



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – MONDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2019

Price transparency

Legal Futures - The Bar Standards Board (BSB) has curbed some of the areas where public access barristers will have to provide price transparency as it named May 2019 as the start-date for the new regime.

Child arrangements arising out of divorce or separation has been dropped from the list following lobbying from the Bar Council and Family Law Bar Association, which argued that it would be difficult to provide accurate indicative fees in an area where cases were not standardised.

Ewen Macleod, the BSB's director of strategy and policy said: "We are confident that, subject to final approval by the Legal Services Board, these new rules will improve the information available to the public to allow them to engage the right barrister for their circumstances, whilst not burdening the profession with unnecessary new requirements."

Prosecutors' fees

The Gazette - The Crown Prosecution Service's latest recruitment spree for deputy chief crown prosecutors, who will be paid up to £93,247, has 'really incensed' practitioners, according to the criminal bar chief, who is preparing to meet the director of public prosecutions this month.

Criminal Bar Association Chris Henley QC has told prosecution chief Max Hill QC in a letter that anger about the treatment and remuneration of prosecution advocates 'is reaching boiling point'.

A CPS spokesperson said: 'The DPP has confirmed that the CPS is carrying out a review of the graduated fees scheme for external advocates this year. CPS officials held a constructive meeting with representatives from the Bar Council, Criminal Bar Association, circuit leaders and the Young Bar before Christmas to open discussions. This review will be a thorough, considered process and we will be consulting with the profession over the coming months.'

Family legal aid

[The Independent](#) - The number of parents forced to represent themselves in child custody battles at family courts has more than doubled in six years in the wake of legal aid cuts.

Campaigners have warned “huge injustices” are taking place and children’s best interests are being “obscured”. Government data revealed 23,881 parents who applied to open private law cases for child arrangements in 2017 had no legal representation – up 134 per cent since 2011.

The figures, obtained through a parliamentary question, show the proportion of applicants going to court unrepresented surged from one in five in 2011 – the year before restrictions to legal aid were introduced – to almost half of all cases in 2017. Overall, including both applicants and respondents, the figure was up 85 per cent, from 29,353 to 54,287.

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