

# SL(5)731 – The Representation of the People (Amendment) (Wales) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2021

## Background and Purpose

These Regulations make provision in relation to proxy voting at certain local government by-elections.

Regulation 2 amends the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001, so as to provide applicants with additional grounds for applying for emergency proxy votes, or changing their nominated proxy, at these by-elections. These additional grounds relate to persons who are unable to attend a polling station in person as a result of following relevant legislation, guidance or medical advice in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The provisions apply to local government by-elections that happen on or before the 4 November 2021.

## Procedure

Draft Affirmative

The Welsh Ministers have laid a draft of the Regulations before the Senedd. The Welsh Ministers cannot make the Regulations unless the Senedd approves the draft Regulations.

## Technical Scrutiny

No points are identified for reporting under Standing Order 21.2 in respect of this instrument.

## Merits Scrutiny

The following point is identified for reporting under Standing Order 21.3 in respect of this instrument.

### **1. Standing Order 21.3(ii) – that it is of political or legal importance of gives rise to issues of public policy likely to be of interest to the Senedd**

We note there has been no formal consultation on these Regulations. In particular, we note the following paragraphs in the Explanatory Memorandum:

*“Due to the emergency nature of these Regulations the Welsh Government did not undertake a public consultation before the Regulations came into force. Views have been sought from the Electoral Commission and their comments that the provisions should also extend to electors with an existing proxy were taken into consideration in the drafting of the regulations.”*



## Welsh Government response

A Welsh Government response is not required.

## Committee Consideration

The Committee considered the instrument at its meeting on 8 February 2021 and reports to the Senedd in line with the reporting points above.

