



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Cabinet Sub-Committee on Justice meeting: 11 May 2023

Minutes of the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Justice meeting on
11 May 2023.

First published: 30 June 2023

Last updated: 30 June 2023

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-justice-meeting-11-may-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Contents

Present

Introduction and welcome

Justice transformation programme

Family Courts

Tribunal reform

Family Ties

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-justice-meeting-11-may-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Present

- Rt. Hon Mark Drakeford MS
- Mick Antoniw MS (Chair)
- Jane Hutt MS
- Julie Morgan MS
- Jeremy Miles MS (part meeting)

Welsh Government officials

- Andrew Goodall, Permanent Secretary
- Andrew Slade, Director General, Economy, Treasury and Constitution
- Des Clifford, Director, Office of the First Minister
- Piers Bisson, Director, European Transition, Constitution and Justice
- James Gerard, Deputy Director Justice Policy
- Karin Phillips, Deputy Director, Community Safety
- Diane Dunning, Legal Services
- Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser
- Owen John, Special Adviser
- David Hooson, Special Adviser
- Christopher W Morgan, Head of Cabinet Secretariat
- Damian Roche, Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)
- James Oxenham, Cabinet Division
- Nigel Brown, Chief Executive, Cafcass Cymru
- Kimberley Phillips, Community Safety Division
- Nadine Young, Social Partnership, Employability and Fair Work
- Adam Turbervill, Legal Services
- Louis Urutty, Communications
- Fiona Green, Justice Policy
- Tony Jones, Justice Policy

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-justice-meeting-11-may-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

- Antonia Castello-Allen, Justice Policy
- David Slade, Justice Policy
- Chris James, Justice Policy

External attendees

- Dame Vera Baird KC, Independent Expert Adviser on Justice Devolution (part meeting)
- Corin Morgan-Armstrong, HMP Parc (item 4)

Introduction and welcome

The Counsel General welcomed Dame Vera Baird KC to the meeting, who would be attending for items relating to youth justice and probation in her capacity as an independent expert adviser.

Item 1: Justice transformation programme stocktake

1.1 The Counsel General noted the latest change of Secretary of State for Justice, with the outgoing Dominic Raab MP replaced by Alex Chalk MP.

1.2 The impact of this change on intergovernmental relations more widely would be monitored, with the opportunity to do so at the first meeting of the newly constituted Inter-Ministerial Group on Justice, which was due to meet on 24 May, but was subsequently postponed by the UK government. A substitute date was awaited.

1.3 The point was made that disaggregated justice data for Wales should be high on the agenda for discussion with the MoJ.

1.4 Notable developments in the criminal justice area included the introduction of the Rural and Wildlife Crime Strategy, which was a first for Wales. In addition, the prisoner education strategy was progressing.

1.5 MSJCW informed the meeting that a data dashboard of Wales specific information relating to youth justice will soon be available, published by Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Services.

1.6 The sub-committee discussed other developments in relation to the Victims and Prisoners Bill, which raised some constitutional issues as well as containing provisions which Welsh Government would not support.

1.7 Concerns were raised about young people held on remand in police custody and further information would be provided for the next meeting, including the associated mental health impacts.

1.8 In noting the stocktake paper, the sub-committee agreed to share it with Cabinet.

Item 2: Family Court Pathfinder Urban Rollout

2. The Counsel General introduced the item, which updated the Sub-Committee on the success of the North Wales pathfinder pilot to date, and invited Nigel Brown, Chief Executive of Cafcass Cymru to provide an overview.

2.2 Although the pilot had not yet been evaluated, early signs strongly suggested that the pilot was delivering positive results for children and families, and the early engagement of Cafcass Cymru had resulted in more early settlements and a very low number of return cases and appeals.

2.3 The problem-solving approach helped reduce the inevitable trauma experienced in repeated court hearings, whilst at the same time it appeared to be achieving real savings for the justice system.

2.4 Given the success of the current pilot and savings generated for the justice system, there was potential to rollout the approach across Wales.

2.5 The sub-committee noted the update.

Item 3: Tribunal reform

3.1 The Counsel General introduced the paper, which set out progress on tribunal reform. The Sub-Committee was also asked to consider and comment on the working draft of the white paper, to agree the policy approach for certain issues and to agree the approach to taking forward the consultation.

3.2 The sub-committee had previously endorsed the principle of the Law Commission's recommendations to create a single, unified and coherent system of devolved tribunals comprising of a First-tier Tribunal for Wales and an Appeal Tribunal for Wales, both organised into chambers, and presided over by the President of Welsh Tribunals. The case for greater structural independence from Welsh Government for the administration of the new tribunals system was also noted, as had been recommended by the Thomas Commission.

3.3 The sub-committee noted and agreed the recommendations in the paper.

Item 4: Family Ties - including a presentation from Corin Morgan-Armstrong, Head of Invisible Wales Family Services

4.1 The Minister for Social Justice and Chief Whip introduced the paper, which asked the sub-committee to note the current work to support family and significant other ties of offenders in Wales.

4.2 The sub-committee heard from Corin Morgan-Armstrong of Invisible Wales Family Services about the retention of family ties for people in custody being increasingly recognised as an important part of an effective justice system.

4.3 A review in 2017 by Lord Farmer found that family relationships were the 'golden thread' to prevent reoffending.

4.4 Family members may also be able to help identify welfare concerns ahead of time by spotting changes in behaviour or signs of vulnerability that may not be apparent to justice frontline staff.

4.5 Likewise, family ties provided an additional source of support and encouragement to people in the justice system, in addition to providing stability throughout their justice system journey. There were reports however that families and significant others often felt the system did not value their insight or potential contribution to successful rehabilitation.

4.6 To combat this, there was a range of relevant work to support families by Welsh Government and its partners, such as the Invisible Walls Wales scheme, developed by G4S and Barnardo's Cymru at HMP Parc, which offered tailored support for families pre- and post-release from custody.

4.7 In addition, the 'Families Affected by Imprisonment' programme brought together North Wales partners including HMP Berwyn, HMP Styal, local

authorities, North Wales Police and the PCC to strengthen the support provided to family members.

4.8 Other work included the 'Family and Significant Other Standards', work to support care experienced young people at HMP Parc, alongside work to support offenders' families, such as the 'Visiting Mum Scheme', the 'Family Connect Forum' and a series of workshops and research to be delivered throughout 2023, funded by the Welsh Government.

4.9 The sub-committee noted the good work in this space.

Cabinet Secretariat
May 2023

This document may not be fully accessible.

For more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/cabinet-sub-committee-justice-meeting-11-may-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).