



## BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 12 JUNE 2020

### Regulation

[The Times](#), [Legal Futures](#) – The media look at a new report from Professor Stephen Mayson, which recommends, amongst other reforms, that there should be one regulator for all legal services.

The Times, however, points out that “last month Alex Chalk, a justice minister, told MPs in a written statement that “there are no plans to review the Legal Services Act”.

Amanda Pinto, QC, Chair of the Bar, is quoted. She said: “The government has made clear that it has little appetite to alter the regulatory landscape in the legal services market right now, but Stephen Mayson’s report is a source of further thought on the issue.”

### Backlogs

[Law Society Gazette](#), [The i Paper](#) - The Gazette reports that the government is refusing to hand over data about an expected backlog of civil cases, according to the Bar Council, which said the figures are likely to make 'uncomfortable reading'.

**Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar**, told barristers she had been ‘fobbed off’ by the government after repeatedly asking for listing data.

Since the report, the government has published the data requested by the Bar Council.

The i Paper reports that a huge increase in joblessness caused by Covid-19 will lead to more people becoming desperate and breaking the law, leaving overstretched courts unable to cope, according to former High Court judge, Sir Richard Henriques QC.

The i Paper reports that, **Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC**, and the former chief prosecutor for North West England, Nazir Afzal, have also told i of their deep concerns about backlogs in recent weeks.

Sir Richard and Pinto disagree over how this can be tackled. While Pinto says that the fundamental right of a jury trial for serious offences must be maintained to ensure fair hearings, Sir Richard argues that some will have to be decided by judges instead to clear the backlog.

## Pride

[Legal Futures](#) - The legal professions of England and Wales – solicitors, barristers and chartered legal executives – will celebrate Pride events virtually during the Covid-19 pandemic, with a 'Home and Away' theme.

The Law Society, the Bar Council and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx) will release a series of video and blog interviews with members from each city whose Pride they were due to attend – Birmingham, London, Bristol, Newcastle, Leeds, Cardiff and Manchester – to highlight the experiences of LGBT+ lawyers across the country.

**Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC**, said: “The Bar Council is delighted to participate in this year’s virtual PRIDE, celebrating diversity, inclusion and the contribution that the LGBT+ community makes to the legal profession and society.

“Though we cannot physically march together this year, we will celebrate PRIDE as much as ever, share the experiences of LGBT+ lawyers far and wide and continue to work towards making the profession equal and accessible to everyone. All people must be treated equally and the law must be applied equitably. The Bar Council is proud to mark PRIDE alongside the LGBT+ community.”

## Pupillage Fair

**New Law Journal, Law Society Gazette** – Further coverage appears on the news that the Bar Council’s Pupillage Fair will be fully online this year.

## Chambers

**Jewish Tribune, LawCareers.net** – Further coverage appears on reports that barristers’ chambers are in talks about downsizing their offices in a bid to cut costs and encourage more remote working, following the coronavirus outbreak. However, there is still a need for physical space for career support and wellbeing, the Bar Council has stressed.

**Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC**, said there may be “immediate advantages” to chambers scaling back their offices, including cuts to costs and an increased flexibility for barristers with caring responsibilities.

“However, those advantages will need to be balanced against the very important role a physical chambers plays in all barristers’ careers: chambers provides training, support and career development, all of which are harder to foster at a distance,” she said.

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Due to overwhelming interest for a limited number of spots, we've had to bring the deadline for expressing interest forwards, to 18 June. We'll do our best to involve as many people as possible but please get in touch by this new date if you would like to share your story!



**The Bar Council** ✓ @thebarcouncil · Jun 8

We're looking for more Social Mobility Advocates to join our #IAmTheBar campaign.

Please email [Campaigns@BarCouncil.org.uk](mailto:Campaigns@BarCouncil.org.uk) by 26 June if you are a barrister from an under-represented background and have a story to share.

More details here: [barcouncil.org.uk/media-campaign...](http://barcouncil.org.uk/media-campaign...)

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