

Christina McKelvie MSP, Convener
Equalities and Human Rights Committee
The Scottish Parliament

Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb, Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
ELGC(5)-01-18 Papur 12 / Paper 12

12 December 2017

Dear Christina

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. Since beginning the inquiry, the Committee has narrowed the scope to the impact of Brexit on human rights.

As part of the inquiry the Committee recently discussed the current status of Brexit negotiations and heard from Rebecca Hilsenrath, the Chief Executive of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. At the meeting the Committee agreed a set of core principles that we consider should be adhered to during the Brexit process in relation to human rights and equality. We will monitor progress against these principles and will be looking for opportunities to work with our counterparts 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 Brexit. We welcome the statement made by Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister of Wales, on [24 October](#)¹ supporting the efforts to ensure that the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill continues to respect the Charter after Brexit. 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.

The Committee will also seek to:

- Engage with the scrutiny of the EU Withdrawal Bill;
- Consider the potential for the development of Welsh human rights law, as has been suggested in evidence taken.

As mentioned in my letter dated 9 January, and in correspondence we have had since, we are keen to discuss priorities and mutual interests with the Chairs of counterpart committees of devolved legislatures and the UK Parliament. I understand that our clerks are working to find a date that is convenient for all.

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

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.

