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Kate Wimpres
Convener
Citizens' Assembly of Scotland

Email: [Redacted]

28 May 2020

Dear Kate

The Citizens' Assembly of Scotland; a response in light of Covid 19

Thank you for your letter of 14 May about the future of the Citizen' Assembly.

I am pleased that the Assembly Members remain willing to participate in the Citizens' Assembly process and I agree that the work of the Assembly can make an important contribution to thinking about how Scotland emerges stronger from the current situation.

As you rightly point out, the world in which we live today has changed dramatically over the past few months, and I agree that it is not possible to be confident that we will be able to resume physical meetings of the Assembly for some time.

I therefore agree in principle that the Assembly should continue its work on line, subject to reaching agreement on detailed proposals for how it would operate digitally, timescales for meetings and for reporting its conclusions. It will also be necessary to agree revised budget proposals.

It is important that any arrangements made to move the Citizens' Assembly deliberations online ensure continued participation by a broad cross-section of the adult population of Scotland and avoiding, as far as possible, the exclusion of some social groups.

I also agree that it would be helpful to consider whether changes to the remit and governance of the Citizens' Assembly are necessary to allow consideration of the experience of Covid-19. The Sponsorship Team in the Scottish Government are available to provide support and assistance as required.

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I would be more than happy to talk through the options with you before you finalise your proposals. Please let me know if you would like to do this.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Russell', written over a horizontal line.

MICHAEL RUSSELL

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