

## Westminster Legal Policy Forum Keynote Seminar: The future of family justice

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Venue: Johnnie Walker Room, The Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, London SW1X 7DR



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Agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chairman's opening remarks**  
**Jessica Lee MP**, Vice-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children and Member, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Family Law and the Court of Protection
- 9.05 - 9.30 **Family law in England and Wales: a context to Government's agenda for reform**  
**Dr Annika Newnham**, Senior Lecturer, School of Law, University of Portsmouth  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 - 10.00 **Implementing Government's response to the Family Justice Review**  
**Nick Goodwin**, Head of Family Justice Policy, Ministry of Justice  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.00 - 10.55 **Reforming family law - efficiency, expert evidence and shared parenting**  
*Perspectives from key stakeholders on Government's response to the 'Family Justice Review' and subsequent schedule for implementation. How significant is Government's commitment to introduce a six-month time limit for care and adoption cases, and what are the likely challenges ahead for implementing this reform? How can Government ensure that expert testimony is only used where necessary to resolve a case, and how might changes to the Family Procedure Rules support this aim, alongside proposals for primary legislation? What are the key themes arising from Government's current consultation on Co-operative Parenting Following Family Separation, and what challenges remain for the recently established ministerial working group in developing proposals for legislative change? Have policymakers given adequate consideration to David Norgrove's concerns in relation to shared parenting, particularly in light of international experiences in this area? Has Government's response given sufficient consideration to a grandparent's right of contact?*  
**Nicholas Cusworth QC**, Chairman, Family Law Bar Association  
**Tom Rahilly**, Head of Strategy and Development for Looked After Children, NSPCC  
**Sam Smethers**, Chief Executive, Grandparents Plus  
**Professor Penny Cooper**, Professor of Law, City University London and Governor, The Expert Witness Institute (2007-2012)  
**John Hemming MP**, Chairman, Justice for Families Campaign Group  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.55 - 11.00 **Chairman's closing remarks**  
**Jessica Lee MP**, Vice-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children and Member, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Family Law and the Court of Protection
- 11.00 - 11.30 Coffee
- 11.30 - 11.35 **Chairman's opening remarks**  
**Rt Hon Elfyn Llwyd MP**, Member, Justice Committee
- 11.35 - 12.05 **Modernising the family justice system**  
*How can the judicial framework most effectively respond to Government's schedule for legislative reform, and what are the challenges ahead for implementing Mr Justice Ryder's recent recommendations as part of the Judiciary's Family Justice Modernisation Programme?*  
**District Judge Nicholas Crichton CBE**, Family Justice Council  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.05 - 12.55 **Family justice under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act - funding, skills and access**  
*How will government's removal of legal aid for private family law cases later this year affect the future of family justice? To what extent will Government's £25 million a year commitment to pay for publicly-funded family mediation reduce the number of family cases reaching the courts? Will reforms lead to an increased number of litigants representing themselves in family cases, and what are the challenges for ensuring access to appropriate representation? Will the safeguarding of funding for cases involving domestic abuse and child protection do enough to ensure appropriate access to justice for vulnerable groups? How will scheduled changes to the fee and remuneration framework affect legal aid practitioners, and what will this mean for skills and expertise in the sector?*  
**Charlotte Image**, Committee Member, Young Legal Aid Lawyers and Associate Solicitor, Wainwright & Cummins Solicitors  
**David Emmerson OBE**, Chair, Legal Aid Committee, Resolution and Partner, TV Edwards  
**Philippa Newis**, Policy Officer, Gingerbread  
**Marilyn Webster**, Chief Executive, Mediation Works  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chairman's and Westminster Legal Policy Forum closing remarks**  
**Rt Hon Elfyn Llwyd MP**, Member, Justice Committee  
**Marc Gammon**, Producer, Westminster Legal Policy Forum