Fairness and Transparency:
Towards a New Framework for Dealing with Rogue Bailiffs and Debt Collectors

A Public Policy Exchange Symposium

Thursday 13th June 2013
10:15am – 4:30pm
Central London

Public Policy Exchange holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking. These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future development across all areas of public policy.
Overview

The criminal and civil justice systems depend upon, and are supported by, effective enforcement action. Without it, debtors have little or no incentive to pay the debt they owe, which can lead to a lack of public confidence in the justice system as a whole. Disturbingly, however, there is growing anecdotal evidence of some bailiffs using aggressive and excessive force, abusing the charging process and misrepresenting their legal authority. In response, the government has announced new laws to be introduced in England and Wales next year to tackle aggressive bailiffs and debt collectors.

Last year, in addition to releasing updated National Standards for Enforcement Agents, the government published a consultation paper ‘Transforming bailiff action’ setting out how it proposes to counter aggressive and unnecessary bailiff activity.

The proposals set out to provide:

- More protection against aggressive bailiffs whilst retaining an effective regime
- A fair, transparent and sustainable costs regime that provides adequate remuneration
- A proportionate regulatory regime that is targeted where action is needed

In general terms, the proposals aim to simplify and make clear the enforcement process, improve the accountability of enforcement agents and address inappropriate enforcement activity.

Having considered all the responses carefully, in January 2013 the government published a post-consultation report putting forward 19 key recommendations.

This timely symposium provides an invaluable opportunity for local authorities, financial services and enforcement industries, the legal profession, judiciary and the third sector to examine the government’s proposals to better regulate bailiff activities and explore the next steps in transforming bailiff action.

“Bailiffs are necessary for both the economy and the justice system. They carry out a difficult role in often challenging circumstances, and the majority operate in a responsible and proportionate manner. However, a significant few use intimidating behaviour, treat debtors unfairly and cause unnecessary distress, destroying the reputation of the majority. The Government is committed to strengthening protections against these rogue bailiffs and the unsound, unsafe or unfair methods that they use, while at the same time making sure that debts can still be collected fairly…”

“Our measures clarify the law, introduce a transparent fee structure and regulate the industry. Debtors and creditors will be easily able to understand their rights and can rest safe in the knowledge that there is no scope for unlawful force against the person…”

- Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, January 2013

Why Attend?

- Explore the key recommendations made following the “Transforming Bailiff Action” consultation paper
- Discuss the need to balance all of the objectives as set out in the government consultation paper
- Consider the ‘National Standards for Enforcement Agents’ document and its ability to be an effective national guidance tool
- Assess whether the new proposals meet the government’s responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010

Who Should Attend?

- Local Authorities
- Bailiffs and Enforcement Officers
- Relevant Government Departments
- The Enforcement Industry
- The Legal Profession
- The Judiciary
- The Advice Sector
- Businesses
- Voluntary Organisations
- Charities
- Landlords
- Local Housing Authorities
- Teams in Housing Associations
- Housing Services Management Teams
- Housing Management Officers
- Housing Finance Professionals
- Income Officers
- Income Management Officers
- Social Housing and Support Officers
- Housing Trusts
- Family Support Officers
- Community Development Teams
- Community Involvement Managers
- Community Involvement Officers
- Community Engagement Officers
- Customer Involvement Managers
- Health and Safety Officers
- Tenancy Management Officers
- Principal Officers – Health and Housing
- The Police

Accommodation

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Programme

09:30 Registration and Morning Refreshments
10:15 Chair’s Welcome and Introduction
10:30 Panel Session One: ‘Transforming Bailiff Action’ – Striking the Balance
   • Will the proposals provide more protection against aggressive bailiffs whilst spelling out the need for effective enforcement?
   • Is a fair, transparent and sustainable costs regime that provides adequate remuneration achievable from the intended changes?
   • Can we reduce excessive regulation on businesses and ensure effective protection for the vulnerable?
   • Explore the key recommendations made following the “Transforming Bailiff Action” consultation paper
11:15 Morning Refreshments
11:30 Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel One
12:30 Networking Lunch
13:30 Panel Session Two: Responsible Enforcement – The Next Steps in Tackling Unnecessary Bailiff Activity
   • Consider the ‘National Standards for Enforcement Agents’ document and its ability to be an effective national guidance tool
   • Review the coordinated programme of work across government in this area and the next steps required to tackle aggressive bailiffs
   • Equalities considerations – will the new proposals meet the government’s responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010?
   • Share best practice on Part 3 of the TCE Act, proposed regulatory changes to the costs of enforcement related services, the development of training competences and any other areas which need to be addressed
14:15 Afternoon Refreshments
14:30 Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel Two
15:30 Chair’s Summary and Closing Comments
15:40 Networking Reception
16:30 Close

**Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice**

Event Details

Date: Thursday 13th June 2013
Time: 10:15am – 4:30pm
Venue: Central London

Forthcoming Events

Preventing Deaths in Police Custody
1st May 2013
The Future of the High Street: The Next Steps Towards Revitalising Our Town Centres
2nd May 2013
Safeguarding Adults from Neglect and Abuse in Hospitals and Care Homes
8th May 2013
Responding to the Needs of Girls and Young Women in the Penal System
8th May 2013
Parking and Local Traffic Management: Beyond the Traffic Signs Policy Review
9th May 2013
Protecting Our Most Precious Resource: Tackling Water Pollution from the Urban Environment
14th May 2013
Recruiting Non-UK Nationals: Understanding and Complying with the Points Based Immigration System
21st May 2013
International Student Recruitment: Understanding and Complying with the Points Based Immigration System
22nd May 2013
Domestic Violence and Young People: Tackling Teenage Relationship Abuse
23rd May 2013
Mental Health and Young People: Promoting a Positive and Healthy Body Image
4th June 2013
Student Health and Well-being: Transforming Sexual Health Services in Universities and Colleges
5th June 2013
Community Cohesion and Social Inclusion: Strengthening Partnership Working Between Local Authorities and Voluntary and Faith Groups
6th June 2013
Beyond 2012: Working in Partnership to Transform Sports in Primary Schools
11th June 2013
The Role of Local Authorities in the New Universal Credit System
12th June 2013
Better Skills, Better Careers: Improving Graduate Employability
18th June 2013
Policing in the 21st Century: Raising Standards, Cutting Crime and Protecting the Public
18th June 2013
Zero Tolerance on Forced Marriage and ‘Honour’ Based Violence: The Way Forward
19th June 2013
Zero Tolerance on Forced Marriage and ‘Honour’ Based Violence: The Way Forward
19th June 2013

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For further information please contact Parvin Madahar on 020 3137 8630 or email parvin.madahar@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk

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