



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – WEDNESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2019

Judicial bullying

Shield's Gazette, [Talk Radio](#) – Further coverage of the Bar Council's guidance issued last week on judicial bullying appears in the media.

Chair of the Bar, Richard Atkins QC says, in a letter accompanying the guide, that only a small number of judges "engage in bullying", but that bullying should never be excused. The guide, which has been sent to barristers, says the targets of bullying by judges may feel unable to do anything.

Court security

[City AM](#) – City AM reports that a diabetic barrister was refused entry to court because of a can of drink.

Max Schofield, a tax barrister at 3PB chambers, tweeted: "I am currently being refused entry to Milton Keynes County Court because I have a 150ml can of drink which I keep in my bag as a diabetic just in case of hypoglycaemia."

He said security guards refused to follow guidance provided by HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS) which said unopened drinks in cartons and cans were permitted in court.

City AM reports that "in response to a string of complaints the Bar Council and HMCTS launched a smartphone identification pilot for barristers in September to allow them to enter court buildings without going through airport-style security, however at present it only applies to five courts."

Employment tribunals

[HR News](#) – HR News reports that rumours persist that the government may be planning to reintroduce employment tribunal fees, which have been seriously

opposed by many in the legal sector, including Andrew Walker QC, former Chair of the Bar.

Speaking after the news that the government is potentially considering a 'progressive' new fee scheme, Walker, who was Chair of the Bar at the time, said that: "People in need of justice have enough hurdles to overcome already. Justice is not a service bought by individuals for their private benefit, nor should it be treated in this way."

The rising demand for help in employment tribunals has sparked UNU Group to launch a free legal helpline, designed to offer support and advice on employment law queries.

Court sitting hours

[Legal Futures](#) - Criminal law barristers cannot go on without "sensible parameters" for sitting hours and overnight working and will take action if the judiciary does not, says Chris Henley, chair of the Criminal Bar Association. He added that the Bar Council have "endeavoured to agree" such parameters with the senior judiciary.

Prosecution fees

The Times, [BBC News](#) - Crown court prosecution lawyers are paid so poorly that their fees are often worse than wages at McDonald's, says the CBA.

Barristers instructed by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) are to attend a "rally" next week to consider taking action that could bring criminal trials in England and Wales to a halt, reports The Times.

The Times reports that the CBA has said the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Max Hill, QC, had given a strong steer to the Bar Council that payments for prosecutors would be reviewed soon.

BBC News online takes a closer look at the figures on earnings and income of the Bar. The BBC reports that: "The average pay for a junior criminal barrister with up to 15 years' experience is about £40,000 a year. Once you subtract the fees to rent chambers and other costs, this falls to about £28,000, according to figures from the Bar Council.

"That's still significantly more than the annual earnings of someone working front of house at McDonald's, on a starting wage of £8 an hour or £16,640 a year. But that's an average - low fixed fees for public barristers and the many hours it can take to prepare for a case mean they can quite easily slip under the minimum wage.

“Equally, some barristers will earn far more and those working privately can earn hundreds of thousands. Criminal barristers can also supplement their incomes by taking a mix of public and private cases.”

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Today we publish the anonymous story of a barrister and recovering alcoholic, who blogs for us on managing addiction at the Bar, how [#WellbeingAtTheBar](#), [@LawCareLtd](#) and more helped them overcome it and return to practice.

Read the story here: bit.ly/2NsB4Q2



10:28 AM - 26 Feb 2019

26 Retweets 47 Likes





Martin McCarthy

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Last week I used my new Bar Council entry card at Notts CC. It allowed me access without a search. It was painless. They scanned my pre app card and it was recognised by the security scanner. It took me less than 10 seconds to get in. Why cant this be used in all courts?

11:11 PM - 25 Feb 2019

3 Retweets 15 Likes

