

Text of press release from the Wales Governance Centre, 12 September 2016:

## Justice in Wales: New report sets out reform proposals

**As Wales moves towards a new ‘reserved powers’ model of devolution, a new report from Cardiff University’s Wales Governance Centre sets out key reforms to improve justice in Wales.**

The report is the first of a series of contributions that the Wales Governance Centre will be making to promote debate on the future of the justice system in Wales as the law between England and Wales diverges.

The report recommends:

- Creating a Ministry of Justice ‘Welsh Centre of Expertise’.
- Establishing a Standing Commission on Justice in Wales.
- Establishing a fully operational High Court Office in Wales.
- Guaranteeing Welsh representation on the UK Supreme Court.
- Publishing separate data and performance indicators on the administration of justice in Wales.

### **Commenting, the author of the Report, Huw Pritchard said:**

“There is increasing divergence between the law of England and Wales and this will increase as we move to a new reserved powers model of devolution.

“It’s important that Wales is taken seriously in the justice system. Ensuring that Welsh law is properly accommodated in the single justice system is essential if the England and Wales justice system is to be able to handle growing difference between the laws of England and the laws of Wales.

“A myriad organisations are involved in the provision of justice in Wales, ranging across the courts and tribunals, the judiciary, the Ministry of Justice and Home Office, policing, probation and youth justice services. As devolution has developed, ad hoc institutional developments have resulted in gaps and overlaps in the functions of the justice system.

“There is also a democratic deficit regarding the oversight of the justice system in Wales.

“All of this requires reform in the administration of justice in Wales. The report highlights areas of good practice where there has been positive co-operation between the UK and Welsh Governments but much more needs to be done by way of recognition of Wales and Welsh law within the shared legal system.

“Specifically, the UK government needs to create a Welsh Centre of Expertise in the Ministry of Justice, establish a fully operational High Court Office in Wales; guarantee Welsh representation on the UK Supreme Court and publish separate data on the administration of justice in Wales.

“We hope this report will help inform the ‘Justice in Wales’ working group established by the UK government to consider the practical implications of a distinct body of law in Wales for the shared legal system of England and Wales.”

The full report is available here: [Justice in Wales Sept 2016](#)