



## BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – MONDAY 1 JULY 2019

### Recorders

[\*\*The Guardian\*\*](#), [\*\*Yahoo News\*\*](#), [\*\*Business Fast\*\*](#) – The Guardian and other media outlets reports that working days for recorders have been slashed and requests are being made for them to sit on the bench at impossibly short notice, according to the Criminal Bar Association (CBA).

The decline in sitting days for recorders is imposing additional strains on full-time, crown court judges, says the CBA. Some recorders have even received warning notices that if they do not fulfil their required annual quota of at least 15 days they may no longer be eligible to serve.

**Derek Sweeting QC, Chair of the Bar Council's Legal Services Committee and Vice-Chair Elect of the Bar**, is quoted in the articles. He says: “The reduction in crown court cases ought to be leading to reduced waiting times and an improvement in efficiency but rather than taking the fall in cases as an opportunity to improve the system, the concern is that it's being used as an opportunity to cut costs by reducing sitting days.

“Courtrooms with available judges should be dealing with cases that are ready for trial, not standing empty. There's a lot of coxing and boxing with recorders being asked to sit urgently at short notice. It's something of a zero-hours approach.”

In 2018 there was a 16% decrease in new crown court trials compared to the previous year. Last week, however, the Metropolitan police commissioner, Cressida Dick, expressed concern about “woefully low” rates for solving crimes, with courts “emptying” despite some offences rising.

### Women in law

**New Law Journal** - Further reports emerge of the news that the Bar Council, Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx) and Law Society have launched a

Women in Law pledge to help support and progress gender equality within the legal profession.

### **Legal Services Board**

**Times Online (The Brief)** – The Times reports that staffing costs at the regulator of lawyers in England and Wales, the Legal Services Board (LSB), have risen by an “inflation-busting” seven per cent over the past year.

The Times reports that when staff costs alone are analysed, LSB officials acknowledged that the increase was even sharper, rising by more than eight per cent. Inflation is running at between 1.8 and 2.1 per cent.

The Times points out that the Law Society paid 83 per cent of the LSB’s funding. The Bar Council picked up nine per cent of the bill and the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives paid four per cent. The remaining seven organisations covered by the legislation, including the Council for Licensed Conveyancers and the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys, also paid four per cent.

**BAR COUNCIL TWEETS @ <https://twitter.com/thebarcouncil>**



**Alison Padfield QC**

@alisonpadfield

Following



Brilliant new disability accessibility tool from [@thebarcouncil](#) - not a regulatory obligation, but \*please\* ask your chambers to use it & put the info online - it makes all the difference if you're disabled & considering visiting/applying to chambers):



[Bar Council Accessibility Self-Audit Tool for chambers – Ba...](#)

This audit has been designed by the Bar Council in consultation with the Bar Council's Disability Panel. There are a wide range of physical and mental disabilities and this audit doesn't cover...

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The Bar Council



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REMINDER: Drop-in session with Chair of the Bar, Richard Atkins QC, on Tuesday 2 July, 16.00-18.00. Meet or speak on the phone to Richard and others from the Bar Council.

More details here in #BarTalk

[r1.dmtrk.net/4CGD-LM4X-091B ...](http://r1.dmtrk.net/4CGD-LM4X-091B)



6:45 AM – 29 Jun 2019

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