

**Mick Antoniw AS/MS**  
**Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad**  
**Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution**



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref CG/PO/413/2023  
Ein cyf/Our ref CG/PO/413/2023

1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 22 November 2023 regarding the implementation of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill.

In your correspondence you asked if I could provide an overview of the anticipated timeline for the implementation of the electoral reforms in advance of the 2026 election, including timescales associated with the National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007 (“the Conduct Order”). You also asked if I could provide an indication of the nature and scale of the changes I anticipated the Welsh Government proposing in a consultation on the Conduct Order.

As you are aware, two Bills related to electoral reforms (the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill and the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Bill) are currently being scrutinised by the Senedd.

The renamed Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC) will not have the legal function to commence and undertake a review of Senedd boundaries until the provision which confers that function is commenced the day after the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill receives Royal Assent. As they have set out in their written evidence to the Reform Bill Committee, it is anticipated that the DBCC will commence its pairing of the 32 UK Parliament constituencies in August 2024. The Bill provides that the Commission’s final report on the pairing of the constituencies will be completed by 1 April 2025. This will then enable the Statutory Instrument to implement the 16 Senedd constituencies to be drafted and made by Welsh Ministers.

In parallel with the DBCC’s work, the Welsh Government will consult on a draft bi-lingual and consolidated Conduct Order. This will reflect our ambition to consolidate the statute book for Wales where we can, to deliver an accessible, bilingual legislative framework. We intend to take steps to consolidate electoral law in Wales for devolved elections, as part of our longer-term goal of modernising electoral law.

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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.

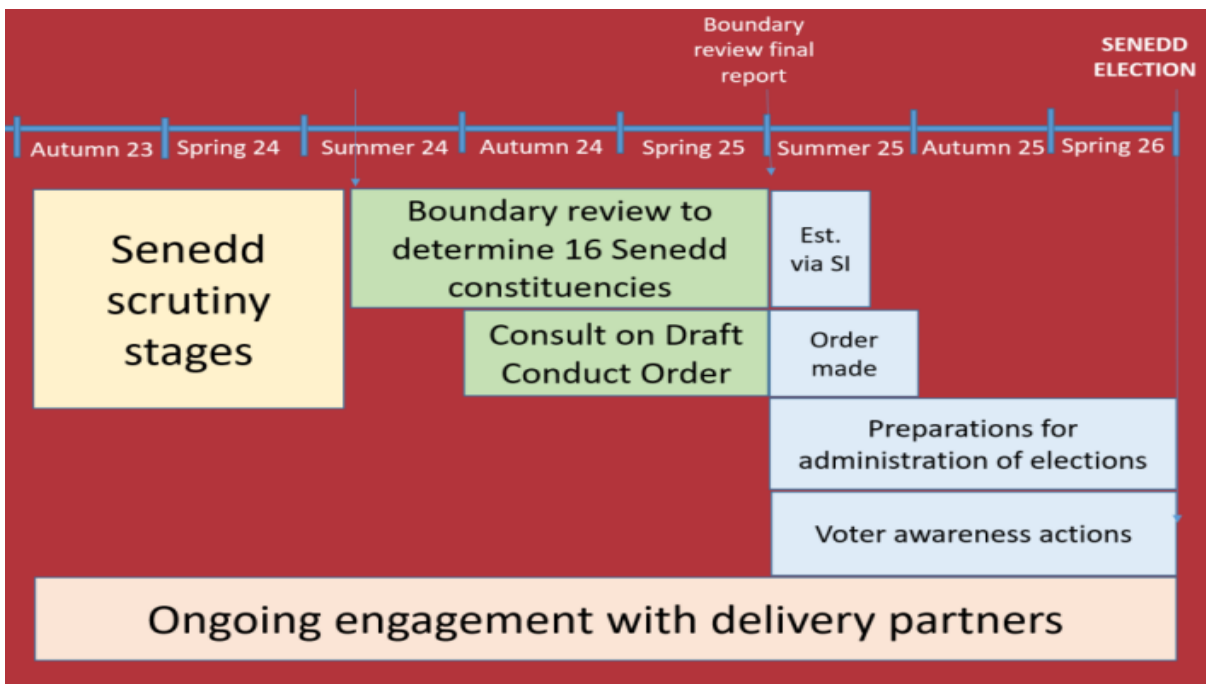
The Conduct Order sets out the detailed rules for conducting elections to Senedd Cymru. It sets out the way in which the election and the election campaign are conducted, including provisions for legal challenge to the election. The Conduct Order has previously been reviewed and amended before each Senedd election.

The Order was originally made, and subsequently amended, by the Secretary of State, before the function of making the Order was transferred to the Welsh Ministers by the Wales Act 2017 (which amended section 13 of the Government of Wales Act 2006). As the original Order was made in 2007, this represents a valuable opportunity for us to consolidate and re-state the law as part of an accessible, bilingual framework for the first time.

In doing so, we will take account of the principles set out in the Legislation (Wales) Act 2019, and seek to produce an Order using modern and clear language which is accessible to the reader. This will include, as you referred to, amendments to ballot paper design, reflecting the move to a single system of election for all Members.

Ahead of the 2026 general election to the Senedd, the Electoral Commission will develop and publish guidance related to the administration of elections, and we will work with delivery partners to facilitate a smooth adoption of the different administrative processes associated with the election. In addition to the usual secondary legislation that precedes a Senedd election, including the Disqualification and Returning Officers' Charges Orders, we will work with partners to facilitate public awareness of the new electoral system.

I have provided a visual depiction of the timescales for these different processes below.



Yours sincerely,

**Mick Antoniw AS/MS**

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