

Statement on behalf of CrowdJustice re Allison Bailey

CrowdJustice stands for access to justice for everyone.

We recognise that there is a controversial and heated debate on the subject of trans rights, capturing a wide spectrum of opinion. As a platform, we take no view on the substance or legal merits of that debate, as shown by the wide range of cases hosted on our platform.

We do, however, adopt terms and conditions relating to the content of the case pages we host. We are satisfied that Allison's case page breached our terms and conditions, and we stand by our decision to have removed it on Saturday evening.

We considered that some of the language used on the case page, taken either individually and/or considered in the full context of the page, was unnecessarily inflammatory and offensive. In our view, parts of the case page, unconnected to the facts of the actual legal case, could be considered to promote hate, abuse or harassment towards a minority community, in contravention of our terms. We took specialist legal advice to confirm our view.

We offered Allison the opportunity to amend or remove the content that we had highlighted as in breach of our terms, and were keen to keep the page open for donations whilst that issue was being resolved. In order to do so, we republished the page with our own holding statement. At that time, we removed Allison's photograph and her name. We did this because the case page now bore our statement, rather than her own. We were keen to ensure Allison was not perceived as the author of our statements, and we had no intention to wound and/or to erase her identity. When we learned that this was her perception, we offered to reinstate Allison's picture and name on the case page but she has not replied.

We are pleased that Allison achieved her £60,000 stretch target so quickly.

As regards the question of why we could not further extend Allison's stretch target, it is clear from our terms that we need to ensure that backers know the purpose for which the funds will be used. Whilst we awaited amended text, CrowdJustice had editorial control of the case page and we could not accurately represent to backers what any further funds would be used for. We repeatedly invited Allison to provide us with amended text but she refused to do so.

To reiterate, our removal of Allison's case page was in no way a reflection of any view about her underlying claim. We reiterate our support for Allison's right to access to justice and for her case to be heard in court.

We empathise with Allison and the upset that she feels from the removal of her page, and we are sorry for the distress that removing it has caused her. At the same time, CrowdJustice stands by its decision to remove unnecessarily inflammatory and offensive content from its platform, and is proud of the fact that it promotes access to justice for a wide spectrum of legal cases.

Julia Salasky,

CEO, CrowdJustice

1 July 2020