

Written evidence submitted by Miss Michelle Dibble (GRA0099)

Terms of reference

The Government's response to the GRA consultation:

- *Will the Government's proposed changes meet its aim of making the process "kinder and more straight forward"?*

No change is needed to simplify. The GRC is too much of an important document to hand out to all in sundry.

- *Should a fee for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate be removed or retained? Are there other financial burdens on applicants that could be removed or retained?*

The fee should be retained. If it is important enough to want a GRC, then the fee is worth paying. If on benefits, I believe the fee will can be waived.

- *Should the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria be removed?*

No, definitely not. The GRC 2004, is intended for sufferers of GD (Transsexualism) and a diagnosis is essential otherwise you are making a mockery of the suffering and long fight carried out by transsexuals to get the GRA 2004 put into UK law.

- *Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?*

No. The two years shows that the applicant is genuine and gives a chance to commence on the medical pathway.

- *What is your view of the statutory declaration and should any changes have been made to it?*

The statutory declaration is a legal declaration that you will continue to live in your new sex for the rest of your life. I believe that it is an essential part to be awarded your GRC.

- *Does the spousal consent provision in the Act need reforming? If so, how? If it needs reforming or removal, is anything else needed to protect any rights of the spouse or civil partner?*

The applicant has the opportunity to get a divorce. When I applied for my GRC, there was no option, I had to be divorced. It is right that the applicant gets spousal consent because the marriage would otherwise become a same sex marriage; not all partners would want that.

- *Should the age limit at which people can apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) be lowered?*

No. Under 18 years old, you cannot be 100% certain.

- *What impact will these proposed changes have on those people applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate, and on trans people more generally?*

It should have no effect because, (unless they are transsexuals, who need to have surgery and cross sex hormone therapy), they should not be allowed to apply for a GRC. The GRA 2004 was fought for by Transsexuals for Transsexuals.

- *What else should the Government have included in its proposals, if anything?*

The Government should make it absolutely clear that applicants for a GRC, must be genuine Transsexuals that are transitioning and are or will be on the medical pathway.

- *Does the Scottish Government's proposed Bill offer a more suitable alternative to reforming the Gender Recognition Act 2004?*

We do not need an alternative.

Wider issues concerning transgender equality and current legislation:

- *Why is the number of people applying for GRCs so low compared to the number of people identifying as transgender?*

It is estimated that there is possible up to 500,000 transgendered, whereas there are only about 7000 transsexuals, the only ones that are qualified to apply, so about 5000 GRC's are what you would expect; a good take up.

- *Are there challenges in the way the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010 interact? For example, in terms of the different language and terminology used across both pieces of legislation.*

Generally, the GRA 2004 is compatible with the Equality Act 2010 and precedes it. Where there would be problems is, if the GRA 2004 were to be watered down and the whole of the transgendered, about half a million of them, and they were allowed to self declare, then it would become incompatible and put women and girls at risk, in safe single sex spaces. The GRC states "for all purposes".

- *Are the provisions in the Equality Act for the provision of single-sex and separate-sex spaces and facilities in some circumstances clear and useable for service providers and service users? If not, is reform or further guidance needed?*

As the GRA 2004 the Equality Act 2010 are at the moment, they are compatible but weaken the GRA, by watering it down and the Equality Act 2010, becomes useless. Basically, you will be letting potentially, up to half a million men in dresses into women's safe spaces.

- *Does the Equality Act adequately protect trans people? If not, what reforms, if any, are needed*

Yes, but the trans people (not Transsexuals) want more without working for it.

- *What issues do trans people have in accessing support services, including health and social care services, domestic violence and sexual violence services?*

This is a post code lottery. Some areas are better than others. When I was trying to gain access to a Gender clinic on the NHS, the wait was about 18 months; I believe that it is even longer now. In the end I went private. Again, health and social care services, domestic violence and sexual violence services are a post code lottery.

- *Are legal reforms needed to better support the rights of gender-fluid and non-binary people? If so, how?*

I don't really know, are these a genuine condition? Not that long ago, there were only transsexuals and transvestites; now there seems to be a new gender every week.

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