

Pwyllgor Cymunedau, Cydraddoldeb a
Llywodraeth Leol

Communities, Equality and Local Government
Committee

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff
CF99 1NA

20 March 2013

Dear Colleague

Inquiry into the future of equality and human rights in Wales

The National Assembly for Wales' Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee is to undertake a short inquiry into the future of equality and human rights in Wales. To assist with its inquiry, the Committee would welcome your views on this subject.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the inquiry are to consider the following:

- How well the specific public sector equality duties are functioning in Wales;
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales;
- The link between poverty and equality and the socio-economic duty; and
- Accountability for equality and human rights legislation in Wales.

Purpose of Inquiry

Approaches to equality and human rights policy and legislation in England and Wales have become increasingly divergent. Equality issues are not fully devolved. Certain elements such as the specific public sector equality duties are the responsibility of the Welsh Government, but the overall general public sector equality duty, along with the rest of the *Equality Act 2010*, is not devolved. Therefore, the assumption is that if the

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh
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general duty was ever repealed, the specific duties would fall.

The Welsh Government's recent submission to the Silk Commission highlights equality as a potential area for further devolution, with specific reference to the public sector equality duty, and the socio-economic duty (which has not been commenced by the UK Government), and this was echoed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission's submission. The Welsh Government also committed to 'strengthening accountability for equality and human rights legislation' in the Programme for Government.

The Committee has expressed an interest in the impact of cuts to the EHRC in Wales, as the Welsh Government has no control over the Commission's budget, even though it regulates the specific duties.

Invitation to contribute to the inquiry

The Committee welcomes responses in English or Welsh from both individuals and organisations and will hold oral evidence sessions in due course.

Submissions should be no longer than 5 sides of A4, with numbered paragraphs, and should focus on the terms of reference as set out above.

If you wish to submit evidence, please send an electronic copy (preferably **not** in PDF) of your submission to celg.committee@wales.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can write to:

Committee Clerk
Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

Submissions should arrive by **Friday 12 April**. It may not be possible to take into account responses received after this date.

The Committee would be grateful if you could forward a copy of this letter to any individuals or organisations that might like to contribute to the review. A copy of this letter will be placed on the National Assembly's website with an open invitation to submit views.

Disclosure of Information

It is normal practice for the National Assembly to publish evidence provided to a Committee. Consequently your response may appear in a report or in supplementary evidence to a report. The National Assembly will not publish information which it considers to be personal data.

In the event of a request for information submitted under UK legislation, it may be necessary to disclose the information that you provide. This may include information which has previously been removed by the National Assembly for publication purposes.

If you are providing any information, other than personal data, which you feel is not suitable for public disclosure, it is up to you to stipulate which parts should not be published and to provide a reasoned argument to support this. The National Assembly will take this into account when publishing information or responding to requests for information.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ann Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A' and a distinct 'J'.

Cadeirydd / Chair