



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013

Thank you for contacting me about section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013.

The Government has implemented the cross-party agreement that was made in the wake of the Leveson Inquiry, through the Royal Charter and the Crime and Courts Act 2013. The exemplary damages measures commenced in November 2015 and a framework has been delivered for a new system of independent press self-regulation.

There is no doubt that exemplary damages are a serious sanction; the protection offered by the introduction of this measure provides a real incentive to encourage publishers to sign up to a recognised self-regulator. I want to see the press voluntarily comply with the reforms recommended by Sir Brian Leveson and enshrined in the Royal Charter. The new framework that has been set up protects our vital freedom of press but at the same time offers real redress when mistakes are made.

The commencement of cost provisions is still under consideration and I know that the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Karen Bradley, is discussing section 40 with interested parties as part of these considerations.

I understand that this will be a serious and significant change for the industry, and a matter of particular concern to many small publishers who had absolutely no involvement in the abuses the Leveson Inquiry was set up to tackle.

Parliament did not set a commencement date for cost provisions (as they did for exemplary damages measures), so it is for the Government to use its discretion.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards

Edward Timpson MP

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