

Mick Antoniw MS,
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution,
Welsh Government

3 November 2023

Dear Mick,

Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Bill

Thank you for attending our meeting on 26 October in relation to the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Bill. The Committee agreed that I should write to you to seek further information on some of the issues we discussed.

Electoral registration without application

The Explanatory Memorandum states, that in order to add additional safeguards for young and vulnerable electors, the open electoral register will be removed for Welsh elections. However, provision to enable this does not appear to be included in the Bill and the EM does not explain how otherwise the register will be removed. We would be grateful for clarification as to why this provision has not been included in the Bill, and what the timescales are for its removal.

During the meeting, you indicated that the Welsh Government would bring forward a Statutory Instrument under the Representation of the People Act 1953 to remove the open register for Welsh elections, and agreed to confirm which procedure will be used to make the subordinate legislation.

We would also be grateful if you could provide details as to whether consideration has been given to the impact the removal of the open register in Wales may have on businesses, charities and other organisations.

Services to promote diversity in persons seeking elected office

Section 28 specifies that arrangements must be made for the provision of services to promote diversity in the protected characteristics and socio-economic circumstances of persons seeking to be

elected. We would be grateful if you could provide further details on the criteria which will be used to assess a person's socio-economic circumstances in order to qualify for such services.

We would be grateful for a response by 16 November in order to aid our consideration of the Bill.

I am copying this letter to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee and the Finance Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John". The letters are cursive and fluid.

John Griffiths MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

