

David Rees AM
Chair, External Affairs and Additional Legislation
Committee

12 December 2017

Dear David

Inquiry into human rights in Wales

You will be aware that the Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee is undertaking an [inquiry into human rights in Wales](#). This has included a written consultation and oral evidence. At the end of the summer term we agreed to narrow the scope of the inquiry to focus on the impact of Brexit on human rights.

At our meeting on 19 October we received briefings on the Brexit negotiations from Assembly Commission officials, and heard an external perspective from Rebecca Hilsenrath, the Chief Executive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. We agreed a set of core principles that we consider should be adhered to during the Brexit process in relation to human rights. We will monitor progress against these principles and will be looking for opportunities to work with our counterpart parliamentary committees across the UK on these issues.

The core principles are that:

- there should be no regression in human rights and equality protections as a result of Brexit;
- Wales should establish a formal mechanism to track future developments in human rights and equality in the EU to ensure that Welsh citizens benefit from the same level of protection as EU citizens; and



- Wales should continue to be a global leader in human rights, and commit to bringing forward legislation to fill any gaps in rights and protection if the UK Government does not do so (where possible).

We are of the view that the Charter of Fundamental Rights must be preserved in some form after withdrawal from the EU. We welcome the statement made by the First Minister on [24 October](#)¹ supporting the efforts to ensure that the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill continues to respect the Charter after Brexit, which. We also welcome the UK Government's commitment to publish the analysis of how Charter rights will be protected after the UK leaves the EU.

We have also written to the following, to set out the core principles and on other matters raised at the meeting:

- Julie James AM, Leader of the House and Chief Whip (cc to Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister; and Mark Drakeford AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance);
- Mrs Maria Miller, Chair, Women and Equalities Committee, Parliament;
- Mick Antoniw AM, Chair, Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee;
- Christina McKelvie MSP, Convener, Equalities and Human Rights Committee, The Scottish Parliament;
- Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP, Chair, Joint Committee on Human Rights.

Yours sincerely



John Griffiths AM
Chair

¹ National Assembly for Wales, Plenary, item 6, paragraph 341, 24 October 2017



Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

