



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Equalities and Human Rights Committee

Christina McKelvie MSP
Convener

Joe Fitzpatrick MSP
Minister for Parliamentary Business

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Via email only

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22 September 2017

Dear Joe Fitzpatrick,

Prisoner voting in Scotland

On Thursday 7 September 2017 the Committee held an evidence session on the issue of the 'blanket ban' on prisoner voting in Scotland. This session was undertaken at the request of Patrick Harvie MSP, in light of both EU and UK court rulings on the issue of prisoner voting. The Official Report of the session can be accessed [here](#).

We note from the legislative programme for 2016/17, [A Plan For Scotland: The Scottish Government's Programme For Scotland 2016-2017](#), the Scottish Government promised that:

“we will take forward a consultation exercise to find out what electoral reforms Scottish citizens would like to see taken forward in future legislation.”

Based on information on [the Scottish Government's consultations hub](#), it would appear that the consultation exercise has yet to start.

We would welcome an update on the proposed consultation and whether this will include the matter of prisoner voting.

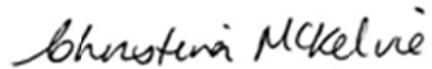
You'll also note from the [Minutes](#) of the meeting held on 7 September that the Committee undertook to write to others stakeholders seeking their views. As soon as

we have received all of these views the Committee will consider the responses and decide what further action we should take, or, whether we should make recommendations to you in terms of how to address the issue of prisoner voting in Scotland.

It would be helpful to receive your response by **Monday 16 October 2017**.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina McKelvie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a distinct loop at the end of the name.

Christina McKelvie MSP
Convener
Equalities and Human Rights Committee