

**Summary of substantive policy discussions**  
**at Liberty Council meeting**  
**October 2013**

**Snowden Disclosures**

The meeting discussed the surveillance disclosures by NSA whistle-blower, Edward Snowden, and the response Liberty should seek from the authorities. It was agreed that a full inquiry into GCHQ surveillance was urgently needed. It was agreed that the Intelligence & Security Committee is unfit for purpose and that in responding to the substantive issues raised by Snowden, Liberty should also be seeking fundamental reform of this flawed oversight body.

The meeting discussed the implications of the disclosures. In particular – the threat to privacy, free speech and association; the threat to legal professional privilege and the risk posed to clients when communicating with lawyers via email; the implications for business and the commercial world of a wholly compromised internet.

The meeting discussed policy objectives and strategy. Liberty has already launched litigation in the IPT and is working with sister organisations in other jurisdictions to bring further claims. The European Parliament has an inquiry underway. The meeting agreed that the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 needs a complete overhaul and a new surveillance framework is required. Judicial warrant must be a pre-requisite for all targeted surveillance and current loopholes that may allow international information sharing agreements to bypass domestic regulation of surveillance need to be closed. The meeting discussed the importance of highlighting the role of the ECHR in litigation and policy work. Article 8 provides the only hard-edged privacy protection that we have and will be crucial in bringing the authorities to book in the courts.