

Written evidence submitted by Miss Sally Grover [GRA0525]

Women and Equalities Committee

Consultation on Gender Recognition Act

Responses to Key Questions

Sally Grover

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

No requirement for the process to be 'kinder and more straightforward'. The process must be fair. Those who seek 'gender reassignment' suffer a delusion that that they are the opposite sex. They should have access to medical help to address their delusion.

Should a fee for obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate be removed or retained?

It is not unreasonable that a fee should be levied to cover the cost of an administrative procedure. The British citizenship application fee is £1,330. Developed Vetting security clearance costs more than £8,000. The fee of £140 appears too low to cover the administration and exhaustive enquiries that must be made. It should be increased to a realistic level so that costs do not end up being borne by the taxpayer.

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

No. The current system already allows a man to be treated as a woman for legal purposes. Those who believe they are the opposite sex are suffering from a delusion and may have other mental health issues requiring diagnosis and treatment. In addition, there has been an unprecedented rise in the number of young people identifying as transgender. Parents, doctors, academics and MPs are concerned that hormones are offered without a comprehensive diagnosis.

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

The requirement for evidence of living as a member of the opposite sex should not be removed or shortened. It is normal for significant changes of status, for example acquiring British citizenship, to require a supporting body of evidence.

It is not unusual for people to regret changing sex and feel trapped in their acquired sex which suggests many people are affirmed in their desired sex too soon and without sufficiently thorough assessment.

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

If someone is set on changing their legal sex it is appropriate that they should be required to affirm that they understand what they are doing and that they intend it to be permanent. A statutory declaration must be reversible to allow for those who regret their decision. The maximum number of legal changes should be no more than two.

Does the spousal consent provision in the Act need reforming?

No. Currently a spouse must be asked if they consent to their marriage continuing before their partner can legally change sex. One party should not have the unilateral right to alter the nature of a marriage from a traditional marriage to a same-sex marriage against the wish of the other party.

A significant percentage of the population opposed the introduction of same-sex marriage. No-one should be forced into a same-sex marriage against their wish.

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

No. The lower age limit is currently 18 and should not be lowered. In England and Wales, under-18s cannot legally get a tattoo, vote or purchase cigarettes, alcohol or fireworks. These regulations are in place for good reason.

Are there challenges in the way the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010 interact?

By focusing on the rights of one group there is a risk of discrimination against other protected classes. There are nine protected classes in the UK Equality Act and even if a policy only affects some of the people who have a protected characteristic, it can still constitute discrimination.

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?

As a biological woman, I am entitled to use single sex toilets in my work place. This right should not be undermined because a male colleague believes he is female.

When I was working for Central Government we were informed that a mtf transgender colleague would be joining. No mention was made regarding which

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toilets this person would be using. It was observed that he used the female toilets so women colleagues were reduced to ensuring that the person was firmly ensconced at his desk before using the toilet or else using the disabled facility. This was doubly unfair - both to female staff and to disabled staff who may have

found the disabled toilet inaccessible because occupied by a non-disabled female colleague.

Are legal reforms needed to better support the rights of gender-fluid and non-binary people?

There is no scientific basis for a 'third sex'. Human beings are either male or female.

If a 'third sex' is accommodated where will it end? The pressure group 'Mermaids' claims there could be 'around eight billion, genders. Are all their demands going to be accommodated?

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