Written evidence submitted by Matthew Stocks

I have never been a sex worker or a client of sex workers. My submission is driven by my concern at the marginalisation of sex workers and the manner in which the current law and these proposed reforms to it effectively place sex workers outside the protection of the law and make it more difficult than need be for prostitutes to work safely.

- Adults should be free to buy and sell sexual services, just like any other service, without either party being criminalised. Criminal sanction in relation to prostitution should fall on those who victimise prostitutes be it by assaulting them, stealing from them or coercing them into prostitution.

- Why is the Nordic model alone and not the New Zealand model of decriminalisation under consideration?

- Criminalising their clients pushes prostitutes into an antagonistic relationship with the police and the rest of the criminal justice system as prostitutes have to collude with criminals, their clients, to earn a living.

- Criminalising clients forces sex work further underground leading sex workers into high risk behaviours if they wish to earn a living.

- The Crown Prosecution Service's recognition of prostitution as violence against women denies the agency of female sex workers and is hard to reconcile with the existence of male sex workers.

- People are trafficked for the purpose of coercing them into all manner of labour, there have been several stories in the news over the last few weeks alone about people being held in domestic servitude in the UK. Yet no one responds to this by seeking to criminalise those seeking to employ domestic servants, fruit pickers...