



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2020

Bar and Young Bar Conference

[The Times](#) (print and online), [The Times](#) (print and online), [Law Society Gazette](#), [Law Society Gazette](#) - The Times and other media outlets report on the Bar Council's Bar and Young Bar Conference, covering topics discussed at the Conference, including race and the Bar, technology, the future trends in the legal sector, criminal legal aid review and the justice system.

Spending Review and levelling up

[Evening Standard](#), [Yahoo News](#), [Politics Home](#) x 2, [Law Society Gazette](#) x 2, [Legal Futures](#), [LawCareers.net](#), [New Law Journal](#) x 2, [Lawyer Monthly](#), [MSN](#), – The media reports on the Bar Council's reaction to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Spending Review, which included funding for the justice system.

Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar, is quoted. She said: "The announcement of extra funding for the justice system in today's Spending Review is a ray of hope in terms of fixing the many problems our justice system faces.

"It is a sign that this government understands the importance of investing in the entire justice system from start to finish."

But she warned the money would only offer short-term solutions to the problems in justice and "must not be a flash in the pan".

She said: "The government must now ensure the system is sustainable in the long-term to ensure access to justice for everyone."

Ahead of the Chancellor's announcement, the media reported that the Bar Council had urged the government to invest in local court systems arguing that people in the Midlands and the North are in 'dire need of early legal advice'.

In a [paper](#) to the Treasury, the Bar Council said 'levelling up is a key government commitment to help communities, particularly in the Midlands and the North, and to reduce regional inequalities'.

As part of the levelling up agenda, the representative body said non-means tested legal aid should be available for all domestic abuse cases, and people should have early access to legal advice for social welfare issues.

Ministers criticising lawyers

The Observer, [The Guardian](#), [New Statesman](#), [Lawyer Monthly](#), [Marseilles News](#) - The Observer and other media outlets report that in a letter seen by the Observer, the immigration minister, Chris Philp, condemned lawyers for challenges to the deportations of asylum seekers.

The Observer reports that the fresh attacks on the legal profession, this time accusing lawyers of undermining the justice system by "playing politics", prompted **Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC** to speak up again following similar comments made by the Home Secretary and Prime Minister in September.

The Observer quotes Amanda Pinto QC. She said: "This latest criticism of lawyers yet again exposes the lack of understanding of the role lawyers play in our immigration and wider justice system, as well as a gap in the minister's knowledge of the Home Office's own operations when it comes to immigration."

Pinto added that lawyers were often responding to late or immediate deportation decisions by the Home Office, which made it impossible to avoid last-minute challenges.

"The government should not make general, unwarranted attacks on the reputation of the legal profession. To do so undermines the whole system," she said.

Meanwhile, in a lengthy article about Home Secretary Priti Patel's career, the [New Statesman](#) reports that the Bar Council, Law Society and others from legal sector complained of her recent inflammatory remarks about "lefty lawyers."

Chair of the Bar

New Law Journal – NLJ runs an article by Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar, looking back on the challenges thrust upon the justice system by the pandemic and some unexpected body blows to the profession, as well as some of the positives that have emerged in 2020.

Court backlog

BBC Radio Four – Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar, appears on BBC Radio Four to talk about the current backlog of cases in the courts.

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