



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

Minister for Culture and the Digital
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Your Ref: ML.C0075.CM.25.4.16
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Caroline Lucas MP
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11 May 2016

Dear Caroline,

Thank you for your correspondence of 25 April, to the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon David Cameron MP, on behalf of a number of your constituents about the Leveson Inquiry. Your letter has been passed to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as this issue falls within the Department's policy remit and I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

This Government is firmly committed to ensuring we have a self-regulatory press system that protects innocent people from press intrusion whilst maintaining freedom of the press.

Following the Leveson Inquiry, the cross-party agreement was implemented through the Royal Charter which established the Press Recognition Panel. As of September 2015, the Press Recognition Panel has been open for applications from regulators and is currently considering an application from IMPRESS. In addition, the exemplary damages provisions in the Crime and Courts Act 2013 came into force on 3 November 2015 in accordance with the timetable set by Parliament.

The decision on when to commence the cost provisions in section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 is one the Government legitimately still needs to take. Parliament did not set a date by which this must be done and, at present, no decision has been taken about when to do this. This government continues to ensure the voices of victims are heard in this debate and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport recently met Hacked Off and a number of victims of press intrusion to hear directly their views on press self-regulation.

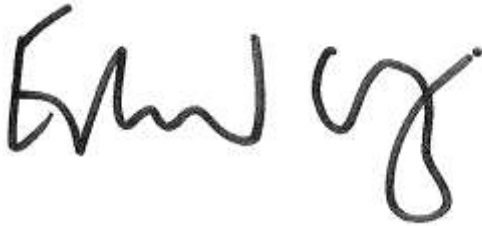
This Government is clear that independent press self-regulation is the way forward and we want the industry to voluntarily comply with the reforms recommended by Leveson and enshrined in the Royal Charter. All government departments publish details of Ministers' and senior officials' meetings with the press now, in line with the



recommendations made in the Leveson Inquiry report.

With regards to the second part of the Leveson Inquiry, media speculation is premature. Criminal proceedings connected to the subject matter of the Leveson Inquiry, including the appeals process, have not yet completed. We have always been clear that these cases must conclude before we consider Part 2 of the Inquiry.

I hope that this is helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Vaizey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ed Vaizey MP
Minister for Culture and the Digital Economy