

NOVEMBER 2010

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP ON FAMILY LAW AND THE COURT OF  
PROTECTION

SPEAKER MEETING

“FAMILY JUSTICE REVIEW IN ACTION”

The Family Justice Review Panel speak for the first time, in an open meeting at the House of Commons

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Family Law and The Court of Protection<sup>1</sup> welcomes Family Justice Review Panel Members<sup>2</sup>, David Norgrove<sup>3</sup>, Councillor the Baroness Ritchie<sup>4</sup> and John Coughlan<sup>5</sup>, as guest speakers for The Group’s second public event which will look at The Family Justice Review’s<sup>6</sup> work and the future of the family courts, to be held at The Palace of Westminster, on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November.

The Family Justice system’s future is uncertain. The Ministry of Justice’s latest announcements<sup>7</sup> and consultation paper<sup>8</sup> in relation to legal aid, which suggests creating higher thresholds for obtaining it particularly in relation to private family law matters, have caused considerable concern<sup>9</sup>. With the fear that the most vulnerable members of society may find themselves without support at a time when they need it most, “Family Justice Review in Action” will look at possible ways forward to address this issue and what can be done to make the family court process fairer for families.

First Speaker for this event is David Norgrove, chair of the Family Justice Review and has knowledge of reform and change management in both the public and private sectors. Joining David Norgrove on the panel are Councillor the Baroness Ritchie, who is a Review Panel Member, chair of the Children and Young People Board at the Local Government Association and is a member of the board of Cafcass and John Coughlan CBE, also a Review Panel Member, Director of Children’s Services for Hampshire County Council and was influential in establishing the Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS).

John Hemming<sup>10</sup> welcomes the event: “There is a lot of interest in the Family Justice Review and I am pleased that the Panel have agreed to attend a meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group.”

**For further information please contact:**

Natasha Phillips – Secretariat, All Party Parliamentary Group on Family Law and The Court of Protection

07769 647 983

[Sobk13@gmail.com](mailto:Sobk13@gmail.com)

## Notes to Editors:

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<sup>1</sup> The All Party Parliamentary Group on Family Law and The Court of Protection was set up to look at issues that fall within the jurisdiction of the Family Courts, including the Court of Protection and other associated issues.

<sup>2</sup> [Full list of Family Justice Review Panel Members](#)

<sup>3</sup> David Norgrove is also Chair of the Pensions Regulator and the Low Pay Commission and panel chair his remit is to operate independently and objectively with no preconceptions about the way in which the family justice system currently operates.

<sup>4</sup> Councillor the Baroness Ritchie is also Lead member for children for the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

<sup>5</sup> John Coughlan is also Director of Children’s Services and formerly represented ADCS on the Ministerial Group on Care Proceedings – the forerunner to the National Family Justice Board.

<sup>6</sup> The Family Justice Review was set up to try and improve the system so that it is quicker, simpler, more cost-effective and fairer whilst continuing to protect children and vulnerable adults from risk of harm.

<sup>7</sup> [Reforms on legal aid](#), as reported by the BBC.

<sup>8</sup> Consultation paper “[Proposals for the reform of legal aid in England and Wales](#)”

<sup>9</sup> Resolution, the family lawyer’s association, shows [concern over the proposals](#), amongst others.

<sup>10</sup> John Hemming MP, is a Member of Parliament for Birmingham Yardley and founder of Justice for Families, a group dedicated towards helping families who feel they have been unjustly treated by the family justice system. John is also chair of The All Party Parliamentary Group on Family Law and The Court of Protection.