

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order amends the Scottish Local Government Elections Order 2011 to provide for the publication of information about voting sequences by ward at local government elections (including by-elections). This information is to be published as part of the declaration of the result.

At a local government election voters rank candidates using numbers. That gives a sequence of preferences, which are used to transfer votes between candidates in calculating the result. To give a simplified example, if there were two candidates at a poll, a voter could vote first for candidate A, then second for candidate B. A voter could also vote for both candidates, but vote first for candidate B, or could vote for either candidate but not for the other. That gives four voting sequences. With multi-member wards the number of sequences is significantly more, but is calculable by electronic counting systems and of interest to researchers, candidates and political parties.

Article 4 provides that the publication requirement is only applicable where votes are counted electronically.

Article 5 requires publication of each unique sequence in which candidates were ranked by voters, and the number of voters who chose each sequence. This does not indicate which voter cast that sequence of votes, being details only of the sequences that were adopted.

Article 6 makes transitional arrangements to apply the publication requirement to the local government elections held on 3rd May 2012 and elections after that date, but before the Order comes into force. These arrangements allow the returning officer to access the electronic records for such polls to compile the information. Conditions are attached, to ensure that secrecy of voting is maintained.