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20<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP  
Chair  
Committee of Public Accounts  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

Dear Sir Geoffrey

**Re. PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE 1<sup>st</sup> June 2026  
LGBT+ Financial Recognition Scheme**

I write in advance of my appearance before the Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> June concerning the Government's LGBT Veterans Financial Recognition Scheme, and following Fighting With Pride's participation in the National Audit Office review of Government compensation and recognition schemes

Fighting With Pride welcomes the establishment of the scheme and recognises the significance of the Government's formal acknowledgement of the historic injustice suffered by LGBT veterans under the ban on homosexuality in the Armed Forces. However, through our work supporting veterans engaging with the scheme, a number of serious concerns have emerged which we believe warrant the Committee's attention

First, there has been a clear lack of funding to ensure veterans can access independent legal advice in relation to the scheme. Many applicants are elderly, vulnerable, or living with long-term trauma arising from their treatment during service. A significant number do not possess the confidence or resources to navigate complex evidential and procedural requirements without support. The absence of funded legal assistance has created inequality in access to justice and risks undermining confidence in the fairness of the process.

Second, the scheme has suffered from insufficient publicity and outreach. Many affected veterans remain unaware of the scheme or uncertain about their eligibility. This is particularly concerning given the age profile of many impacted individuals and the fact that some have become deeply disconnected from military or veterans' communities following their dismissal or forced resignation. Greater effort should have been made to proactively identify and engage those affected, although we acknowledge that following months of campaigning by FWP the MOD have now appointed an agency a contract of £60,000 to promote the scheme, some 16 months

after the scheme was announced and a mere six months before the scheme ends. This is potentially too little, too late.

Third, Fighting With Pride remains concerned by delays both in the establishment of the scheme itself and in the appointment of the additional independent panel members intended to support decision-making. For many veterans, justice delayed has been justice denied. Some applicants are elderly or seriously ill, and the prolonged timescales have added to distress and uncertainty for individuals who have already waited decades for recognition. The Third panel was finally announced on the 18<sup>th</sup> May, some seven months after the MOD mooted the idea of having an additional panel. It may assist the Committee to seek evidence from Lord Paddick on the operation of the Panel, if they have not already sought his evidence.

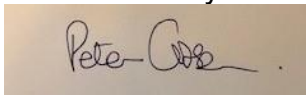
We are also concerned that the scheme lacks adequate provision for long-term mental health support. The historic ban caused profound and enduring psychological harm, including trauma, shame, isolation, loss of identity, and damaged family relationships. While financial recognition is important, many veterans require sustained specialist mental health and wellbeing support which extends beyond the life of the scheme itself. At present, there is no clear long-term framework to provide this.

In addition, Fighting With Pride believes insufficient consideration has been given to creating a lasting legacy or endowment for the LGBT veterans' community. Comparable international initiatives, including the Canadian LGBT Purge Fund, have recognised the importance of establishing enduring community support, education, research, and memorialisation programmes alongside compensation arrangements. The UK scheme currently lacks such a long-term commitment, despite the continuing needs of this community.

Finally, we remain deeply concerned about the inequality faced by those veterans who were forced to resign or otherwise left service under pressure and who now find themselves excluded from aspects of the scheme or required to pursue Judicial Review proceedings in order to challenge decisions. Many of these individuals suffered consequences identical in nature and severity to those formally dismissed. The distinction drawn between categories of service exit risks creating further injustice and retraumatisation for affected veterans.

I look forward to attending on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and assisting the Committee with its enquiries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light-colored rectangular background. The signature appears to read "Peter Gibson" with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Peter Gibson**  
CEO