



## Equal Rights for Men and Women

*Patrons:*

Sir Peter Bottomley MP

Mr Mark Brooks

**Registered Charity No. 1107795**

### **PARITY News Briefing - October 2017**

This is the fourth News Briefing to be collated in lieu of UPDATE, since we have yet to find a volunteer to edit this. This issue has been prepared by Ian Levy. Needless to say, responses and contributions from members will be most welcome. Please address these to the Honorary Secretary, Chandra Vaghela.

We welcome on board two Trustees – Richard Ford and Swayne O’Pie.

In addition we have been fortunate to attract two further applicants and are pleased to confirm that David Turner and Roda Ogunpehin have been co-opted in the role of Trustees.

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### **Chair’s Obituary For Peter Leckie**

Sadly, I have to report that Peter Leckie died recently from complications arising out of an illness sustained as a result of certain medicines he was taking.

Peter was associated with Parity for many years and contributed greatly to our campaigning work. He became an enthusiastic advocate of men’s rights and participated in our efforts to better the public perception of the true nature domestic violence and the real problems inhibiting boys educational achievements.

He edited “Update” for a number of years with great skill and energy. Latterly he took over as Hon Secretary from David Yarwood, retiring from this role only when his illness precluded him from attending meetings and fulfilling his secretarial duties.

Peter is missed by us all and we extend our deep sympathies and condolences to his family and friends.

**John Mays - Chair**

## **Minutes of the 30th PARITY Annual General Meeting - Saturday 8 July 2017**

held in the Disney Room, Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London SE1 8UJ

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

The 30th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of PARITY was attended by 12 persons including three Officers and two Trustees as shown in Annex 1- AGM 2017 Attendance Record, and was chaired by John Mays, Chair of PARITY. [The quorum required was 10 members]. Chair welcomed and thanked those present for attending. As last year, Ian Levy was behind the camera and would be producing a record of this.

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Chandra Vaghela (CV) reported apologies from John Taylor, Graham Starkey, Tim Walker and Tony Upton.

#### **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Minutes of the 29th Annual General Meeting held in London on the 16 July 2016 were published in PARITY News Briefing – August 2016 and a copy was available to view at the Meeting.

The Minutes were taken as read with no queries. They were proposed for acceptance as a true record and no objections were raised. The Minutes were duly approved by the meeting, and the main copy was accordingly signed by the Chair.

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING NOT ON AGENDA**

No matters arising from the Minutes of the 2016 AGM were raised.

#### **4. CHAIR'S REPORT**

**a.** Chair welcomed all and the members wishing to become new Trustees. Two sad pieces of news. Peter Leckie, who as Hon. Secretary for a number of years had done splendid work, unfortunately, became ill a few months ago. It turned out to be fatal and he passed away on 8 June 2017. He was enthusiastic and came up with good ideas. We will miss Peter, who was a great supporter and held in great respect by us. Hon. Secretary - CV went to his funeral that was held on 22 June in Liverpool. The other sad news was the death of Arun Bhat, who passed away in February 2017. He was a Trustee for a number of years, although quiet, Arun was a great supporter and did his best at Trustee Meetings and allowed use of his address as the PARITY address. He will also be missed.

**b.** A more happier matter is that David Yarwood (DY), who was active in forming the predecessor to PARITY (Campaign for Equal State Pension Age) in August 1986, founded a few years later PARITY to address other more pressing inequalities suffered by men and has provided a dedicated service for 31 years. It was proposed to honour DY as an Ex-Officio Honorary Life member to the Board of Trustees. All present recognised DY's efforts and dedication and applauded his achievements.

**c.** Chair, in his report, then reflected on the global changes reported since the last AGM. He said "Who would have thought that Donald Trump, who chaired the USA Apprentice, would be elected to be the President of USA. None of us dreamt that, he would win the election, and now he has been the President for

more than six months, he is likely to be there for another three and a half years at least and with a possibility for a further four”.

**d.** He further added “If that was a surprise, the call in April for our General Elections on 8 June was an unexpected surprise and we had an unexpected result that was so close. We face an uncertain political situation and serious problems. Negotiations for Brexit is a huge problem, particularly if they do not go right and it will be disastrous for us all”.

**e.** Further, he said, “In the last few months we have faced a rise in terrorist activities - three in the last three months with many others having been frustrated. Now we have to deal with preventing radicalisation of young people. So the future for us as a country and Europe is difficult to foresee, with huge economic and political problems ahead”.

## **5. HONORARY SECRETARY’S REPORT**

**a.** There were five Trustees meetings held since the last AGM with an average attendance of 5.

**b.** Chair’s report mentioned with sadness the death in February 2017 of a Trustee, Arun Bhat and in June 2017 our previous Hon. Secretary, Peter Leckie. On the positive side, we were successful in recruiting in the role of Hon. Treasurer, Keith Richardson (KR) who was co-opted on the Committee in January 2017.

**c.** DY, who has been the founder of this charity organisation has finally decided to relinquish his role as a Trustee. As a Founding Officer and Trustee, his wise counsel and energies to further PARITY aims will be sorely missed.

**d.** The vacancy for an Editor for Update continues, but in the meantime, Ian Levy (IL) has kindly offered to undertake to edit the News Briefing on a temporary basis. Should any of our members wish to take on this role or contribute articles, cartoons, jokes, etc please send these to the News Briefing Team via our email address: [postmaster@parity-uk.org](mailto:postmaster@parity-uk.org)

**e.** Our recruitment for additional Trustees and Officers continues. With Margaret Cooper (MC) present and one or two other nominations, we will bring them on board in the fullness of time.

**f.** Regarding the various activities, these were:

**i.** PARITY Website has been updated with text to two of the sections updated. Other sections are yet to be updated. A lot of hard work was put in by David Yarwood, who we should thank.

**ii.** Equalities and Human Rights Commission: Chair has written to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission, where the Commission Board composition is heavily biased towards females. An evasive response has been received and a further response by PARITY this time to the Minister concerned is intended.

**iii.** Proposed Domestic Violence (DV) Bill

Chair has written to Prime Minister about this:

- Complaining about funding being aimed mainly at female victims;
- Publicly funded facilities for male victims lag considerably behind those for female victims;

- There are very few refuges or safe houses for male victims.
- iv. Men and Boys Coalition - PARITY has joined the Men and Boys Coalition that was launched on the 15 November 2016 in the House of Commons and will fully support the majority of the Coalition activities and priorities. However, there may be some issues on which PARITY will reserve the right to withdraw support or action by the Coalition.

## **6. HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR 2016**

**a.** Keith Richardson, Hon. Treasurer advised that all had seen the completed Accounts on Pages 6 & 7 of the AGM booklet. Although some of this dated before his time, he can confirm the accuracy of records of the Charity and that the subscriptions plus donations members have made, have been used solely for the PARITY Objectives. He reported that for a Charity of our size, we can choose between the Accounts – either Receipts & Payments Accounts or Accrual Accounts. PARITY has Receipts & Payments Accounts, which is an appropriate approach for a charity of this size.

**b.** He added that the Accounts, as in previous years, show that the Trustees have been responsible and cautious custodians of the limited funds available to the Charity. Hon Treasurer reported a total year end to 2016 fund of £6,546. To the end of June 2017, the balance stood at £6,517, which tallies with the balance at the bank.

**c.** Hon. Treasurer drew attention to page 11 of the AGM booklet. It would be helpful if the income was front loaded for planning ahead. At end of June 2017, we received £530 in subscriptions and donations, compared to £1,400 in previous year. This is setting some alarm bells ringing. Hon. Treasurer is urging members to amend their standing orders to pay subscriptions and make donations in January each year or sending a cheque at the beginning of the year in future.

**d.** Chair expressed satisfaction at having KR, who is proving to be a very efficient Hon. Treasurer for us.

**e.** DY reported that the estate of Peter Leckie bequeaths to PARITY 3% of any residual value. Although we have no idea of the amount we will receive or when we receive it, PARITY, being one of the 38 specified beneficiaries mentioned, it is likely that the amount will be in thousands rather hundreds.

Chair invited questions on the Officers reports, but MC - (Observer for would be Trustee role), raised a question relating to the recent publicised announcement by Amber Rudd to increase funding for Domestic Abuse (DA) and whether PARITY had applied for any of this. Chair deferred this to be covered under Any Other Business, with her permission.

## **7. ELECTION OF HONORARY OFFICERS**

Chair advised that in accordance with the AGM notes, DY, who has provided a dedicated service for 31 years to PARITY and its predecessor, is to be honoured as an Ex-Officio Honorary Life member to the Board of Trustees. He was proposed by Richard Ford (RF), seconded by Brian Robertson (BR) and with all in favour and no objections, David was duly elected unanimously.

Chair invited a proposer and a seconder regarding re-election of officers – himself as Chair, Chandra Vaghela as Hon. Secretary, and Keith Richardson as Hon. Treasurer. Mark Brooks (MB) proposed these officers accordingly with

Richard Ford (RF) seconding them. With all in favour and no objections, the officers were duly elected.

## **8. ELECTION OF HONORARY TRUSTEES**

Chair invited a proposer and a seconder for the re-election of existing Trustees with en-bloc nominations of Robert Whittle (RW), Ian Levy (IL) and David Hyatt (DH) as they were all willing to continue as Trustees.

These nominees were proposed by MB and seconded by RF. With all in favour and no objections, the Trustees were duly re-elected

Chair reported that nominations had been received as new Trustees for Swayne O'Pie and RF. Hon Secretary and Chair pointed out the duties required of Trustees to attend approximately six meetings per year on weekdays in London and to support the objectives of PARITY. The two nominees agreed and were seconded by IL. With all in favour and no objections, the new Trustees were duly elected.

## **9. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR**

Hon Treasurer advised that in accordance with the regulations, the Accounts submitted to the Charity Commission do not require to be audited. As in previous years, Hon. Treasurer will get an independent qualified person (probably a qualified accountant, but not necessarily so), to examine the Accounts and sign them. This was confirmed to be acceptable to all.

## **10. RESOLUTIONS**

Chair advised that no formal resolutions from members had been received by the due date. He pointed out that resolutions must be received two weeks before the AGM, otherwise according to the governing documents, they cannot be accepted.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**a.** MC enquired whether PARITY had applied for any of the funding increase recently announced (in the Mail and Evening Standard) by Amber Rudd for victims of DA. She suggested that as funds have been allocated within the Government Budget, it is crucial to get a % in now rather than later.

**b.** Chair referred this to MB for his comments. MB advised that over the last 10-15 years, Government policy has been a priority of focussing DA funds on female victims, and that still continues. The £20 million is allocated through Local Authorities (LA) rather than through charities and guidance issued with the announcement states that priority is to be directed at female victims. Some of the money will also go to male victims or services that support both female and male victims. A lot of charities that support men's issues have been arguing for the funding to be increased. He added that with the new DV Bill proposed in the Queen's Speech, there is opportunity for making a higher case for ensuring that all services are male victim friendly.

**c.** With the charity that MB chairs, there have been meetings with the Home Office. What has been frightening in the past was the lack of awareness that there could be male victims. There is nothing controversial in the proposed Bill when it goes through, except that there will be a single domestic violence abuse commissioner, who will focus government mind on abuse. The national papers

have stated that an inclusive view to DV should be taken and the view that DV also takes place in same sex relationship (males on males and females on females), rather than the traditional held beliefs by many organisations that there are female victims and male perpetrators.

**d.** For National organisations, they have to provide a service to apply for the money. Nationally, the Central Government funding has been through local women's aid, which teams up with the LA. For male victims, the fund allocated is likely to be less than 5%.

**e.** MB's charity has had money previously from the Crime Commissioners for some training for a number of their DV adviser staff. But it has always been difficult to get the LA interested. The exception being the new Northampton Refuge, which is opening in couple of weeks' time that has been funded following these meetings.

**f.** MC suggested that perhaps a Name & Shame approach to LA that do not favour gender equality will achieve results, because a lot of lack of service has been hidden for decades and LA are getting away with murder. She added that the media need to be made aware that the traditional female victims to males is no longer the only forte, female on female, male on male and female on male also feature increasingly now.

**g.** Applications for funds allocated are to be via the LA. Funds will be allocated based partly on demands in the local area and also where there are funding gaps. The guidance with the announcement says that it is primarily for female victims.

**h.** In the past, the Big Lottery Funding allocated more to female victims on the basis that austerity had had a bigger impact on female victims and so the funds were increased to prop up the services for them.

**i.** Regarding classification of these crimes by the Home Office and Crown Prosecution Services (CPS), at present crimes such as violence against Men and Boys (footballers who had been sexually abused years ago), are reported by the CPS under the category "Violence against Women and Girls". A number of organisations are arguing with the Home Office and CPS to have a parallel category "Violence against Men and Boys" and reclassify these under this category, as what is happening, is unsustainable. Following a meeting with Alison Saunders – CPS, they are looking at how they can be more genuine in addressing these. This was a closed door meeting due to pressure from some organisations. The fact that there was a meeting was progress and acknowledgement of the issue and, whereas doors were shut until a couple of years ago, with representations now from PARITY and others, there is a significant shift. With MB being on some CPS Committees, there is some male representation now and doors are considered to be a little ajar, but nowhere as open as we would wish.

**j.** Hon. Treasurer remarked that there will be great difficulty in getting Government funding for a service or advocacy and dissemination of information, as the size of membership is important.

**k.** DY raised question with MB regarding:

**i.** Whether additional money to LA is likely to be used in providing equal treatment with emergency accommodation for men, as there are very few or no refuges for men. MB agreed with this.

**ii.** Whether anything has happened following the legislation in Wales - Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse Act a couple or three years back, in which they were appointing a Commissioner. MB confirmed that in Wales they have appointed a Commissioner and if you were a male victim, Wales is the place to be for receiving better treatment. In the UK, many of the refuges set up for women and run by women are now providing a service to both male and female victims. The worst place for males is London, where there are no refuges. Invariably, services and support services for male victims are virtually non-existent. There are enough spaces for about 4,000 women across the UK. What has helped MB's charity and others is that they have not regarded this as a competition issue, but it is about lack of spaces for men.

**i.** BR asked MC about her top 3 suggestions for PARITY. MC responded - Name and Shame LA in media (where they do not provide adequate services for male victims), increase membership and bring in the funding. Additionally, the CPS needs to be held to account in glorifying many cases where women are abused, whereas when a man has been abused, it is totally ignored and no financial compensation is provided. Chair reported that there has been a change recently in the reaction of the government and their awareness that men could also be subject to domestic abuse and be victims and also there is acceptance that it is a two way street, whereas five to ten years ago this was not so. MB confirmed by way of example that when the Press Notice by Amber Rudd announcing the new DV Bill was made, it did acknowledge by quoting figures from two years ago of male as well as female victim numbers. Chair thanked MC for raising these good points.

**m.** BR raised the matter about the disparity in jailing of men and women (approximately, 83,000 men and something like 3,500 women in jail). Academic research has shown that throughout every stage of the sentencing process, there has been this degree of disparity. The sentencing guidelines are so explicitly sexist that in the University College London lecture room, all burst out laughing. Another worrying thing he reported was the increasingly privatisation of the prison service and the warehousing of men, which has become a huge private business.

**n.** Chair agreed and added that the conditions under which these prisoners are held are also a concern. He added that for young prisoners, this is even more disastrous, as 50% go in illiterate and come out illiterate and can't even get a job as lorry or van driver. This is reflected in the rates of re-offending and the price to society is huge - creation of criminals in prisons and cost of keeping them in prisons.

**o.** BR also mentioned that the use of drugs in prisons is also a big issue, as prisoners not using drugs when imprisoned, come out beginning to use drugs. He cited an example of a jailed father, who was not allowed the videos brought in by his mother to aid in his training, but prisoners could obtain any kind of drugs in prison.

**p.** DY added that the growing male population in prison seems to reflect the increasing academic disadvantages faced by white working class males and the government not doing anything about it. This is causing socio-economic problems, including that of young educated girls with degrees not being able to find suitable partners. BR added that this is a similar problem to the one of

“left-over” women in China, where educated girls do not find suitable partners and remain unmarried.

**q.** MC added that from her experience of dealing with sixteen court cases, this was all due to corruption in our court system. Until the corruption stops and the courts cease to be used as a circus, we cannot stop the number of males going to prison. It is all about getting them in there and collecting the money. She alleged that it was government that was providing the court with funds in a budget but not investigating whether they were being used appropriately or in a corrupt way. She added that one particular company (allegedly a network of the mafia) is providing the training for all the judges! and are therefore controlling the outcomes by judges in the courts. Chair said he had seen no evidence of this, but MC insisted she was living it!

**r.** DH mentioned that this may have an indirect connection with PARITY - about the Trustees meeting on 22 March 2017 that he did not attend due to gout, but had he done so, it may have been about the same time he would have been on Westminster Bridge at 2:45pm, when the terrorist incident took place there.

**s.** Robert Whittle tabled the Friday 7 July Edition of Metro Which had the headline on its front page “Behind Bars...liar Who Cried Rape 15 Times”

**t.** There being no further business, Chair thanked all attendees for participating in our AGM and closed the Meeting at precisely 12:52 pm.

### **Talk by Ian Tyes - Sex Discrimination in the UK – Institutionalised?**

#### **1. Welcome & Introduction**

Chair had pleasure in introducing Ian Tyes the Guest Speaker. Ian graduated from Imperial College with a 1st degree in Electrical Engineering in the early 1980's and ran his own computer business for 20 years. Following a short relationship, Ian became a separated dad and experienced the family courts for the first time in 2001. He retrained as a Solicitor to help other victims of our unfair system, becoming a qualified Solicitor in 2008. Ian then decided that he would not practice to be a solicitor but practice not to be a solicitor. Ian worked at Cambridge Citizens Advice Bureau for 4 years before starting his own legal advice business, which he still does part-time, whilst researching and campaigning on discrimination and human rights issues and trying to learn Mandarin.

**2.** The talk was essentially a run through of sex discrimination issues, some of which are on the PARITY website. It covered what he described as “institutionalised discrimination”, where law, policies and practices make it absolutely clear that it is legal to treat men and women differently.

**3.** He referred to Swayne O’Pie’s very good book – “Why Britain Hates Men”, whereas this talk will show “How Britain Hates Men” on a legal basis giving example and practices.

#### **Direct Discrimination**

Direct – where all men are treated one way, all women are treated another way, and usually a better way according to the Law. The Law can be directly discriminatory, for instance, the father is not married to the mother and both have a child, but (i) he does not have the parental responsibility for registering a birth and choosing the name of the child, whereas an unmarried woman can; (ii) his name cannot go on the birth certificate, unless

the mother chooses to allow this and both go along with her to register. The Law requires a mother's consent to jointly register the birth.

Other issues - Health screening, women have cervical and breast screening tests, but there is no comparable screening for men.

On issue of rape, the Criminal Justice system specifically defines rape as male perpetrator with victim being either male or female. So this is regarded as a male crime. In the case of an equivalent female crime where the female is a perpetrator, she will be prosecuted for a sexual assault, which has a lower threshold. Maximum imprisonment for rape is life and for sexual assault it is fourteen years.

Circumcision case was discussed, where a separated parent had a baby circumcised by a GP using a forged signature of parental responsibility by the paternal grandparent. The circumcision was badly performed and child was in agony. This was to the mother's horror, and when she found out and complained to the police, they did nothing for three years. This went through challenges but there was no prosecution. It was eventually reported to the General Medical Council, who moved incredibly slowly, but eventually concluded that the GP had failed in his duty and is awaiting a disciplinary action. Mike Buchanan, somehow got a judicial review on why the CPS did not prosecute and now they have arrested the GP and charged him with grievous bodily harm with intent and the grandparent with grievous bodily harm. It became the top news item for two weeks.

### **Indirect Discrimination**

Indirect discrimination S19 Equality Act 2010: The law appears to be fair and gender neutral, but in fact one disproportionately affects one gender more than the other and legislation talks about it as only justifiable where proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. What "legitimate aim" could there be?

Examples: The discrimination starts before the baby is born - with abortion rights only the woman's consent is needed, father has no say. Legally, a mother has absolute right. After birth, a baby has its own human rights. An unmarried father has no absolute rights, but can have rights by jointly registering birth with mother's consent or agreeing a joint parental responsibility agreement or by marrying her. If these do not work, the father has to apply to court for parental responsibility, which takes a long time - 2 or 3 months, by which time the baby may have already been registered, with the father's name not on the birth certificate and without his choice of surname.

When this (married and unmarried father) discrimination was challenged 20 years ago, the courts agreed it was discrimination, but ruled that if he were a decent chap, he would have married the mother! This needs to be challenged again.

An interesting case arose where the father could get legal aid to challenge this, but he got parental responsibility through the courts before he could challenge it and therefore no legal aid was available.

If you know anybody in a similar category who is not jointly registered for parental responsibility and wants to fight and challenge this discrimination, legal aid may well be available, so if they do please contact Ian Tyes.

## **Social/Cultural Discrimination**

Winner takes all system grouping – whoever becomes a primary carer for children after separation gets everything – child benefit, child tax credits, working tax credits, housing benefits, child support allowance, etc,

Political correctness - It is OK to use term *midwife* but must use *Chair*

## **Personal Choice**

The gender pay-gap is a non-issue, as it is based essentially on choice. Despite so many years of campaigning and millions spent in attracting females into the engineering professions, only a still small percentage of engineers are now female. With large numbers of males employed as engineers/miners/soldiers and other risky jobs which are comparatively well paid, the average pay of men is likely to be higher than the comparative average pay of women. Whereas as women are largely employed in less well paid jobs or less risky jobs (carers/cleaners/nurses), or are in part-time jobs that equates to lower average pay. Also, women have maternity leave and career breaks, which affects pay, due to cumulative less length of service and build-up of experience.

## **Direct Discrimination – Consumer Law**

An instance of “women-only” entry to night clubs gyms, swimming sessions, etc can be challenged as legal advice shows you can win in requesting equal treatment, either by securing comparable “men-only” sessions; or scrapping single gender sessions altogether; or instead by providing proportionate refunds to men for a lesser service.

In some football committees, if only 3 out of 10 members are female, whereas 95% footballers are male, this can be challenged.

Some clubs arrange a free “ladies day” in football, which is illegal! It should be the same service for the same price.

Some restaurants offer a free bottle of wine or flowers for Mother’s Day. This can be challenged, if they do not do the equivalent offers for Father’s Day.

In the past on some airlines, male passengers were not allowed to sit next to a child, even if it was his own, on the basis that they might be a paedophile. This happened once to Boris Johnson! Some years ago, a Swiss traveller who experienced this humiliating experience, challenged it in an English court and won his case. If such a practice is still applied by some international airlines, it should be similarly challenged.

## **Direct Discrimination – Employment law**

Under Employment Law “girly” calendars can be banned but “hunk” calendars can be displayed. “Women-only” quotas and shortlists, etc are illegal, this confirmed by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. Despite this, the Government has legislated (under the 2010 Equality Act) to persist with all-women shortlists for another two decades. In contrast, any recruitment must be on merit.

Exception in Equality Legislation: where a particular group is under-represented in a particular employment, you are allowed to choose a candidate of that group if of equal merit, but you have to be able to justify your decision.

In the case of a Law firm intending to reduce their headcount, they had to decide between a man and woman, who was pregnant. Being scared to fire the woman, they fired the man, although he was a better candidate. He took them to a tribunal.

There is no such thing as positive discrimination! All discrimination is bad.

## **How to Challenge?**

Depending on who you are taking on, eg. a public authority, use Freedom of Information Requests ([www.whatdotheyknow.com](http://www.whatdotheyknow.com)).

For a private firm, the route is different and you can use Data Protection Act. (NB: Law is changing next year that will result in greater power!).

Use the Complaints Procedure and be focussed, not emotional, as some companies don't do anything unless there is a complaint.

Use a Tribunal or informal way by writing a letter or going and seeing them and then stating what is being done is illegal and it is unfair to men.

For Public bodies, there may be an OMBUDSMAN free services, after going through the appropriate Complaints Procedure.

It is best to use a formal letter before making a claim, stating exactly why what has been done is wrong, what you want done about it, and putting a time limit for a response.

After that, offer for a mediation or there may be an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) available.

The risk of going to court is that if you lose, you end up paying their cost. An ideal case is a victim where he has nothing, so if he loses, they can't take away anything. The victim is protected from costs as he cannot lose anymore.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Have a duty to be fair. Funding for Domestic Violence and male victims. Absence of funding can be challenged as they have to justify inequality.

University Curricula is not covered by the Equality Act!

Discrimination in favour of pregnant woman is allowed.

Supreme Court Housing Law case: Mum threw three kids out on the streets. Dad in private rented one bed accommodation took them in and as a result of overcrowding, private landlord evicted him. As a person with parental responsibility, he sought local authority help and they refused to provide accommodation. He appealed and then it went to the Supreme Court, which ruled that although he was a primary carer, he had made himself intentionally homeless because he took the children in knowing he would be evicted. Local Authorities do not have to provide accommodation to those who make themselves homeless intentionally.

When Ian Tyes was working at CAB, Equalities and Human Rights wanted to hear about institutionalised discrimination. A list was provided in 2006, but the Commission, which is not on our side, has yet to respond!

## **Changing the Law – 3 ways .**

Become an MP. Ian Tyes has not been successful. However, Phil Davies MP is doing his bit for Men.

In trying to become a Judge, Ian Tyes was questioned - if the roles were reversed would men and women receive the same punishment, and he replied affirmatively and was not accepted.

Ian Tyes has tried becoming solicitor and run test cases, with some success.

## Legal Disruption

Legal Disruption (Civil “disobedience”?)

MPs or the Public Authorities system is based on numbers, if one person a week complains about a family breakdown or requests a file under Data Protection, no notice would be taken. However, if synchronised and many people join together with complaints about family breakdowns to their MP or request copy of their files it would cause a disruption and bring the system down.

Lenient sentences on women can be challenged. One can contact the Attorney General and the file will be reviewed. There is a need to challenge Nottinghamshire Police, who decided that misogyny is a hate crime but not misandry.

Sanctions against Public Authority breaches – primarily financial and a successful case should result in change in policy. Try the Ombudsman after complaints procedure outcome.

Ian Tyes

[http://www.tllegal.moonfruit.com/  
tllegalhelp@gmail.com](http://www.tllegal.moonfruit.com/tllegalhelp@gmail.com)

## Future of prostitution in the UK

Prostitution has again come into public debate. There are calls to see soliciting decriminalised but not purchasing.

On July 1, 2016, the Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) on UK prostitution submitted their third report to Government, detailing the findings of their inquiry. Among this the report advised that the Home Office should ‘change existing legislation so that soliciting is no longer an offence and so that brothel-keeping provisions allow sex workers to share premises, without losing the ability to prosecute those who use brothels to control or exploit sex workers’. Upon review, the UK government chose not to implement the Committee’s recommendations. However, a final HASC report was scheduled for June 2017.

The HASC’s rationale behind their recommendations is to create a framework to enable the better protection of sex workers, who, through their occupation, they claim are often subject to abuse, harm and exploitation. Many organisations corroborate this idea, arguing that decriminalisation will allow it to be more carefully regulated.

There is, however, disagreement regarding the desired extent of decriminalisation and how best to implement reform. This has arisen at local, national and international levels. The European Parliament, for example, is an advocate of the Sex Buyer Law (Nordic Model), which legalises soliciting but criminalises purchasing. In the UK, Northern Ireland has implemented the Sex Buyer Law. In March 2017 the Scottish National Party also announced its support for the legislation. However, the World Health Organisation, Amnesty International and the UK’s Green Party support a complete legalisation of prostitution. The issue was debated at a conference in London on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at the Grange Wellington Hotel, hosted by the Public Policy Exchange

If the law is changed to allow soliciting but not buying, what would this then mean? It would create a clear double standard and confusion. Will prostitution be illegal or not? Normally if something is illegal both parties involved in the exchange are prosecuted. If something is lawful neither party is. To prosecute one party and not the other seems seriously unfair.

The philosophy behind this is very anti-male by punishing men and not women. This is consistent with current thinking on other issues but no one seems to be pointing this out!

However, soliciting is not solely this way round. Male escorts also exist for women. If the law is changed as the HASC want, how would it work in these situations?

### **HPV vaccine for boys?**

Should boys be given the HPV jab (Human Papilloma Virus) on the NHS?

Across the UK, all girls aged 12-13 are offered the HPV jab as part of the NHS childhood vaccination programme. Thought to previously cause about 80% of cervical cancers, this figure has fallen sharply since it was introduced.

Mary Ramsay, head of immunisation at Public Health England, said: "Evidence from around the world suggests that the risk of HPV infection in males is dramatically reduced by achieving high uptake of the HPV vaccine among girls".

This follows on from Dr Kirsty Bonney from Devon saying she wanted to see boys "equally protected" with the HPV vaccine rather than risk cancer in later life. Paying privately for her sons Zak, 13 and Finn, 11 to be immunised, she made the decision after working on a chemotherapy unit, where she looked after two young men with HPV-related throat cancers.

However the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) found little evidence to justify treating boys too: "While there are some additional benefits to vaccinating both males and females, the current models indicate that extending the programme to boys in the UK, where the uptake in adolescent girls is consistently high (over 85%), would not represent a good use of NHS resources."

The decision has attracted strong criticism.

The British Dental Association said it would urge the committee to reconsider the evidence. The chair of the BDA, Mick Armstrong, said: "HPV has emerged as the leading cause of oropharyngeal cancers, so JCVI's unwillingness to expand the vaccination programme to boys is frankly indefensible."

Shirley Cramer of the Royal Society for Public Health said: "We are deeply disappointed by the JCVI's decision today, which suggests that fundamental priorities are focused more on saving money than on saving lives. Such a simple vaccination programme has the potential to make such a big impact on the public's health on a national scale. We hope that the government's advisory committee reconsider this decision as soon as possible and put the public's health and wellbeing before cost-saving."

The cost-saving argument seems not to make sense as although the cost of vaccinating boys has been estimated at about £20m a year, the cost of treating HPV-related diseases is higher - treating anogenital warts alone in the UK is estimated to cost £58m a year. (Source: HPV Action)

This initial recommendation by the JCVI will now be subject to a public consultation and a final decision will be made this month (October 2017).

Although the decision as it stands is disappointing, it is good to see people speaking up for boys and men.

Sources: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-40062677> (7th June 2017)  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-40658791> (19th July 2017)

### **CPS makes commitment to male victims of sexual and domestic abuse**

A major breakthrough? Hopefully!

On Wednesday the 6/9/2017, the Crown Prosecution Service announced that they had published its first ever public statement recognising the needs and experiences of male victims of offences including rape, domestic abuse, harassment, stalking and child sexual abuse.

This is a hugely significant breakthrough but caution must be urged. In the past, people in authority have said they recognise male victims of domestic violence exist but this has not translated into practical equality. The system has still always ended up discriminating against them. Whether this will prove to be a watershed moment or just an attempt by the CPS to placate men's voices whilst never intending to change things we will have to wait and see. Nevertheless this can only be a very encouraging development.

The full statement can be found at:

<http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/equality/vaw/public-statement-male-victims-crimes-covered-by-CPS-VAWG-strategy.pdf>

A summary of their statement can be viewed on their website at:

[http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/latest\\_news/cps-makes-commitment-to-male-victim/](http://www.cps.gov.uk/news/latest_news/cps-makes-commitment-to-male-victim/)

It is printed below:

*The Crown Prosecution Service has published its first ever public statement recognising the needs and experiences of male victims of offences including rape, domestic abuse, harassment, stalking and child sexual abuse.*

*Many male victims of these crimes never come forward to report them to the police. This can be for a variety of reasons, including fear that their masculinity may appear to be diminished if they report domestic abuse or that homophobic assumptions will be made around their sexuality if they are raped by a man.*

*The CPS has always been committed to securing justice for all victims, both male and female, and applies policies fairly and equally. It has worked with groups which represent the interests of male victims to explore the issues they face in relation to these offences.*

*The new [CPS public statement](#) sets out:*

*Plans to give prosecutors more information, to help them better understand the experiences of male victims and the barriers to them reporting offences;*

*A commitment to work with third sector organisations and campaign groups to challenge gender stereotypes and improve reporting;*

*Proposals to involve more national men's groups, as well as groups working with boys and girls, in the scrutiny of CPS policies.*

*The Director of Public Prosecutions, Alison Saunders, said: "The way society views masculinity can make it very difficult for men and boys who are the victims of sexual and domestic offences to come forward.*

*"This 'public statement' formalises the CPS commitment to male victims and recognises that stereotypes of masculinity and femininity can, and do, feed sexist and homophobic assumptions. These can deter male victims from reporting abuse and pursuing a prosecution.*

*"The statement addresses this challenge and I hope it will create an environment that gives male victims increased confidence to come forward and get the justice they deserve."*

*The statement forms part of the [CPS revised Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) Strategy 2017-2020](#) which outlines the CPS's approach to all VAWG Crimes.*

*The CPS, in line with the United Nations conventions, ratified by the Government, recognises these crimes have a disproportionate number of female victims, hence the continued use of the term "VAWG". However, the CPS also recognises the experience of male victims and the distressing impact on them.*

Credit also goes to the Mankind Initiative, Survivors Manchester and Dr Ben Hine who all worked with the CPS policy team to develop this policy announcement. The Mankind Initiative's response was welcoming and can be found here:

<http://new.mankind.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CPS-Statement-a-landmark-moment-for-male-victims-of-domestic-abuse.pdf>

### **PARITY joins Men and Boys Coalition**

The Men and Boys coalition was launched in November 2016 as a network of organisations, academics, journalists, professionals and leaders committed to highlighting and taking action on the gender-specific issues that affect men and boys.

PARITY has now joined up with this and is lending its support. By going to their website ([www.menandboyscoalition.org.uk](http://www.menandboyscoalition.org.uk)) you will find PARITY's logo on there among the others, along with a brief description of our organisation and the website address.

Although PARITY will obviously be supportive of the vast majority of issues and campaigns they run, we reserve the right to withdraw our support on any we disagree with and not to be associated with them.

### **Rape issues**

The subject of rape has been discussed again in the media recently. The issue of cases going to court where one or both parties have been drinking has prompted comment.

The Crown Prosecution Service was criticised by His Honour Judge Philip Shorrocks. Saying in recent times many such cases have conformed to a pattern he said "The complainant and the defendant know one another. One or both has been drinking and or taken drugs before the events giving rise to the complaint taking place. Each gives a plausible enough account as to what has happened. There is no independent evidence which tends to suggest that the complainant is telling the truth. In such circumstances – given the burden and standard of proof – the defendant is usually and unsurprisingly acquitted. Perhaps the Crown Prosecution Service understands the words "realistic prospect of conviction" to mean something which is not obvious to the rest of us". (Source: Daily Telegraph comments section 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017)

The Daily Mail was basically of the same opinion. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2017, it ran an article entitled "Two shattered young men and the question: why did these rape cases ever get to court?" It described how these were situations of drunken encounters and one word against another.

Meanwhile Alison Pearson wrote a piece called "It's not a crime to tell women to be careful" published in the Daily Telegraph 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017. In it she refers to retiring judge Lindsey Kushner QC warning that predatory men targeted women. Subsequently teenager Megan Clark, who herself was raped after drinking and taking drugs, told BBC's *Victoria Derbyshire* show that Judge Kushner told women to "be careful" and it was "good advice". Alison Pearson said it was "only common sense for women to act responsibly".

The issue of whether or not a man having sex with a drunken woman should be regarded as rape is very controversial and invokes passionate debate. However, there always seem

to be questions that do not get raised: If women who are drunk are deemed not responsible for their actions, should that then mean *men* who are drunk and sleep with them are equally not responsible for their actions and thus should not be charged with rape? Equally, what if a sober woman has sex with a drunken man – should she then be deemed to have raped him (as the law stands this would be impossible because a woman cannot be charged with raping a man!)? There seem to be stronger levels of responsibility applied to men than women socially and legally. This is not only unfair to men but patronising to women as well.

The fact that people are speaking out for men is encouraging. In this respect the tone by The Metro on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017 was very welcome. On its front page it reported a case of a woman who falsely cried rape fifteen times being imprisoned. It referred to one of her "victims" being wrongly given seven years in jail. Sympathising with men and seeing them as victims is a positive development.

### **Women-only issues**

Many councils operate things like women-only swimming and gym sessions. It is questionable as to whether this is legal or not but they have been brought in for religious and personal reasons – some women in a state of undress may feel threatened by men. This in itself could be construed as a defamation of character against the vast majority of men who are not sexual predators and can control themselves. The fact that the rest of the time there are mixed sessions proves they don't *have* to be necessary. It is *right* to cater for everybody's requirements but is it fair to carry this to the point where others are discriminated against? Is it fair that one group of people can be at the mercy of the wishes of others and be banned from facilities through no fault of their own? Whatever your opinion here it needs to be recognised that men have restricted access to these services for reasons beyond their control.

In view of this it was interesting that the Pulse leisure centre in Dursley, Gloucestershire had to cancel its women-only sessions after a man complained it was sexist and illegal. This can be seen on the following link from the BBC website on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-40887393> However, the article actually highlights the criticism of the man himself for complaining and bringing an end to these sessions. They imply that he has done women an injustice rather than end a discrimination against men and challenge intolerance of the male sex.

It is important that when challenging unfairness to men we also try to win the social argument rather than just the legal one!

However, it was encouraging to see the reaction to Labour MP Chris Williamson's suggestion there should be women-only train carriages after claiming an apparent rise in sexual offences on public transport. Reported on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2017 on BBC's website at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-41020179> the 'comments' section makes for enlightening reading. It is full of people in essence saying how it discriminates against men and demonises them. How it is unfair and unnecessary and creates division!

### **PARITY legacies?**

PARITY's work and effectiveness depends largely on the funds we have available. In this respect, we are grateful to all those who have made donations in the past. Funds for our work could also be helped, of course, with legacies. Perhaps members who are able to would like to consider remembering us also in this way when writing or amending their will.

Thank you.