



Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru
SeneddLJC@senedd.wales

21st February 2024

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 second meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Justice was held on 25 January.

The hybrid meeting was chaired by Angela Constance MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs, in Edinburgh.

The UK Government was represented by Lord Bellamy KC (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice), John Lamont (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland), Fay Jones (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales) and Lord Caine (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland)

In the absence of Northern Ireland ministers, Richard Pengelly, the Permanent Secretary at the Northern Ireland Department of Justice, again attended on behalf of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. With the restoration of devolved institutions to Northern Ireland, it is expected that the next meeting will be attended by a minister of the new Executive.

A communiqué summarising the business of the meeting has been issued and can be found [here](#).

The main focus of the meeting was a discussion of the different potential approaches to exonerate and compensate the wrongly convicted victims of the Post Office Horizon Scandal. I highlighted my views that the reputational damage to the justice system has been significant, that computer systems are not always correct and that there are clear links to the dangers of increasing the use within the justice system of other technologies including Artificial Intelligence and facial recognition without fuller understanding of the risks and clear plans for mitigation. I also put forward my view that a statutory duty of candour is essential to help prevent similar miscarriages of justice in the future. It was agreed that these matters will form the focus of separate discussion in a future meeting.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Mick.Antoniw@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Mick.Antoniw@gov.Wales

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 meeting then discussed measures being taken to improve prison capacity, court recovery, and legal aid.

The next meeting is due to take place in approximately four months' time. 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, reading "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