

# Hunt Bashes BBC Over Brand and Ross

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After his wide-ranging [speech](#) to Polis today, the Conservative's shadow secretary media secretary Jeremy Hunt took time to bash the Beeb over its response to the [Russell Brand/Jonathan Ross phone-call row](#).

Hunt was careful not to call for anyone to be sacked. He believes that politicians shouldn't go around trying to get private individuals fired. But he was scathing about the BBC response to the incident and the outrage it has provoked.

Hunt said this was not risky comedy, it was 'offensive, juvenile behaviour'. But what worried him was that the BBC's slow and limited public response indicates that "the BBC doesn't understand the huge influence the stars they employ have on the public".

This all chimed with the theme of social responsibility that he outlined in his [speech](#):

*"Our public service broadcasting needs to raise its game in the 21st century. It can – and should – do more. Typically public service broadcasters in Britain have tended to see their role as "raising an issue" or "pushing a problem up the political agenda". Jamie's School Dinners is a classic example of this, timed to perfection just before a general election in a way that pressured the government to find £280m in an emergency package to improve school food. Sometimes they go further, promoting awareness of issues through leaflets and websites linked to programmes. Who do you think you are? and Embarrassing Bodies are good examples of this But socially responsible public service broadcasters should be more ambitious than simply "raising an issue. They receive huge public subsidies, both in cash through the licence fee and implicitly through spectrum subsidy and prime positions on electronic programme guides. Surely it is reasonable for broadcasters to take more responsibility for the social impact of their programmes and not just simply place issues on the table for debate."*

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