



ABUSE OF PROCESS

A report by Voice4Victims CIC

Claire Waxman & Harry Fletcher

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CONTENTS



A. Background

B. Introduction

C. Victims Perspective

D. Speakers:

1. Jess Phillips, Family Courts
2. DC Candler, Police perspective
3. Sir Keir Starmer, The Courts
4. Dr Jane Monckton-Smith, Motivation of Perpetrator
5. Harry Fletcher, NAPO report

E. Group Discussion

F. Campaign next steps

G. Speakers Biographies



A. BACKGROUND

Due to Claire Waxman's long standing experience of stalking and the justice system, she helped to campaign for the stalking law reform in 2012. Since then, she set up Voice4Victims, an organisation that campaigns for the rights of victims. She and her co-director Harry Fletcher have drafted the first ever Victims Right's Legislation with the support of Sir Keir Starmer MP, which will give victims of crime legally enforceable rights. Voice4Victims also provides, on a voluntarily basis, advocacy and support to victims who have reached a standstill with the justice process.

Through Voice4Victims crucial work, they hear from more and more victims of harassment, stalking coercive control and domestic violence who are being exposed to further risk and harm via legal processes. Voice4Victims was alarmed to see how this type of stalking and harassment is still not being recognised by the Police, Crown Prosecution Service and the Courts and the disconnection between these agencies are facilitating high levels of risk to the victim. Voice4Victims deal with cases where Family Courts are giving little or no consideration to restraining orders or the history of harassment that some victims have endured, when they find themselves in the Court process. They are also aware that concerns raised by CAF/CASS about ex-partners who use contact with children, who they have previously shown no interest in, are often ignored or considered as trivial by the Courts. This misunderstands and minimises the abusive nature of harassment, stalking and coercive control and the psychological harm it causes victims, which can leave them debilitated, because it means that they are constantly worrying about what their harasser might do next.

On 11th July 2016, Voice4Victims CIC hosted an Abuse of Process conference at the House of Commons with Keir Starmer and Jess Phillips, as the sponsoring MP's. The aim of the day was to highlight the many issues victims of this form of abuse are facing and the failings of the current system in protecting victims from further harm and risk. This report outlines the discussions held during this event and recommendations for the Abuse of Process campaign.



B. INTRODUCTION

Claire Waxman introduced the conference and defined **Abuse of Process** as **perpetrators using their right to access legal proceedings in order to emotionally abuse their victims and continue unwanted contact with them**. She defined that the aim of the conference was to recognise this escalating problem and to highlight how victims should be safeguarded from this form of abuse whilst ensuring the perpetrator's legal right to access is considered.

She described the platforms that are easily accessible to perpetrators to abuse in order to continue the unwanted contact with their victims:

- Civil court
 - a. It costs as little as £25 for someone to start proceedings in the civil courts and perpetrators can easily pursue complaints of slander, defamation and claims that victim owes them money.
 - b. This process often gives perpetrator the 'right' to send paperwork directly to the victim, much of which is irrelevant to the actual claim and personal.

- Family court
 - a. Perpetrators can initiate contact orders, even when there has been little interest in the child previously but it's a route to maintain influence over victim's life and find out personal details and safe locations.
 - b. The Family courtroom is small and intimate, allowing victims of risk to be abused in these environments with very little thought given to victims perspective and safety.
 - c. Changes to legal aid place victims at increased risk allowing litigants in person and the possibility of the victim being cross examined by their abuser.

- Private prosecution
 - a. It can cost as little as £50 to start proceedings and details will be sent to the victim regardless of whether the claim is genuine and the perpetrator has the financial means to fund proceedings.
 - b. They are often initiated by perpetrators even when police have disregarded perpetrators previous claims.



B. INTRODUCTION

- False allegations to the Police
 - a. It causes more harm & distress to victim and discredits victims complaints to police sometimes stopping victims from accessing justice and support.
 - b. The allegations can be for sexual harassment, stalking, theft, fraud, professional misconduct and malpractice.

She stated that all these forms of abuse by litigation are rarely recognised by the Justice agencies and too often being sanctioned by courts and the Police who are failing to understand the perpetrator's real motivation and as a result colludes with the perpetrator. She stated that it is rare for civil or family courts to be aware of criminal convictions or details of prohibition orders.

She advised that the Police or Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) are very reluctant to pursue any criminal proceedings with these forms of legal abuse often seeing these matters as a civil issue, in addition, the courts disregard the victim's concerns that this is an abuse of process. Courts are repeatedly giving permission for protective orders to be breached so legal proceedings can continue.

She gave examples of the types of cases her organisation deal with where abuse of process is present.

Lucy:

Lucy's ex-partner has taken her to court a total of fifteen times and this has cost Lucy in the region of £25K as she is not eligible for legal aid. Her perpetrator has applied to the courts for a number of different claims from full residency of the children; to small claims court over her car; to the court for a non-molestation order against her. In addition he has made many other vexatious/spurious claims against her and has had her arrested over false allegations of assault. Lucy has been relentlessly trapped in the court system by her perpetrator who has been charged and convicted for stalking and is now subject to a restraining order (RO).



B. INTRODUCTION

Diana:

Diana was repeatedly stalked via the civil courts. Police failed to recognise this form of stalking and therefore, Diana has not been able to access criminal proceedings. Diana has therefore been forced to get a civil injunction against her perpetrator. The County Court agrees that this injunction has been breached as her perpetrator brings false allegations against her yet Police fail to act and keep signposting her back to the civil courts for remedy. Diana has spent three years going back and forth between the Police and Civil courts with no resolution and is stuck in this legal abuse.

Rose:

Rose is a high risk Domestic Violence (DV) victim who has experienced stalking since divorcing her abusive husband. He has started several private prosecutions against her. His claims are without merit and he is breaching the restraining order by sending her court documents directly and forcing contact through the courts. Police and CPS are still not recognising this as a breach of the restraining order as they believe her abuser has an absolute right to access these proceedings, regardless of their merit.

Jane:

Jane Clough was murdered by her ex-partner Jonathan Vass, who was the father of her child. Jane was able to secure guardianship, residence and custody of their baby until the child was 16 after Vass had sexually and physically abused her. However, after her murder, those parental rights were automatically given to Vass, Jane's murderer. Jane's family, whilst still dealing with the grief of her murder, were forced into a legal battle with Vass in order to adopt their grandchild and to stop Vass exercising his parental rights. Legal processes were set up in such a way that the system allowed the man that had killed Jane to represent himself in court, giving him the opportunity to question and cross examine and intimidate Jane's family via video link, even though he was deemed to be too dangerous to attend court. Vass was also awarded legal aid whilst Jane's family had to spend £1000's of their own money to safeguard their grandchild. The family asked "Why are the courts allowing perpetrators to have so much contact with their victims?"



B. INTRODUCTION

Claire:

Claire Waxman then talked about her own experience of being stalked for the past thirteen years and how her stalker had used the civil court process on three separate occasions to breach his restraining order and continue unwanted contact with her. She explained that the restraining order was in place to prevent her stalker from making direct or indirect contact with her and storing or retrieving information about her. In order to make his vexatious claims in the Civil Courts, he breached his Restraining order on those two clauses.

On the second occasion her stalker accessed the civil courts, CPS dropped charges against him as her stalker argued that it was his human right to access the civil courts. The CPS felt that the restraining order could not prevent this right of access. As a result, Claire applied for a judicial review of the CPS's decision not to prosecute.

She spoke about being successful with her case (*R (on the application of Waxman) v Crown Prosecution Service [2012] All ER (D) 22 (Feb); [2012] EWHC 133 (Admin)*) and that the Judge upheld her application concluding that the CPS was wrong to discontinue prosecution. The Judge held that the right of access to courts under Article 6 of European Convention is not an absolute right and can be restricted in order to achieve a legitimate social objective, which includes the prevention of persistent harassment. Claire informed the conference that Voice4Victims CIC receives a high volume of cases similar to her own, where victims are being told by the Police or CPS that the perpetrator's right to access proceedings is absolute and therefore, no action can be taken to stop this abuse of process.

Yet the landmark ruling has established case law and clarifies that abusers do not have a right to access courts for the purpose of continuing to harass victims and Claire felt this was a point that needed to be taught to the Police, CPS and the Courts.

She said that Voice4Victims are having to use this landmark ruling to continually advise the Police and CPS on far too many cases where victims are being harassed, stalked or are subject to domestic violence or coercive control via the civil and family court, private prosecutions or even false allegations.



B. INTRODUCTION

Claire set out her objectives for the **Abuse of Process campaign**:

1. Training – to develop training so that the Justice Agencies and Judiciary recognise these forms of abuse and prevent the Courts colluding with the perpetrator and creating unsafe orders, and unsafe court environments and therefore, better support victims.
2. Challenge – to challenge the misconception of an absolute right to access courts. Claire said that Judicial officers may need to weigh up and assess the requirements for procedural fairness and access to justice against protection of the victim from further abuse through the perpetrator's exploitation of the justice system.
3. Campaign - to campaign for better co-ordination of court systems to create a joined up approach to help courts recognise when abuse of process is happening by sharing of information and allowing victim to disclose information without appointing solicitor and incurring costs for vexatious claims.
4. Bill proposal - Outline Legal and policy reforms to understand law more effectively and ensure protection orders, non-molestation orders and restraining orders are upheld and strengthened and victims are not exposed to further risk and harm, including a duty on courts to rule out vexatious claims.
5. Produce and publicise report based on today's conference and officially launch the abuse of process campaign in the late autumn.



C. VICTIM'S PERSPECTIVE

A presentation was given by a victim Sarah, who described the stalking, harassment and coercive control she was subjected to by her ex-partner who she had a baby with even though he had begged her for an abortion. Her abuser pleaded guilty to harassment and received a restraining order preventing any further contact with the victim and 12 months' probation. A few months later, the victim's perpetrator was found guilty of harassing another woman and was sentenced again. Sarah said the stalker persisted but it was difficult for Police to gain enough evidence to charge him with a breach of the RO. When their child was 18 months old, her stalker applied to the family courts for contact and parental responsibility. The application was a breach of the RO, however the family court allowed the initial hearing to proceed which caused the victim a huge amount of distress and anxiety. The court had put no safeguarding in place and so the victim was in the same building as her stalker and it was down to the victim's Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) to keep her safe and secure. The victim contacted her local MP for support who asked the Family Court to put proceedings on hold. This was done to allow her stalker to apply for a variation to the restraining order to allow him access to the Family Court. This access was granted which was against the advice of Police, Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), her IDVA and her MP and the courts therefore, allowed her stalker to engage with the victim directly through the FC process.

During the Family Court process, The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) became involved and in three separate reports highlighted to the courts their concerns with contact being allowed and in one report, CAFCASS clearly stipulated there be no further contact. Extrapolating from this victim's experience, there are a number of issues that impact on abuse of process and access to justice:-

- Family courts disregarding restraining orders and criminal convictions in order to progress proceedings
- Family courts disregarding advice from third parties who express an expert view on risk to victim including Police and MARAC



C. VICTIM'S PERSPECTIVE

- Abuser using Family Courts to access and humiliate victim
- Family Court Judge ignored 3 CAFCASS reports which advised no contact and he has appointed a guardian to help facilitate the contact order as CAFCASS refuse to do it
- No recognition in Family Court that the abuser is using that court as a means of stalking and Coercive control
- A lack of understanding in Family Court of the typology of and risks of stalking behaviour
- The abuser's barrister is able to omit evidence from court which might lead that court to a different view of the perpetrator and victim
- Case was wrongly deemed non-complex and was originally allowed in front of lay bench rather than a District Judge
- Despite overwhelming evidence of abusive behaviour and criminal convictions, no safeguarding measures were put in place in the family courts
- Court refused to appoint a psychologist with stalking expertise because they felt it would bias the outcome and instead used someone who had no experience of stalkers to assess the perpetrator

To date, the victim continues to be forced into the family court process with her abuser and feels she has no right nor voice regarding the psychological impact the process is having on her and her family. Her fear and distress is constantly used against her by the judge and courts saying it is she who is stopping the contact order from being implemented.

D. SPEAKERS



1. Jess Phillips, MP

Jess Phillips highlighted to the room the current problems within the family courts in regards to supporting and protecting victims of domestic abuse. Jess said that there was an inaccurate myth that the Family Courts are unfairly biased towards the mother and she described the family courts as being used as another weapon of power and control. She stated that in 10% of all separations end up in the Family Courts and in 70% of those cases there is evidence of Domestic Violence or abuse and yet only 1% of those cases end up with no contact orders.

Jess informed the audience that in Domestic Violence homicide reviews, the common factor, regardless of background, is the woman leaving and thereby increasing her risk of violence.

A survey undertaken by Women's Aid of Domestic Violence Victims concluded that the biggest issue for women was the need for reform of the Family Courts. In Jess's view, during the process, the state replaces the perpetrator as a prime critic of the mother and thereby the voice of the victim is lost. She told the seminar that an All Party Parliamentary Group on Domestic Abuse had written a parliamentary report entitled 'Domestic Abuse, Child Contact and the Family Courts' and had launched a joint call with Maria Miller, MP to take action on the issues victims are facing.

Jess gave an overview of the issues that needed tackling:

- A need to ensure safe child contact, not contact 'at any cost'.
- A need to tackle the issue of access to Legal Aid and victims being exposed to cross-examination by their abusers.
- A lack of access to special measures in family courts.
- A need to implement Practice Direction 12J – Child Arrangements and Contact Orders: Domestic Violence and Harm.
- An urgent need to understand the impact of domestic abuse on children.
- A Need for Specialist domestic violence training throughout the family court judiciary.
- No assumption of shared parenting by the Courts.



D. SPEAKERS

- A need to prove that the father is competent to provide safe and appropriate care and parenting where abusive behaviour is present.
- A need to assess the risk a perpetrator of domestic abuse poses to their child by Court and by CAFCASS.

Jess concluded that the family courts in this country are incredibly secretive and get no media attention, so it's very difficult to highlight and report on what goes on during the court process.

2. DC Candler, Metropolitan Police

DC Candler spoke of his involvement in Claire Waxman's case and summed up his concerns regarding abuse of process cases as:

- The stalking victim becomes the "defendant" when the perpetrator brings a civil case so there is no access to screens or other special measures as YJCEA (Youth Justice Criminal Evidence Act) 1999 does not apply
- Because YJCEA does not apply, the perpetrator may directly cross examine the victim. The rules of criminal evidence do not apply so counsel may adopt less "forgiving" tactics
- Police have the ability to access any data about individual on criminal database but are unable to do the same with civil proceedings
- No centralised IT system to help facilitate these types of cases unlike the Criminal Courts who use systems called XHIBIT and LIBRA and can easily cross reference cases

He added that in dealing with complex cases, police officers have to work with all jurisdictions separately in Criminal and Family Courts and that the police have no right to be an interested party in these proceedings.

He noted that there were no rules on confidentiality of information as per Public Interest Immunity, CPIA 1996 and in Civil Courts, staff did not routinely check details of claims and any related information such as restraining orders or convictions of the applicant and this information is not revealed to that court unless raised by an interested party.

D. SPEAKERS



DC Candler made six recommendations based on his professional experience:

1. The Civil Courts should have a centralised system so that repeat litigants may be identified.
2. Amend claim forms by adding two questions. "Have you ever brought a claim against the same person before" If yes, what were the court, claim number and result. This could go a long way to weeding out the malicious claimants and would prompt a bit more diligence by court staff.
3. Ensure courts are applying S146/147 Powers of Sentencing Act 2000. This allows the court to remove the perpetrator's driving licence. A good tactic to prevent following the victim.
4. ALL stalkers should have to complete treatment at a stalking clinic.
5. Add all convicted stalkers to MAPPA (*Multi-agency public protection arrangements*) VISOR (*IT system for the management of people who pose serious risk of harm to the Public*)
6. Add police officers to the list of interested parties to attend Family and Civil Courts.

3. Sir Keir Starmer, MP

Keir Starmer, Labour MP for Holburn & St Pancras, Former Director of Public Prosecutions at the Crown Prosecution Service, reported that there had been numerous reforms to the Criminal Justice System but not to the Civil and Family courts. He noted that in the Criminal Courts in Domestic Violence or Sexual Assault cases for example, it was now possible to refer the perpetrators to clinics.

Keir felt there was an issue of credibility for victims in the Criminal Justice System if they did not report the crime immediately, returned to the perpetrator and/ or struggled to give an accurate timetable account of experiences. These factors worked against the victim who often had no meaningful support to help them access justice. He believed recent changes to the Crown Court environment allowing vulnerable victims access to 'Special Measures' (*series of provisions such as screens that help vulnerable and intimidated witnesses to give evidence in court and to relieve anxiety associated with re-living this evidence*) needed to transfer to both the civil and family courts.



D. SPEAKERS

He called for much greater distribution of the victims' experiences amongst Parliamentarians, particularly where perpetrators had negative motives for using legal processes to engage with their victims.

He argued that the different court jurisdictions needed to work together and as a general rule be allowed to strike out cases without the victim having to attend court to defend 'vexatious' claims. Keir also believed that private prosecutions should be taken over by the Crown Prosecution Service and struck out if deemed vexatious and without merit.

He added that Parliament needed to examine whether the adversarial process causes trauma, particularly regarding the impact on children and whether the system needed to move towards an inquisitorial one where the Judge had more power to sort out the truth so the weight is not all on the individual. Keir concluded that there was an urgent need to look again at legal aid and the impact on victims and that the system needed to be reset so that there are safeguards in place protecting victims from further harm and risk.

4. Jane Monckton-Smith, Senior Lecturer, Gloucestershire University

Jane Monckton-Smith, criminal psychologist outlined her views on the motivation of these perpetrators. She described a cluster of patterns of behaviour which are so closely aligned in their characteristics and mind-set as to be broadly comparable. These patterns are Domestic Abuse, Coercive Control and Stalking, all of which are now criminal offences, not least of all because of their relationship to serious harm and homicide. The vast majority of so-called domestic homicides have Stalking and/or Coercive Control in their antecedent histories. This is well documented in the extant research, and has led to the suggestion that coercive control predicts homicide more effectively than violence by nine times (*Stark 2007*).

She informed the room that there are unifying characteristics which help us recognise Stalking and Coercive Control.

She said it is crucial to be able to recognise the characteristics and behaviour patterns of those people who are likely to be abusing legal processes. Too often these people can manipulate professionals to believe that they have legitimate cause for using the legal process, whether that be the criminal or civil courts.

D. SPEAKERS



She first described to the audience the **PURPOSE OF THE BEHAVIOUR**

- Whether the person is using the Criminal or Civil Courts the end game is broadly similar: to FORCE contact with the victim, to undermine the victim's credibility, to control the victim, to demonstrate how powerful they are and to maintain a presence in the life of the victim.
- In any case the roles of stalker and victim will be reversed. The victim becomes unbelievable, untrustworthy, irrational and powerless – all the things the stalker is.
This is devastating for victims and victory for offenders.
- Part of the stalker's toolkit, is to convince others that the victim is a bad person, and to respond to that.

She then described the **CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERPETRATOR**

She considered the actions of Ben Butler, to be abuse of process and that case is a model for what happens when abuse of process is not recognised.

Stalkers/Controllers are predominantly people who are fixated on imposing themselves into the life of an unwilling and non-consenting victim.

From her own research, and from reading other research, these are the common factors

- Fixated – they are focused on an individual and instigating or maintaining control over them and their lives
- Obsessed – the focus is ongoing and resistant to challenge. They cannot be dissuaded from acting on their mission
- Destructive – they do not measure their own best interests. They are willing to, and do push forward with their mission, irrespective of the consequences to themselves – because all they want is the contact and the control over the victim. Children and others can become collateral damage in this focused mission.

D. SPEAKERS



- Repetitive – they will do things over and over again irrespective of the time and resources it takes from their own lives
- Compulsive – they will act as if compelled to act in the way they do

She described these abusers as arch manipulators with no sense of remorse or care for the victim's feelings or trauma. She said they want the victim to KNOW that the only person in the world who can keep them safe, is the stalker. They have the most power over their lives. They can control even the courts and the police.

She outlined **the EFFECTS OF THESE BEHAVIOURS ON THE VICTIM**

- Court proceedings and other formal processes FORCE the victim to have contact, to respond to the stalker and often to be in the same room as them.
- The victim will often begin to feel isolated from help as the system appears to be working with the stalker. This can place children and victims in grave danger as victims withdraw and start to think they have to manage their own safety. The system becomes part of the abuse.
- Even if the stalker wins their process, this is far from the end and manipulation of the law is relentless for the victim.

She then described a number of **EFFECTS ON THE STALKER/CONTROLLER**

- This person is convinced they are entitled to engage in their behaviour, and the legal process gives them clear entitlement, and access to the victim which they interpret as them being right.
- They think that legal process makes them invincible, it is a game; they can use the courts to perpetuate their campaign;
- When the legal process works with them, perpetrators start to have proof that they are invincible and entitled, and the danger for victims can start to escalate
- Stalkers do not care about punishment – sanctions which are predominantly for punishment will not work. Sanctions should acknowledge that the stalker does not respect or recognise authority or prohibition orders.

D. SPEAKERS



5. Harry Fletcher, Director Voice4Victims CIC

Harry Fletcher described research he was involved in whilst he was at NAPO (National Association of Probation Officers) called Abuse of Process in the Family and Civil Courts. He described how abusive behaviour continued as some convicted perpetrators pursued their victims through vexatious claims in the family and civil courts. He described analysing nearly 40 cases sent predominantly from Family Court staff detailing malicious claims of contact or even attempts to halt adoption proceedings, often the claims were made when they were serving lengthy prison sentences. At the time of the research in 2012, the perpetrators often obtained Legal Aid for their challenges whilst the majority of female victims had to rely on savings. It was the view of Family Court staff that the process affected victims psychologically and in all cases had a detrimental effect on the children's health and welfare. Often the proceedings had been allowed in court after advice from Family Court staff stating clearly that such action would have harmful impact on victims and families.

The report recommended that consideration be given to establishing a panel of last resort, this panel would decide if the claims were bonafide or vexatious. In addition the report recommended that power be given to the Courts to suspend parental responsibility until such time that the perpetrator could prove that their behaviour was fit for purpose and parenting. It was also recommended that courts be encouraged to make use of orders which prevented further vexatious applications for a stated number of years if it was proved that the victim was clearly being distressed and traumatised by this legal action.

E. GROUP DISCUSSION



A number of suggestions were made by conference participants for improvements and change in the system including:

1. Mandatory training for police and lawyers on victims and the nature of abuse
1. Greater understanding of the psychological impact on victims of DV, Stalking and coercive control
1. Mandatory training for judges on nature of coercive control
2. Recording judges' comments to victims
3. Use of video link for perpetrators to be more integrated in to court process and not be seen as a disadvantage for victim
4. No contact applications in the Family Courts were becoming harder to obtain and this was a risk to children
5. To consider the independent review of sharia councils and religious intolerance when considering abuse of process
6. An urgent need for new legislation to prevent abuse of process
1. A need for a review of the effectiveness of restraining and other restrictive orders in particular the response to multiple breaches
2. A need for greater co-ordination and communication between the different jurisdictions in particular where there had been relevant criminal convictions and the imposition of restriction orders
3. A need for legislation to prevent cross examination of victims by their perpetrators in all courts and safeguarding measures put in place

F. CAMPAIGN NEXT STEPS



Voice4Victims have officially launched their Abuse of Process campaign and will now be focusing on the following steps as part of their campaign:

1. Review existing legislation in respect of prohibition orders and abuse of process and draft as appropriate
2. To review existing training for all criminal justice professionals and those working in family and civil courts
3. To examine whether there is a need for new policy directives
4. To examine ways in which to restrict vexatious applications
5. To examine ways and means of improving communication between different legal jurisdictions
6. To examine the impact of the growth of litigants in person and its impact on victims
7. Make clear recommendations for legal and policy change in order to tackle the issues raised in this abuse of process conference
8. To strengthen restraining, non-molestation and other prohibition orders and ensure they are enforced

G. SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES



Claire Waxman, Voice4Victims

Claire Waxman started campaigning in 2009 for a stalking law by launching 'Claire's Campaign.' This campaign received great support and raised public awareness of stalking and the need for the harassment laws to be amended. She gave evidence of her stalking experience at the Parliamentary Enquiry for the stalking law reform, which led to a new stalking law in England and Wales in 2012. Claire continues to raise awareness of stalking and the new stalking legislation through public speaking and training.

Claire actively campaigns for victims' rights in the Criminal Justice System and in 2014 set up Voice4Victims, a campaign organisation which has drafted the first Victims Bill in conjunction with Harry Fletcher and Sir Keir Starmer, MP which is being debated in Parliament. The organisation also provides advocacy and support to victims navigating the justice system and those being abused through legal processes.

Jess Phillips, Labour MP for Birmingham, Yardley

Jess Phillips is the Labour MP for Birmingham Yardley. Jess has committed her life to improving the lives of others, especially the most vulnerable, and spent five years working for Women's Aid supporting and defending women.

Jess became a councillor in 2012 through the Labour Future Candidates Programme. In this role, she worked tirelessly to support residents, with her work being recognised when she became Birmingham's first ever Victims Champion.

Since becoming a MP in 2015, Jess has continued her fight to support those who need it the most and has been appointed to the Women and Equalities Committee and Backbench Business Committee.

G. SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES



DC Daniel Candler, Metropolitan Police

Daniel Candler joined the MPS in January 1992 and joined the CID officially in 1997. From February 2000, DC Candler worked within the Homicide Command, Covert Policing and Pan-London Crime targeting Organised Criminal Networks (OCN). He returned to Borough policing in 2011 where he supervised teams of CID officers within the Community Safety Unit (CSU) and main CID office. In 2014 he worked on the Waxman/ Fogel case and helped to bring about the first prosecution of someone using the civil courts to stalk their victim. Since September 2015, he has been attached to the Crime Academy, training sergeants and training detectives on the CSU course. (Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime, Honour Based Abuse & Safeguarding vulnerable adults.)

Sir Keir Starmer, Labour MP for Holburn & St Pancras

Before being elected to Parliament in 2015, Keir was the Director of Public Prosecutions and head of the Crown Prosecution Service (2008-2013). Prior to the 2015 General Election, Keir worked with Baroness Doreen Lawrence and victims' groups to develop Labour's proposals for a law to protect victims' rights. These proposals were reflected in the Victims of Crime (Etc) Bill, a Private Members Bill that Keir introduced in 2015.

Keir co-founded Doughty Street Chambers in 1990, working to protect human rights and fight against the death penalty. He is the author of several key texts on the law and from 2002-2007 he worked for the Policing Board of Northern Ireland as a human rights advisor.

G. SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES



Dr Jane Monckton-Smith, University of Gloucestershire

Dr Jane Monckton-Smith is a specialist in the area of Homicide, Stalking, and Coercive Control. She is a Senior Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Gloucestershire, and has written a number of books focusing on research she has undertaken in the area. Jane also maintains a wide portfolio of professional activity which includes Chairing Domestic Homicide Reviews, advising police at a local and national level, working with national stalking and homicide charities, and working with multiple organisations in their responses to Coercive Control and Stalking. The recommendations from her most recent research have been developed into a reference tool which helps professionals respond to Coercive Control and Stalking, and have formed the basis for the Domestic Homicide threat triad.

Harry Fletcher, Voice4Victims

Harry Fletcher is a criminal justice campaigner, who passionately believes in the elimination of injustice, is committed to the protection of the vulnerable and challenging the status quo.

Over the last 20 years of parliamentary campaigning Harry has drafted thousands of parliamentary questions for parliamentarians, prepared papers for adjournment and other parliamentary debates and written scores of briefings for MPs and Peers of all Parties on legislation. He has drafted 20 Private members Bills and, amongst other achievements was instrumental in establishing a number of cross Party and trade union groups on criminal justice issues. Most recently he has co-drafted the Victims' Rights Bill.