

Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair, Equality & Social Justice Committee

By email

25th of November 2024

Dear Jenny,

Thank you for your letter dated 15th October 2024, seeking an update on recommendations in the SEHR report relating to collaboration between the Welsh Government, Equality and Human Rights Commission and my office.

I fully support the recommendations contained within the report: including the recommendation for my team and I to work with EHRC to examine opportunities to enhance communication and share intelligence on issues relating to equality and human rights, including protocols for data sharing; and to coordinate actions using existing powers to hold the Welsh Government and public authorities to account.

I include here a summary of some of the action we have taken in line with this recommendation. Some of the actions pre-date the report and are included for context.

To help integration of the equality and well-being duties as well as to support the implementation of the new socio-economic, we worked jointly with the Welsh Government and EHRC in 2021 to produce *A More Equal Wales: mapping guide*. The Toolkit is designed to help public bodies apply the three sets of duties in an aligned way.

One of the key projects we have successfully partnered on in relation to this recommendation has focussed on integrated impact assessments. A series of workshops were organised by Welsh Government earlier this year to create a community of practice. This has been attended by members of my team, including our Deputy Commissioner. My office is now working on supporting this network and exploring, with others including the EHRC, how we can improve the integration of impact assessments and the improvement of their quality in general. We will convene two workshops in the new year which will include Welsh Government and EHRC.

My Deputy Commissioner has also attended meetings of the Welsh Government's Human Rights Advisory Group which also includes the EHRC and is being kept informed of the development of the group. We commented on the draft Terms of Reference of the group to ensure it integrated well with the Well-being of Future Generations Act. I understand that the group hasn't met since February 2024 due to changes within Welsh Government that have taken place since then and expect to hear shortly of the next date.

My team are part of discussions alongside EHRC with the Budget Improvement and Impact Advisory Group (BIAG) set up by the Welsh Treasury to provide advice as they prepare the Welsh Government's budget.

Over recent months, my team and I have focussed on strengthening our relationship and collaboration with the EHRC in order to deliver my strategy Cymru Can. We have held a series of meetings to scope a joint programme of work we would like to take forward in the future. Areas of planned and potential future collaboration include the following;

- input from EHRC in drafting the 2025 Future Generations Report to ensure alignment and to reinforce our respective work - we have already held a session with EHRC to shape the drafting of recommendations around a More Equal Wales goal and have invited further input from them during the next phase of involvement;
- collaboration on working with public bodies on how to improve their involvement with people affected by inequalities, in particular from an intersectional point of view, and the need for equality and inclusion best practice to move beyond projects and into 'business as usual'
- Artificial Intelligence is a feature in both our strategies and there is potential to work together on that subject;
- The potential to work together to highlight lack of progress on tackling entrenched inequality in Wales, in line with the 10th anniversary of the Well-being of Future Generations Act next year;
- EHRC have identified a role for themselves in countering polarisation and we have discussed how we could collaborate in future on this;
- The potential for us to work with the UK EHRC Board on how an approach that focuses on future trends provides a useful lens for their own work.

Finally, despite capacity constraints, I want to assure the Committee that I am ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is at the core of delivering my strategy [Cymru Can](#).

I hope the Committee finds this update useful. Please let me know if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,



Derek Walker

Future Generations Commissioner for Wales