

Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP, Chair, Joint Committee
on Human Rights

Y Pwyllgor Cydraddoldeb, Llywodraeth Leol a Chymunedau
Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
ELGC(5)-01-18 Papur 13 / Paper 13

12 December 2017

Dear Harriet

Inquiry into human rights in Wales

I am writing in my capacity as Chair of the National Assembly for Wales' Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee.

The Committee is undertaking an [inquiry into human rights in Wales](#). Since beginning the inquiry the Committee has narrowed the scope to focus on 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 a Committee we are keen that our concerns are heard at a UK level, and would therefore welcome any opportunities for joint working with counterpart committees, including the Joint Committee on Human Rights. I understand that the clerks of the relevant equalities and human rights committees are currently seeking to find a convenient date for Chairs to meet and discuss shared interests and priorities.

Yours sincerely

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



John

John Griffiths AM
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

