

First Minister establishes a Commission on Justice in Wales

A new Commission on Justice in Wales has today been announced by First Minister Carwyn Jones.

The Commission, to be chaired by the current Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, will review the justice system and policing in Wales and consider how the system can achieve better outcomes for Wales.

The Commission will deal with the unfinished business from the Silk Commission, which made a number of carefully reasoned, evidence-based recommendations, in respect of justice – covering the courts, probation, prisons and youth justice. It will also address crucial issues relating to the legal jurisdiction and the challenges facing the legal services sector in Wales.

The First Minister said:

“In Wales, we have had a separate legislature for 6 years but, as yet, we do not have our own jurisdiction. By establishing the Commission on Justice in Wales, we are taking an important first step towards developing a distinctive justice system which is truly representative of Welsh needs.

“The Commission will consider how we can do things differently in Wales and identify options to develop a distinct Welsh justice system, which improves people’s access to justice, reduces crime and promotes rehabilitation.

“I am delighted that Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd will chair the Commission when he steps down as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales in October. Having risen to the heights of the judiciary in Wales and England, Lord Thomas commands universal respect and brings his unprecedented wealth of experience to this important role.”

Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd said:

“I am very pleased to take on this challenge when I step down as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales in October. As a small developing jurisdiction, Wales offers unique opportunities to identify new solutions to the complex challenges facing justice and the legal profession. These are crucial to Wales’ future prosperity and I hope the commission will make a valuable contribution to addressing them.”