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ELECTORAL REFORM: WE SHOULD HAVE A THREE-WAY CHOICE, SAYS DEMOCRACY MEP

The British public should be given three choices in a ‘traffic light’ referendum on electoral reform, which is expected on May 5 next year, says a leading MEP and democracy expert.

Mr Edward McMillan-Scott, European Parliament vice-president responsible for democracy and human rights, said voters should be able to choose between the current First Past the Post (FPTP), Alternative Vote (AV) and Single Transferable Vote (STV). He hopes the public will give a red light to FPTP, an amber light to AV – which is not a truly proportional system – but the green light to STV.

McMillan-Scott, who won the first national election under proportional representation (PR) – the 1999 Euro-election - while leader of the Conservative MEPs, is a long-term supporter of electoral reform. He joined the LibDems in March after a dispute over David Cameron’s choice of EU allies.

McMillan-Scott is organising a Westminster meeting for MPs on July 21 to argue the case for a real choice jointly with his Press Officer, Janice Small – who is director of Conservative Action for Electoral Reform:

“This is a chance of a lifetime for Britain to get a really fair system of electing MPs. Around the world there are many variants of PR – but practically nobody uses AV. Britain is one of the world’s oldest democracies and it is time we brought our electoral system up to the highest international standards by introducing STV.”