



Craig Whittaker MP

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Leveson 2 and section 40

Thank you for contacting me about Part 2 of the Leveson Inquiry and Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013.

The Government has decided not to proceed with Part 2 of the Leveson Inquiry and to repeal Section 40. The decision is in line with commitments made in the 2017 Conservative Manifesto and was taken following a full, open public consultation.

The world has changed since the Leveson Inquiry concluded in 2012. The Inquiry thoroughly examined the culture, practices and ethics of our press in response to illegal and improper press intrusion. The Inquiry and investigations were comprehensive, and since it was set up there have been extensive reforms to policing practices and significant changes to press self-regulation.

The media landscape has also changed. Newspaper circulation has fallen by around 30 per cent since the conclusion of the Leveson Inquiry, and although digital circulation is rising, publishers are finding it much harder to generate revenue online. There are serious concerns that Section 40 of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 would make the problems the press face worse. Respondents to the consultation expressed concerns that it would impose further financial burdens, especially on the local press.

The work of the Leveson Inquiry, and the reforms since, have had a huge impact on public life. At national and local levels, a press that can hold the powerful to account remains an essential component of our democracy, and Britain needs high-quality journalism to thrive in the new digital world. However, I believe that a free and sustainable press with effective regulation, and public access to a fair and low cost complaints procedure, can be achieved without resorting to Leveson 2 and Section 40.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

Craig Whittaker MP