



Ein cyf/Our ref CG/PO/358/2023

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
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Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
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19 October 2023

Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Inter-Ministerial Group on Justice

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you that the inaugural meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Justice was held on 12 September.

I view the establishment of this group and the inclusion of the Welsh Government within it as an important recognition that the Welsh justice landscape is different to that of England, and that its needs therefore need to be considered separately, and to be afforded the same significance of those of the other nations of the United Kingdom.

The virtual meeting was chaired by Lord Bellamy KC, with the UK Government also represented by The Rt Hon David TC Davies MP, Secretary of State for Wales. The Scottish Government: was represented by Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs, and I represented the Welsh Government.

In the absence of Northern Ireland ministers, Richard Pengelly, the Permanent Secretary at the Northern Ireland Department of Justice, attended on behalf of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

A communiqué summarising the business of the meeting has been issued and can be found [here](#). Among the points I raised were a suggestion that the group should look particularly at reoffending rates; concerns around ethnic disparities in the prison population; the availability of useful data, particularly for Wales; the equality of access issues that can arise from digitisation of justice processes, for example in the courts; and the need for amendments to the UK Government's Victims and Prisoners Bill, currently before the UK Parliament.

The meeting opened with an agreement of the group's Terms of Reference which is published [here](#).

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The next meeting will take place in approximately four months time and I will keep you informed once it is scheduled.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mick Antoniw". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mick Antoniw AS/MS

Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution