

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

Note on the informal briefing from the Scottish Government Bill Team - Tuesday 15 March

Members of the Committee met with the Scottish Government's Bill team for a briefing on the main provisions in the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill to understand the content of the Bill before starting to take formal evidence.

The Bill team provided an explanation of the **background** to the Bill including the following points:

- The estimated 200,000 to 500,000 trans people in UK, of whom 6,000 have applied for a gender recognition certificate since they came in in 2014 (0.5 of 1 per cent).
- The Scottish Government's view that not all trans people want a GRC (eg non-binary people), as it is for people who want to transition from male to female and vice versa.
- In 2018, LGBT research for the UK Government showed that 10 per cent of trans people didn't want a GRC, most said that there were barriers to/issues with the GRC process.
- That the Scottish Government's own consultation highlighted barriers, eg gender dysphoria diagnosis and other evidence, the two-year period, the need to convince the gender recognition panel, the £140 fee (although this now reduced to £5) and the two to three year waiting lists for gender identity clinics.

Committee members for more information from the Bill team on the inclusion of the following **provisions** in the Bill:

- Removal of the requirement for a diagnosis of gender dysphoria;
- Reduction in the time period from two years;
- Reduction in the minimum age limit for application for a GRC;
- False declarations/obtaining a GRC fraudulently and how these could be identified

Committee members then asked **questions** on the following areas:

- The impact of change on data collection highlighted by Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- International comparisons;
- Data protection implications of sharing information following the issuing of a GRC;
- Rights of children who are subject to a supervision order;
- The relationship between the Equality Act and the impact of reform on single sex spaces;
- The role of the Registrar General in the process;
- Awareness of any concerns raised by religious groups.