



## BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2021

### Justice Secretary

**The Times (print, p.55), [The Guardian](#), Law Society Gazette (print, p.4)** – The Times questions whether the appointment of Dominic Raab to both Justice Secretary and Lord Chancellor signals the Johnson government's desire to abolish the post of Lord Chancellor. The role is meant to be independent of cabinet government, and combining it with the position of deputy prime minister seems incompatible with that principle.

Derek Sweeting QC, Chair of the Bar Council, is quoted as saying "in the absence of a written constitution, the position remains unique and vital", adding: "The fact that the last three lord chancellors have all been lawyers suggests the experiment with non-lawyer appointments is over and that the role is larger than that of justice secretary. We might hope that combining the position with that of deputy prime minister will help ensure that our justice system gets the attention and support that it needs."

The Guardian reports on concerns from Labour and senior legal figures that Dominic Raab was appointed as justice secretary in order to overhaul the Human Rights Act. It quotes the Chair of the Bar Council Derek Sweeting QC's reaction to Mr Raab's appointment, saying "As we welcome the eighth justice secretary in the last 10 years to play this vital role, the need for a consistent and strong voice in government for our justice system could not be greater."

The Law Society Gazette uses the same quote in its coverage of last week's appointment of Mr Raab.

### Due diligence

**The Times (print, p.54)** – The Times writes on the need for lawyers to exercise due diligence when supporting charitable endeavours, after some high profile legal

professionals were involved in promoting an exhibition with links to a convicted con-woman.

The Bar Council's advice on due diligence is quoted: "Given the magnified visibility barristers now have through their social media presence and activity, we would urge extra care when lending support to other organisations."

## Diversity

[Legal Futures](#) – The old 'tap on the shoulder' system of appointing judges would have yielded better diversity for ethnic minority lawyers than the current system, Labour MP David Lammy has claimed.

He observed that there were areas of the Bar and City law firms that still felt like they were "100% white". Changing this situation required leadership "at the top of chambers and among those who run the Bar Council."

## Clerks

[Legal Futures](#) – Legal Futures reports on an event on the fair distribution of work hosted by Lincoln's Inn. The seminar heard that barristers' clerks must ensure that both work coming in and marketing efforts by chambers are done with an eye to equality in the way they are distributed.

Elaine Banton, co-chair of the Bar Council's Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility Committee, said there was a "culture of procuring self-generated work" at the Bar, which tended to favour some more than others and had to be closely monitored.

## Climate change

[Legal Futures](#) – The Bar Council is mentioned as supporting a global collaboration of lawyers aiming to reduce climate change through model contracts.

## BAR COUNCIL TWEETS



**The Bar Council**  @thebarcouncil · Sep 22



Richard Frost, @middletemple Outreach Officer, explains how aspiring barristers can get advice from the Inns of Court on funding, scholarships and interviews at #PupillageFair2021. Find out more and book at [barcouncil.org.uk/pupillagefair2021](https://barcouncil.org.uk/pupillagefair2021). @TheInnerTemple @HonSocGraysInn @lincolnsinn





**The Bar Council** ✓ @thebarcouncil · 2h

...

In his speech at the swearing-in of the new Lord Chancellor, [@BarCouncilChair](#), Derek Sweeting QC, stressed the important and unique role of the Lord Chancellor as well as the need to defend human rights.

Read the Chair of the Bar's speech: [barcouncil.org.uk/resource/chair...](http://barcouncil.org.uk/resource/chair...)

[@MoJGovUK](#)

**Ministry of Justice** ✓ @MoJGovUK · 19h

"I have sworn an Oath that I will continue to uphold the rule of law and defend the independence of the judiciary."

Deputy Prime Minister and Justice Secretary [@DominicRaab](#) has been sworn in as Lord Chancellor today.

Read his full speech: [gov.uk/government/spe...](http://gov.uk/government/spe...)

