



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-P-JJ/5202/19

Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP
Secretary of State for Justice
102 Petty France
London
SW1H 9AJ

25 October 2019

Dear Mr Buckland

My colleague, the Counsel General and Brexit Minister, wrote to your predecessor on 21 March to advise him of progress on the Welsh Government's proposals to legislate to enable prisoners and young people in custody from Wales to vote in devolved Welsh elections and to inform him that in the meantime we would apply to those elections the changes which form part of the *Hirst* package of measures.

I am now able to confirm that the Welsh Government's intention is to introduce legislation in this Assembly to enable prisoners and young people in custody from Wales who are serving a custodial sentence of less than four years to vote in local government elections. Our aim is that eligible prisoners and young people in custody will be able to vote at the next ordinary local government elections which will be held in May 2022.

We will also seek an appropriate legislative vehicle to introduce provision at the earliest opportunity to enable prisoners and young people in custody from Wales to vote in Assembly elections, on the same terms as will apply for local government elections. The first ordinary Assembly elections at which prisoners and young people in custody would be able to vote will be those in 2026.

We recognise that much work will need to be done to deliver prisoner voting in a timely, coherent and effective manner. I would be pleased to discuss our proposals with you further and I look forward to our officials continuing to work together in taking matters forward.

I am writing similarly to the Minister for the Constitution in the Cabinet Office and am copying the letters to the Secretary of State for Wales, to the Llywydd as Chair of the Assembly Commission and to the Chair of the Assembly's Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie James AC/AM

Y Gweinidog Tai a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Housing and Local Government