



Professor Laura McAllister and Dr Rowan Williams
Co-chairs of the Constitutional Commission



14 January 2022

Annwyl Laura and Rowan,

I am pleased to note that the Constitutional Commission is now up and running and I look forward to meeting you from time to time, along with Adam Price, to hear how your work is going.

I am writing now to share some emerging thoughts which will be of interest to you and Commission members. Wales' constitutional future options are clearly linked to wider currents in UK political agendas. Any and all options which are developed on Wales' future can only be taken forward, practically and as a matter of law, in the context of a broader UK reform agenda.

I have been considering how to create a platform for this wider UK dimension to be heard in Wales alongside our own national debate running through and alongside the Constitutional Commission. My plan is to invite a series of high profile speakers from different parts of the UK political spectrum and geographies to give public talks expressing a range of different views on the UK's constitutional future. I intend primarily to approach key speakers who are not currently in governmental office on the basis that they are more likely to be able to speak freely and interestingly. No one has been approached at this early stage – I wanted to share my thoughts with you first – but coverage of a wide spectrum of political views will be among my aims.

To be clear, I am not proposing to add this series to the Commission's work. The series will be sponsored by the Welsh Government perhaps working with an appropriate partner to help us manage logistics. Depending on the coronavirus I hope sessions can be held "in person" at a physical location in Cardiff but we will also accommodate on-line contributions where that helps secure strong contributions. The series will run to perhaps half a dozen or so events over the next 12 – 18 months.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I envisage this series as being complementary to the work of the Constitutional Commission but not part of it. That said, the contributions will clearly be of interest to the Commission and I hope that, where it is useful and practical, we can organise events in a way that allows opportunity for inter-action between you and some of our speakers.

I should emphasise that these plans are at early stage of planning and I will, of course, keep you informed as things shape up more firmly.

Yn gywir,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MARK DRAKEFORD