

Written evidence submitted by Ms Martha Dunkley [GRA1950]

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

Sadly they will not. The necessity to produce many bureaucratically closely defined 'proofs' of gender dysphoria and care path process will defeat many as it has in the past. The recommendation was for a simple declaration similar to a Statutory Declaration that would be legally binding but that does not require the lengthy 'jumping through hoops' that are required currently.

- 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?

There should be automatic provision for those on low income.

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

Being of a different gender than designated at birth or generally embodied is recognised by the psychiatric profession not to be a mental illness. There should be no need for a diagnosis either to live in the gender that feels appropriate or to obtain a Gender Recognition Certificate.

- Should there be changes to the requirement for individuals to have lived in their acquired gender for at least two years?
- What is your view of the statutory declaration and should any changes have been made to it?
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- 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 spousal veto is in our view an infringement of personal rights of the individual. What should be available is a speedy divorce for those partners for whom gender reassignment is a bar to continuation of the marriage or civil partnership.

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

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- What impact will these proposed changes have on those people applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate, and on trans people more generally?
- What else should the Government have included in its proposals, if anything?
- Does the Scottish Government's proposed Bill offer a more suitable alternative to reforming the Gender Recognition Act 2004?

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?
- 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.
- 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?

The Equality Act 2010 has operated without harm to protect trans people using appropriate facilities. We see no need for change other than to restrain alarmist and unevidenced rhetoric around these provisions.

- Does the Equality Act adequately protect trans people? If not, what reforms, if any, are needed
- What issues do trans people have in accessing support services, including health and social care services, domestic violence and sexual violence services?

Domestic violence services have rigorous vetting by experienced staff in place to prevent harm and we see no need for further regulation in this regard.

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

We believe that the campaign of misinformation from various quarters would not be permitted against other marginalised groups and that steps should be taken to

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**prevent the dissemination of lies that result in
psychological and sometimes physical harm**

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