

## Westminster Legal Policy Forum Keynote Seminar: Libel & privacy law - challenges for reform

Date: Morning, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2010

Venue: Central London

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.45 - 9.00 Registration
- 9.00 - 9.05 Chairman's opening remarks  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 - 9.15 An overview of the issues  
*Themes: Where do libel and privacy laws in England and Wales presently stand? How do they impact upon freedom of expression in the UK and internationally?*  
Professor Gavin Phillipson, Professor of Law, Durham University
- 9.15 - 9.25 Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee inquiry - 'Press standards, privacy and libel'  
Senior speaker to be announced
- 9.25 - 10.15 Press freedom and privacy law  
*Themes: How should the balance be struck between the right to freedom of expression and the right to privacy? What is meant by a 'right to a reputation', and to what degree can it be protected by law? How is the evolving body of European law in this area influencing UK case law? To what extent are the reporting press affected in what they may publish? Does the work of the Press Complaints Commission adequately complement the courts in resolving press problems? Are concerns over the operation and impact of 'super-injunctions' valid? On what basis are damages awarded in privacy claims and in libel claims, and should greater emphasis be placed upon non-pecuniary remedies?*  
Mark Thomson, Senior Partner, Defamation, Atkins Thomson Solicitors  
William Gore, Director of Public Affairs, Press Complaints Commission  
Bob Satchwell, Executive Director, Society of Editors  
Questions and comments from the floor with Professor Gavin Phillipson, Professor of Law, Durham University and senior speaker
- 10.15 - 10.20 Chairman's closing remarks  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.20 - 10.40 Coffee
- 10.40 - 10.45 Chairman's opening remarks  
Dr Evan Harris MP, Chairman, Parliamentary Campaign for Libel Reform
- 10.45 - 11.10 Libel law - reform proposals  
Lord Lester of Herne Hill QC  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.10 - 11.30 Case study: the science community and freedom of speech  
*Theme: What impact do current laws have on open debate, particularly in the fields of science and academia?*  
Simon Singh, Science writer and broadcaster  
Senior representative, industry
- 11.30 - 12.25 Libel law - addressing the challenges for reform  
*Themes: Could more be done to ensure procedural and substantive equality for both claimants and defendants in libel cases? Which areas of libel law require greater clarification? Are concerns over 'libel tourism' valid, and if so, would the introduction of more stringent criteria in libel law, such as a 'significant harm test', be useful? Given the increased prevalence of digital media, such as twitter, blogging and web 2.0 should the 'single publication rule' be adopted? What role does, and should, the 'public interest' play in libel proceedings? Should use of alternative dispute resolution be encouraged, and would a libel tribunal provide a viable option?*  
Paul Tweed, Senior Partner, Johnsons Solicitors  
John Kampfner, Chief Executive, Index on Censorship  
David Allen Green, Solicitor, Preiskel & Co  
Senior representative, lawyer  
Questions and comments from the floor with Simon Singh, Science writer and broadcaster and senior representative, science Industry
- 12.25 - 12.55 Libel and privacy law - the way forward for policy  
Senior speaker to be announced
- 12.55 - 13.00 Chairman's and Westminster Legal Policy Forum closing remarks  
Dr Evan Harris MP, Chairman, Parliamentary Campaign for Libel Reform

