

13 June 2011

Dr Michael Macpherson  
Psycho-Social and Medical Research  
PSAMRA - Integral Studies  
Guildford and Berlin

Our Ref: 67/018155/11  
Your Ref:

Dear Dr Macpherson,

Localism Bill Part 4 - Community Empowerment Chapter 1 - Local Referendums  
**Clause 53 Application to parish councils**

Thank you for your email to the Secretary of State of 14 April with your recommendations about parish democracy. Your letter has been passed to me for reply and I am sorry for the delay in doing so.

The provisions in the Localism Bill enable the local referendums regime to be applied, with such modifications as may be appropriate, to the parish sector by secondary legislation. Whilst the Government is keen to ensure the important element of direct democracy through parish polls is retained at the parish level, it intends to take the opportunity to update and reform the existing parish polls regime as part of this work.

During the Localism Bill's passage through the House of Commons, Ministers committed to consulting on the exact changes that should be made before any secondary legislation is drafted. Many of the issues raised in your 2009 memorandum (such as the trigger threshold and the conduct of polls) are issues on which we intend to consult and I will ensure the views set out in your memorandum are considered as part of that consultation. I will also let you know when the consultation is published should you wish to submit any further comments.

In the meantime, thank you for your interest and comments on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



**Victoria Jones**