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Title: **Chair**

Association: **Motor Accident Solicitors Society (MASS)**

Restoring the Balance for Claimants

After a summer dominated by prisons, riots and criminal justice, we are likely entering into a period where civil justice issues will hopefully come to the fore. The now long overdue review of the Whiplash Injury Regulations 2021 is expected to be published imminently, ahead of a limited degree of scrutiny by Parliament.

Given that the 'inflationary buffer' of around 11% announced in 2021 fell painfully short of the inflation reality, a substantive increase in the tariff would be fully justified. If the tariff is not adequately corrected upwards, Labour MPs can fully expect an outcry from the claimant sector.

Given Louise Haigh's comments during the election campaign, we can anticipate further details of the formal inquiry into insurance premiums by the relevant regulatory authorities. MASS will be pushing for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to explore all available options to ensure that motor insurance remains affordable for consumers, and that the promised annualised savings are returned to premium holders.

The election of Andy Slaughter and Ruth Cadbury as Chairs of the respective Justice and Transport Committees may precipitate a more intensive degree of scrutiny around motor accidents and a range of other civil justice issues.

It should not be forgotten that in opposition, Labour strongly opposed the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) and the Civil Liability Act. Championing the consumer, the party has long voiced support for the principles of access to justice and equality of arms. We are approaching a period where it is hoped that these words of support are turned into action. The legislative and regulatory agenda of recent years has strongly favoured the interests of defendants. It is now time to better protect the interests of claimants and restore the balance that should exist in our legal system, where neither side is unduly favoured in the eyes of the law.

