

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Douglass, Caroline](#); [Lawton, Nicola](#); [Sutton, Rob](#); [Marks, Kate](#); [Rawlinson, Lee](#); [Burns, Anna](#); [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: HOLD Trans / gender critical belief issues- Exec champion update  
**Date:** 09 November 2022 14:42:35  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
**Sensitivity:** Private

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Hi Caroline

As you know the situation is extraordinarily complex and difficult with such strong feelings (and complaints) on all sides. I really value all of your support and input given how challenging this is--very much looking forward to tomorrow's conversation.

The moderation panel has been organised by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] at short notice, with HR at the helm and then clearing things with [REDACTED] (as ExCO LGBT+ champion). The group did weigh up how to address both 'groups' fairly- the view was that SEEN's post had been moderated in advance (they followed HR steer on timing it this week not next week; had the content checked before posting; and posted with comments turned off); to be proportionate the decision was not to [REDACTED] to remove her post but rather to stop further comments and explain why. If we did not do this we would be ignoring the distress of those aligned with SEEN. I think it would be useful to describe more of the discussion when we meet tomorrow

[REDACTED]  
Thanks  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** Douglass, Caroline <caroline.douglass@environment-agency.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 09 November 2022 12:01  
**To:** [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Lawton, Nicola <nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Sutton, Rob <rob.sutton@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Marks, Kate <Kate.Marks@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Rawlinson, Lee <lee.rawlinson@environment-agency.gov.uk>; Burns, Anna <anna.burns@environment-agency.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: HOLD Trans / gender critical belief issues- Exec champion update  
**Sensitivity:** Private

[REDACTED]

As one of the gender executive champions I would have welcomed being on this moderation meeting. I am uncomfortable by the position that has been reached and do not support it. I feel the views expressed by this post are expressed respectfully and reasonably and I think the comments about 'perpetuating inaccurate stereotypes' is exactly what [REDACTED] is saying she feels as a result of SEEN network – so there is misinformation by both parties. By only tackling [REDACTED] post we are ignoring the distress expressed by staff members and perhaps unfairly tackling one group over another.

Can we be clear the SEEN network is not an EA network it is a civil service network and any individual is welcome to be a member.

Thanks  
Caroline

**Caroline Douglass**  
**Executive Director Flood and Coastal Risk Management**

Environment Agency

☎ External: [REDACTED] Internal: [REDACTED] Mobile: [REDACTED]

Pronouns: [REDACTED] ([why is this here?](#))

Office: [PA.ExecutiveDirectorofFCRM@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:PA.ExecutiveDirectorofFCRM@environment-agency.gov.uk)



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**From:** [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**Sent:** 09 November 2022 11:33

**To:** Lawton, Nicola <[nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Sutton, Rob <[rob.sutton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:rob.sutton@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Douglass, Caroline <[caroline.douglass@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.douglass@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Marks, Kate <[Kate.Marks@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.Marks@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Rawlinson, Lee <[lee.rawlinson@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:lee.rawlinson@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Burns, Anna <[anna.burns@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:anna.burns@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**Cc:** [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@defra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk); [REDACTED] [\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**Subject:** RE: HOLD Trans / gender critical belief issues- Exec champion update

**Sensitivity:** Private

Hi all

For awareness [REDACTED] and I just attended the moderation meeting to review the Yammer posts mentioned below. Attendees included HR folk and [REDACTED] providing legal advice. A significant number of complaints and queries have been received with people upset on all sides.

The [post](#) by [REDACTED] and subsequent comments (over 70 so far) are unfortunately approaching the border of what is acceptable – perpetuating inaccurate stereotypes about people with gender critical beliefs, misrepresenting the position of SEEN etc and thereby causing offense (though positively intended to be supportive of trans colleagues). The group decided the following course of action:

- Add a corporate message to the thread of comments which clarify Defra group position re

SEEN, support available to those feeling any distress, and the need for balance and respect

- Approach [REDACTED] to request she turn off comments on her post, explaining the rationale above. If she declines to do so we will need to do this without her involvement.
- Approach [REDACTED] and ask her to let us add the same corporate message to her SEEN [REDACTED]
- Make a new all company Yammer post with the same corporate message, with comments turned off

At tomorrow's meeting I will also seek your views on sending out a wider EA corporate message and what would be most appropriate channel eg via EM round up.

The moderation group are meeting again on Friday and keeping a close eye on anything else that develops in the meantime

Thanks

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 09 November 2022 09:24  
**To:** Lawton, Nicola <[nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Sutton, Rob <[rob.sutton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:rob.sutton@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Douglass, Caroline <[caroline.douglass@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.douglass@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Marks, Kate <[Kate.Marks@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Kate.Marks@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Rawlinson, Lee <[lee.rawlinson@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:lee.rawlinson@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; Burns, Anna <[anna.burns@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:anna.burns@environment-agency.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@defra.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@defra.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: HOLD Trans / gender critical belief issues- Exec champion update  
**Sensitivity:** Private

Hi all

Ahead of tomorrow's meeting I wanted to quickly update you on latest developments:

- [REDACTED] and I met with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on Monday. [REDACTED] confirmed she is one of three co-chairs leading a committee of about 14-15 others (of which [REDACTED] is one). She confirmed a desire to avoid causing distress particularly for vulnerable colleagues and welcomed advice on how to 'avoid being insensitive'. It was a productive conversation which included agreement to:
  - Make their initial SEEN Yammer post as soon as possible (following Tuesday meeting with [REDACTED]), and with comments disabled.
  - Update [REDACTED] on trial of a Yammer moderation panel which we would immediately put in place following their post
  - Arrange further meetings with myself and [REDACTED] to discuss ways of working and support arrangements in place for all our diversity Networks, and how this could extend to SEEN
  - Seek to arrange an initial meeting with Kate Marks to discuss how SEEN relates to Fatih & Belief strand and potential Exec Sponsorship arrangements for SEEN
- Following their meeting with [REDACTED], SEEN made their Yammer post yesterday with

comments disabled:

- [REDACTED] has arranged the pilot Yammer moderation panel (membership composed of HR reps who face ALBs across group, plus myself and [REDACTED]). The first meeting is being held today at 10.30 am and will include review of the SEEN post and reaction to it. Posts that have been flagged so far for review include
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
- Rob and Anna have been working with [REDACTED] to 'fast track' an EA version of proposed Yammer guidance / Principles for communication across Defra group

I have attached 2 relevant email chains for awareness

Thanks

[REDACTED]

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** Lawton, Nicola <[nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.lawton@environment-agency.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 07 November 2022 09:53

**To:** Lawton, Nicola; Lawton, Nicola; Sutton, Rob; [REDACTED]; Douglass, Caroline; Marks, Kate; Rawlinson, Lee

**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** HOLD Trans / gender critical belief issues- Exec champion update

**When:** 10 November 2022 15:30-16:30 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Sensitivity:** Private

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