of relevant interest in respect of candidates in Local Authority elections.
- Section 63 - Pre-election meetings
- Section 68 - Powers of Deputy Returning Officer for maintenance of the peace
- Section 81 - Powers to make regulations about the publishing of declarations of relevant interest in respect of candidates in National elections.
- Section 84 – Power to make regulations to enable a voter to be allotted more than one polling station within a constituency at which the vote may be taken.
- Section 88 – To make it an offence for a candidate to fail to disclose relevant interests.
- Section 107 - Tellers – removing the requirement to take an oath of secrecy.
- Sections 136, 140 and 152 – Update to enable a recall by a Tynwald Committee.

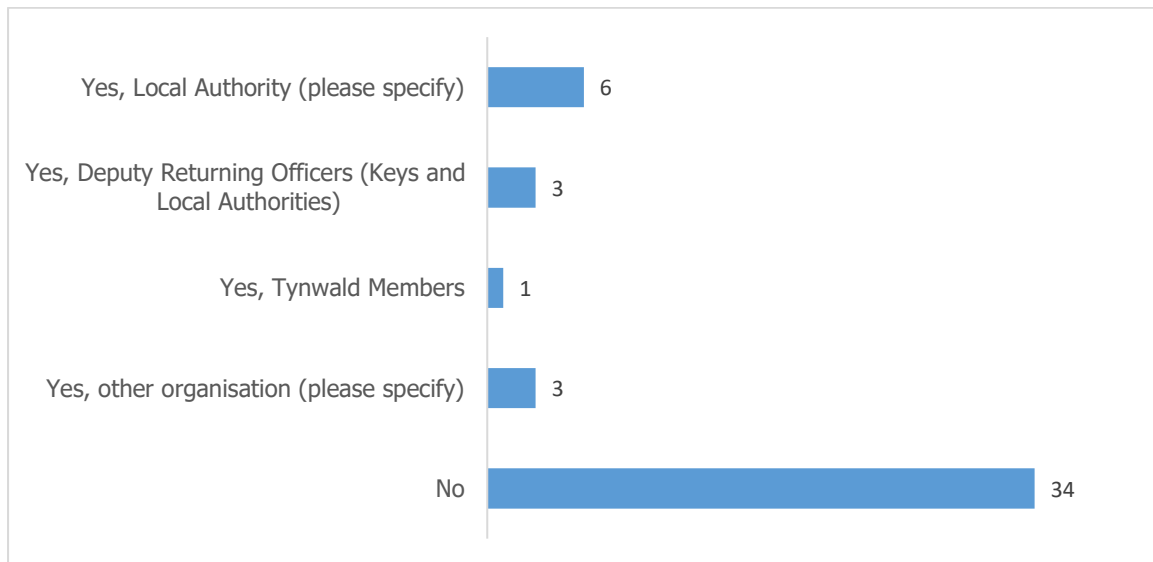
It is proposed that the amended legislation will be in place in time for the House of Keys General Election, scheduled in September 2026

The Public Consultation was accessed via the Isle of Man Government Consultation Hub or paper copies were available from the Cabinet Office for those individuals with no online access.

Results from Public Consultation

1. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

This question asked respondents whether they were responding on behalf of an organisation.



The following six local authorities submitted a response to the consultation:

- Braddan
- Lezayre
- Onchan
- Port St Mary
- Ramsey
- Douglas City Council

The following three other organisations also submitted a response:

- Tynwald Members
- Deputy Returning Officers (Keys and Local Authorities)
- Other Organisations (not specified)

2. Local Authority

This question asked respondents whether they were responding on behalf of a local authority.

There were 5 responses to this part of the question. 1 Response was received from Braddan, Lezayre, Onchan, Port St Mary and Ramsey.

3. Do you have any comment on the proposed amendment of Section 3? – “Definitions – Election Regulations”?

7 respondents were in support of the amendment.

1 respondent felt that having a digital voting option would increase engagement.

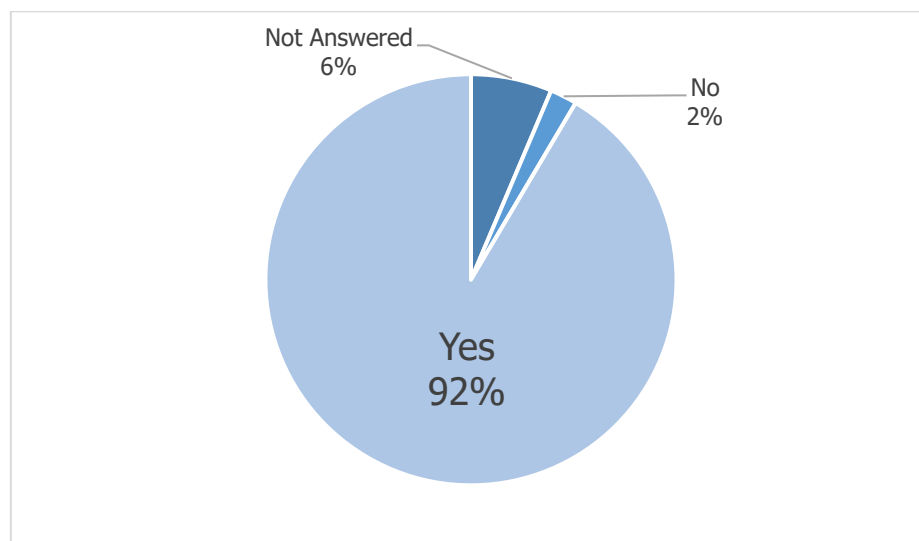
1 respondent commented that political parties should have its definition extended to include all candidates standing for election should have their party affiliation recorded on ballot papers.

1 respondent was disappointed that the amendment wasn't in place for the 2025 Local Authority Elections.

1 respondent commented that COMIN should not be involved in Local Authority Elections.

18 respondents made no further comment.

4. Do you agree that all candidates' declarations of relevant interests should be published in advance of an election?



5. Please could you summarise why you agree or disagree with publication of declarations of relevant interest?

21 respondents commented that there should be complete transparency.

1 respondent commented that it is morally incumbent for candidates to publish relevant interests.

8 respondents commented that the change will better inform voters of candidates relevant interests.

1 respondent commented that they agreed with the amendment.

3 respondents commented that candidates' relevant interests should be made available for voters to view prior to an election.

1 respondent commented that voters should understand the possible implications of a candidate's relevant interests.

1 respondent commented that only if a candidate is elected should their relevant interests be published.

1 respondent commented that there should be a slight change to the wording of the Bill (removing the word may and replacing with will).

6. Do you have any comment on the proposed amendment of section 63 – "Pre Election Meetings"?

The proposed amendment will remove Cabinet Office responsibility for organising one pre-election meeting per area (as mentioned above). This is intended to allow communities or organisations across the Isle of Man to arrange pre-election meetings to better match the requirements of the electorate. Candidates, political parties, or community organisations can arrange pre-election meetings on various platforms (in-person or online) at times and locations that work best for their local community.

5 respondents commented that the responsibility should remain with Cabinet Office.

5 respondents commented that the responsibility should be passed to the community to organise i.e. Captains of the Parish.

5 respondents are happy to support the amendment.

1 respondent raised cost concerns.

1 respondent commented that there should be flexibility as to who organises the meetings.

1 respondent commented that there should be a compromise as to who organises the meetings with Cabinet Office still having some involvement.

7. Do you have any comment on the proposed amendment of section 68 -, "Powers of deputy returning officer for maintenance of the peace"?

The proposed amendment confirms that although a Deputy Returning Officer must maintain order at an election, any requirement to arrest, detain or remove any individual breaching the peace or committing an offence in relation to an election, would be dealt with by the IOM Constabulary and the IOM Courts as appropriate. This amendment may not be applied so as to prevent an eligible person from voting.

1 respondent commented that an individual should forfeit their right to vote if they are removed from a polling station.

9 respondents are in support of the amendment.

2 respondents commented that such powers should only be carried out by Police and Courts not a DRO.

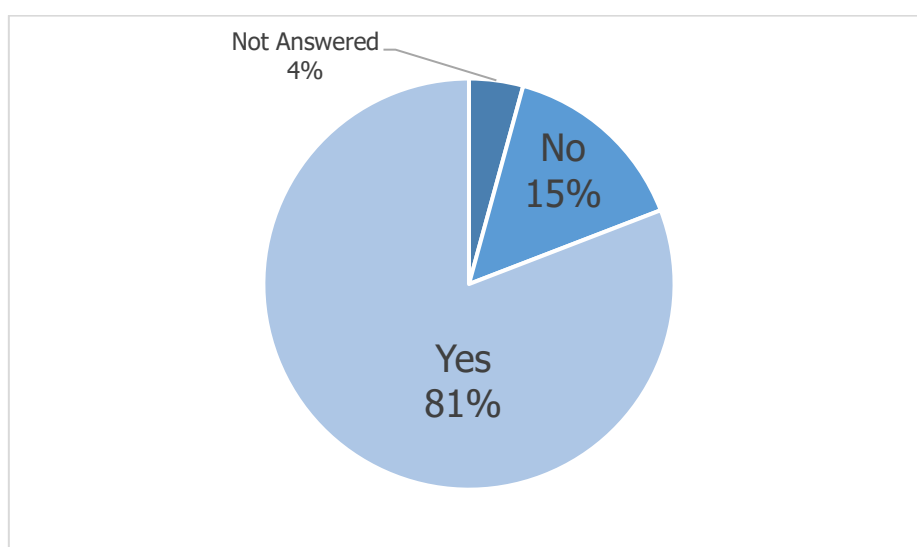
1 respondent commenting on behalf of IOM Constabulary commented that there will need to be some clarification around power of arrest without a warrant.

1 respondent commenting on behalf of IOM Constabulary commented that the Police Force are content with the amendment to this section of the Bill.

2 respondents commented that the DRO should retain the power of arrest and to detain.

1 respondent commented that there should be some form of education to the public as to what would constitute poor behaviour at a polling station.

8. Do you agree that voters should have the option to vote in any polling station within an allotted area?



9. Would you like to add any further comment in relation to the above question or about the proposed amendment to Section 84 – “Ability to vote in any polling station within a constituency”?

This proposed amendment changes the Act so that the regulations made would be able to permit a voter to attend to cast their vote at any polling station within their constituency (or another allotted area). This amendment would permit island wide voting however at present it is proposed to retain polling station allocations to within existing constituency boundaries.

2 respondents were happy that the amendment would encourage greater democratic participation.

2 respondents suggested that the amendment could be extended to allow voting at any polling station on the Island, while another 2 stated that all polling stations should be accessible.

2 respondents raised concerns about the possibility of an individual being able to vote at multiple polling stations and asked for this risk to be protected against. 4 respondents called for the introduction of online voting for House of Keys elections.

10. Do you have any comment on the proposed amendment of Section 88, "Data Protection clarification"?

The proposed amendment to this section makes clear, in relation to data protection legislation, the purpose for which the declaration of relevant interests may be published (see section 81 above). Nomination papers and declarations of relevant interests are official documents and the publication of them is a task conducted in the public interest.

2 respondents commented that the amendment is sensible as it conforms to GDPR Regulations.

4 respondents commented that they are in support of the amendment.

1 respondent queried whether the amendment is in line with rules and regulations in respect of data protection.

1 respondent commented that the amendment ensures better openness and clarity.

1 respondent commented that they are of the opinion that the amendment will only work if Candidates relevant interests are published.

11. Do you have any comment on the proposed amendment of Section 106 – "Offences in respect of nomination papers etc"?

The proposed amendment to this section makes clear an offence is committed if a person seeking to become a candidate fails to disclose any relevant interests within their declaration of relevant interests.

2 respondents commented that there should be penalties for candidates who have wilfully disregarded the regulations for declaration of a relevant interest.

8 respondents are in support of the proposed amendment.

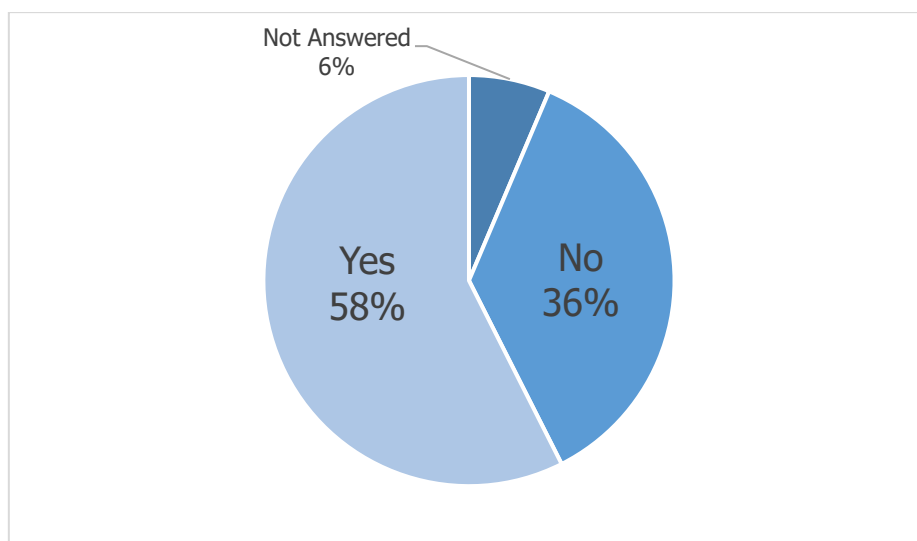
3 respondents commented that the proposed amendment will be an open and transparent process.

1 respondent does not agree with the proposed amendment.

1 respondent commented that a candidate should be required to produce a list of all documents that they have authored rather than those not in their name.

1 respondent commented that an Election should be declared as void if a candidate is found to have failed to declare a relevant interest.

12. Should Tellers be removed from the list of those bound by the requirement of secrecy to allow them to lawfully perform their role?



13. If you would like to share any additional comments on the role of Teller, please add them below.

There were 24 responses to this part of the question. Some responses included multiple points.

6 respondents commented that they had intimidation concerns in respect of Tellers.

5 respondents commented that they had privacy concerns.

7 respondents commented that they do not support Tellers and feel that they do not serve a purpose.

7 respondents were of the opinion that there needed to be more education for the public surrounding the role of Tellers including what they can and cannot do.

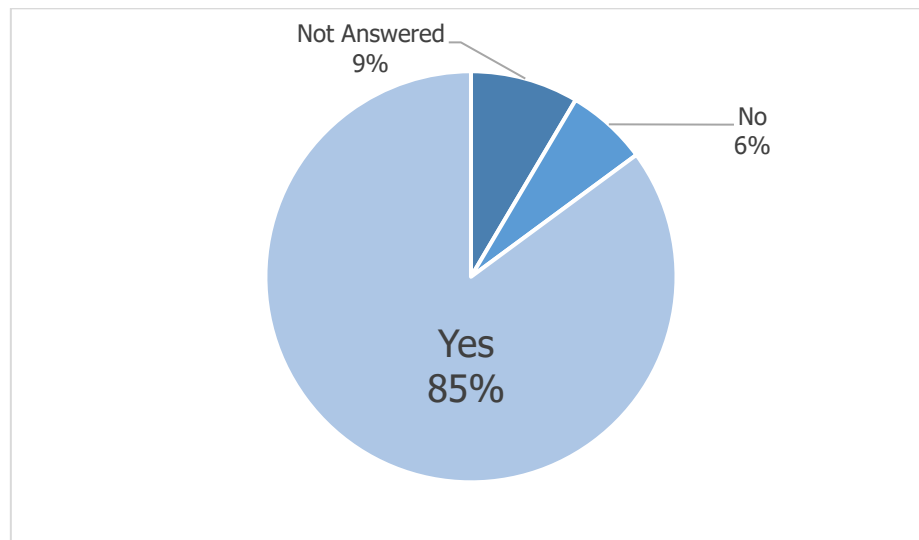
5 respondents commented that there should be a 'code of practice' that sets out what a Teller can & cannot do. A notice displaying such information should be provided outside of each Polling Station.

7 respondents are in support of Tellers with 3 of these respondents happy with the current process.

1 respondent suggested that there should be an alternative to Tellers i.e. observers.

2 respondents commented that rather than having multiple Tellers based at a Polling Station there should be 1 single Teller. This would avoid large groups outside the Polling Stations.

14. Do you support the proposed amendment to add a third condition which may trigger recall provision?



15. Do you have any additional comments about the proposed amendment to recall provision conditions?

4 respondents made the case that the amendment should be extended to empower the public to trigger an automatic recall, such as through an official petition.

1 respondent queried whether the proposed amendment would also apply to members of the Legislative Council and if not then it possibly should.

1 respondent commented that the proposed amendment would avoid delays and free up parliamentary time to concentrate on other pressing matters.

1 respondent commented that an independent ombudsman should be appointed to carry out investigations.

16. Do you have any general comments or observations to make about this draft bill?

3 respondents were satisfied that the Bill will bring positive changes and wished for it to be implemented in time for the 2026 general election.

4 respondents commented that consideration needs to be given to introduce digital voting as individuals will be more inclined to vote this way.

2 respondents commented that consideration needs to be made into changing some of the constituency boundaries.

1 respondent commented that there needs to be an open and transparent process around candidate's declarations of relevant interest.

1 responded commented that the Isle of Man Government should make voting compulsory.

1 respondent commented that there needed to be some education provided to the public in respect of how the official count at polling stations is conducted.

Summary

There were 47 responses to this public consultation. 45 responses were online via the Isle of Man Government Public Consultation platform. 2 responses were input manually by the Crown & Elections Team as two individuals were not able to access the online consultation.

The comments from the Public Consultation have been analysed resulting in high level policy decisions made in respect of the role of 'Teller'. The requirement for declaration of secrecy, which allows Tellers to perform their roles has been removed and a 'code of conduct' for Tellers has been compiled.

There will also be increased communications around the role of Tellers which will assist with educating the electorate which explains what they can and cannot do at a Polling Station.