



Elin Jones AC, Llywydd

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru

Elin Jones AM, Presiding Officer

National Assembly for Wales

Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM
First Minister of Wales
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Your ref:
Our ref: EJ/CE

4 December 2018

Dear Carwyn

At the Chairs' Forum meeting, on 28 November 2018, we discussed the role of the Assembly and its committees in scrutinising Brexit-related legislation. Chairs raised an emerging concern about the role of the Assembly in the process of legislating for Brexit.

Chairs reported that the Welsh Government has sought delegated powers for Welsh Ministers in a number of Brexit-related UK Bills, rather than bringing forward its own Bills for scrutiny by the Assembly. In terms of the subordinate legislation needed to correct the statute book ahead of leaving the European Union, I understand that you have agreed to a significant proportion of this legislation being made by UK Ministers, using concurrent powers on behalf of Welsh Ministers.

Whilst I, and the Chairs' Forum, understand that you have made these decisions on the grounds of efficiency for the governments involved in the process, the concern expressed by Chairs is that this comes at a cost of the Assembly's role and therefore Members' ability to effectively represent the interests of the people of Wales in the process of legislating for Brexit.

In representing the views expressed to me by Chairs, and acting in the interests of the Assembly's position in the Brexit process, I have concerns that the cumulative effect of these Welsh Government decisions is an inadvertent bypassing of the Assembly's role.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

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I am sure that you would agree that the scrutiny of legislation that falls within the competence of the Assembly or Welsh Ministers, particularly relating to important areas of policy affecting citizens, benefits from far greater Wales-specific scrutiny when considered by the Assembly.

The limited opportunity for scrutiny offered by legislative consent conventions and associated procedures is incomparable with the Assembly's full legislative scrutiny processes.

Further, legislative scrutiny by the Assembly offers a more accessible and transparent process for Welsh stakeholders and the public, and also ensures the law is made in both of our official languages.

Just as you have striven to ensure a role for the Welsh Government in the Brexit process, I must ensure that the Assembly, and its Members, are enabled to play the full role they were elected to perform.

I understand that Assembly committees are planning to undertake further work in this area and I am sure that they will continue to raise issues with you and the Welsh Ministers.

In the meantime, I ask that you consider the concerns that have been raised and I would be grateful for your thoughts on how you might ensure that the Welsh Government does all it can to enable the Assembly to play its full part in legislating for Brexit.

I have copied this letter to Chairs of the Assembly's committees, the Leader of the House, and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance (in light of his role in the Brexit process).

Yours sincerely

Elin Jones AM
Llywydd