



Ministry of **JUSTICE**

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for recent correspondence.

The Governance of Britain programme sets out the Government's plans for constitutional reform. But as the report makes clear, and has been emphasised by the Prime Minister in a number of subsequent speeches, this programme is also based on a desire to move to a new way of working – one where the public are involved and included.

As part of the process we want to encourage debate, to talk with people across the country to understand their views. We held a public meeting in Leicester at the end of last year designed as the first step in this process. To help focus the discussions we organised the discussion around the five main questions including whether people would like more of a say in how this country is run. I am most grateful for your response to them to add to the knowledge we have built up from the event. Rest assured that your views will be fed into the ongoing national debate on the Governance of Britain and that particular suggestions will be passed to the relevant policy team across government.

We firmly believe that public engagement enriches, rather than replaces representative democracy. The public hold a vast amount of knowledge, both tacit and explicit which can help make better policy decisions and improve service implementation. The public have an important role in the success or failure of policy – such as addressing levels of obesity or tackling climate change which necessitate changes in individual behaviour or attitude and which also makes their involvement beneficial. And lastly their role as citizens and members of the community exercising their democratic duty. Your input to this debate therefore is valued on many levels.

The Government published a review of voting systems on 24 January 2008. At this point the Government is not seeking to reform the electoral system for the Commons. However, a suitable voting system for a reformed and substantially or fully elected House of Lords is currently being considered by a cross-party working group. The Voting System review was published to contribute to the ongoing debate on electoral reform for the Commons. Its