

9 June 2021

Lord Jonathan Evans KCB DL
Committee on Standards in Public life
Room G07
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Dear Lord Evans,

I am writing to you on behalf of Christian Concern and the Christian Legal Centre regarding the call for a public inquiry into the influence of Stonewall and other lobby groups on public society. As I am sure you are aware, this call has been initiated by the campaign group [Sex Matters](#) which is raising valid concerns about institutional capture by these organisations.

Christian Concern and the Christian Legal Centre have many years of experience helping people who have suffered from the influence of organisations like Stonewall in public institutions. For example, we helped [Joshua Sutcliffe](#) who lost his job as a school teacher for referring to a group of girls in the class as 'girls'. The school was a Stonewall Champion. Another case is that of [Richard Page](#) was dismissed as a magistrate for expressing his belief that children do better with a mother and father, which raises serious concerns about free speech.

We supported [two ten-year-olds](#) who were excluded from their school for requesting not to take part in their school's LGBT event. This kind of punishment is usually reserved for a pupil who has assaulted a teacher. This raises questions about freedom of conscience. In another case, [Svetlana Powell](#), a teacher of some 17 years' experience, was dismissed for answering students' questions about her beliefs, and referred to the government's anti-terrorism watchdog, Prevent. Once again there are serious implications for freedom of speech.

School pastoral assistant, [Kristie Higgs](#), lost her job after raising concerns about Relationships and Sex Education in a private Facebook post. Her reservations are shared by many thousands of parents across the UK, yet are apparently a barrier to employment. Christian councilor [Mary Douglas](#) lost her position in her council for opposing the use of public money to fund a Pride event. Only after legal help provided by the Christian Legal Centre did the council realise that she had the right to freedom of speech.

There have been several examples highlighted in the media of schools allowing children to change gender, sometimes without telling the parents. We are supporting [Nigel and Sally Rowe](#) in challenging a school which advised that 'misgendering' a six-year-old child who was allowed to sometimes cross-dress could be considered a form of bullying. Legally, however, a child cannot change gender. Their children were disturbed by the cross-dressing.

More recently, the case of school chaplain [Rev. Dr Bernard Randall](#) who lost his job for a sermon which suggested that people should be free to disagree with LGBT ideology, attracted significant media attention. He was also referred to Prevent for what he said, raising serious concerns about free speech, even for a chaplain in chapel.

Christian Concern frequently receives requests for help from parents or staff in schools who are concerned about conscientious objection to LGBT-related indoctrination by the likes of Stonewall and Mermaids. I attach an outline showing that we often receive several enquiries for help along these lines per week on average. This must scratch the surface of the amount of concern in the country as a whole.

Since the call for a public inquiry was issued, it has emerged that the Equalities and Human Rights Commission has decided to [end its participation](#) in Stonewall's Diversity Champion's scheme. Separately, the University of Essex has been advised to [reconsider its relationship with Stonewall](#) because of the way in which Stonewall's advice which misrepresented the law and contributed to restricting freedom of expression. These moves point to a growing understanding of how damaging the influence of Stonewall has been.

There is now an urgent need for an inquiry into how these organisations have affected public standards. It is beyond question that their influence has been damaging for standards in public life. We note the committee's remit extends to issues relating to the ethical standards of the delivery of public services by private and voluntary sector organisations, paid for by public funds.

Below I set out how various Principles of Public Life have been undermined by the adoption of transgender ideology.

Integrity

It is obvious that the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme violates the principle of integrity. It constitutes inappropriate influence on public sector organisations. Such corporate membership schemes undermine public service by handing over public money to a charity and campaign group whose entire ethos attacks the foundations of society, namely traditional marriage, the family and biological sex. The integrity of organisations is called into question by all this.

Accountability

If holders of public office are accountable to the public, then this is no longer evident in many institutions given the vast influence that LGBT organisations and ideology now hold over them. Government responses to public participation in its consultations on matters such as on same-sex marriage and Relationships and Sex Education, show that principled public opposition is disregarded.

Honesty

Public office holders are required to be truthful. How can they do this when advancing 'trans rights' means they have to lie routinely about who is male or female? Some of our legal cases deal with public sector workers who in good conscience refuse to be forced to lie in this manner. [Dr David Mackereth](#) lost his job for saying that in conscience he would not lie about whether someone is biologically male or female. If honesty is penalised then no other standards in public life can survive.

Leadership

This final principle encapsulates the magnitude of the problem our society now faces. Public office holders are required to exhibit the seven principles in their own behaviour. Moreover, they should be willing to challenge 'poor behaviour wherever it occurs'. How can this be possible when integrity is marginalised, accountability is snubbed and honesty becomes a legal risk rather than an expectation?

I hope you agree that there is a compelling case for an inquiry into the influence of these organisations and that the Committee on Standards in Public Life should undertake such an inquiry. I would be very happy to discuss these issues in more detail in a meeting with you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Andrea Minichiello Williams
Chief Executive, Christian Concern