

PRESS COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

From the Director

16 November 2007

John Pugh Esq MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr. Pugh,

I read about your EDM on encouraging higher standards in new media with great interest. At the PCC, we have been thinking for some time about the significance of these new services and what they mean for content regulation.

While it would now be close to impossible – as well as philosophically undesirable – to impose regulation on how people may communicate via the internet, it seems that independent, voluntary regulation might help provide effective redress for people affected by something that is published online. Recently, the PCC Chairman Sir Christopher made this point in a speech in Edinburgh, when he said that the PCC:

“might also act as a beacon to those new media operators who seem confused about what is the right thing to do in an age when they are party to the dissemination of falsehoods or the conduit for cyber-bullying. It will not be enough – in the face of future horror stories about children committing suicide following online video bullying, for instance – for such businesses to do the bare legal minimum.

That is not what taking responsibility means.

But at least there is already a model of how voluntarily to establish successful ombudsman services which can react quickly to resolve problems and act as an outlet for grievances before things become too serious.”

CHAIRMAN

Sir Christopher Meyer

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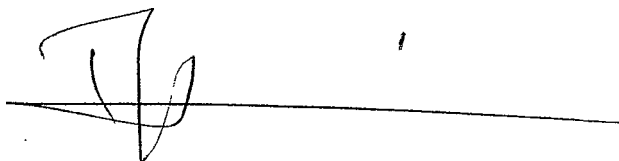


It is a challenging and interesting area. If you would like to come to the PCC to see how our system works, or if it would be in any way helpful for me to pop over for a chat at the House of Commons to discuss the matter, then please let me know.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely

Tim Toulmin

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TT', is written over a horizontal line.