

17th January 2014.

Dear Mr Speaker

Speaker's Commission on Digital Democracy.

I have twice watched your recent speech to The Hansard Society on this subject.

I also watch a fair bit of proceedings on the parliament channel. There is of course coverage of debates in the other devolved assemblies, as well as from Westminster.

One issue that I really find frustrating is the "division"; even more so when there are a series of votes required and their consequence need for "divisions". I feel this is a subject that your Commission should seriously address.

A vote in the devolved assemblies takes little more than five minutes, the members remain at their places and the performance of business looks "efficient"

In the Commons, it is mayhem. Members are seen scurrying around, yapping away or taking no interest at all. I am aware in the background the division bells will be summoning members from far off places to come and vote. It is very time consuming and looks exceedingly inefficient. We the tax payers are paying for all this idle time. There never seems to be enough parliamentary time, but the following idea should free some up.

My son in law is a retained fireman and he carries a pocket pager 24/7. When he is available to respond he selects "in" on the pager and if not available selects "out". If he is needed the controller knows from these previous actions what crew he has to hand, and sends an "alert" in event of an incident All the firemen have to acknowledge this call by single button. Then they all go off to the fire station and whatever the incident requires.

If one substitutes fireman with member and controller with speaker, you Mr Speaker could call a vote. The voting window needs to be open for a determined time (2 minutes say), and every member can vote. No need to leave seats, dawdle around the chamber and lobby or rush for other buildings or places.

I commend the outline idea to your Commission, and I sure some one will develop a far more sophisticated device than I suggest with yes, no, abstain buttons and a message screen so it's clear what the division is called for.

Yours sincerely

Dave King