



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 31 JULY 2020

Small Change for Justice

[The Times](#) + 10 more local media outlets – Further coverage of the Bar Council’s Small Change for Justice report. The Bar Council, which represents 16,500 barristers in England and Wales, published research claiming that the government spent only 39p per person per day on justice.

Bar Council chair **Amanda Pinto QC** said: “For just small change, 22p per person more, the Government could put its money where its mouth is, commit to boosting law and order and protecting the public by investing the price of a packet of Hobnobs per person per week in the whole justice system.”

Changes to the justice system

[The Sunday Times](#) – Dipesh Gadher and Rosa Ellis report on the changes to the justice system caused by the pandemic in the Sunday Times ‘Future Of’ series.

Among the concerns around having fewer jurors are the fact that a reduced jury could be less diverse and therefore place black or Asian defendants at a disadvantage.

“For the jury system to work there needs to be a sufficient number of people to even out prejudice or bias,” said Derek Sweeting QC, Chair-Elect of the Bar Council. “It’s much easier if you’re a strong individual to dominate another six people rather than 11.”

Crime stats

[The Daily Telegraph](#) – Home Office data showed that the proportion of crimes resulting in a charge or summons fell from eight per cent to seven per cent in the year to March 2020, down from 15.5 per cent when records began in 2014.

Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar said: “Pre-Covid-19 charging rates have plummeted, and as a result, so has the public’s trust and confidence in justice.

People need to know that if they are the victims of crime or if they are falsely accused, they will have a fair outcome in a reasonable time.

“Our own recently published report, *Small Change for Justice*, sets out how shockingly underfunded the justice system, including the police, has been over the last decade. A system that is run on pennies cannot be expected to deliver world-class results. Targeted financial intervention is desperately needed.”

Bar Council survey

The Times (print and [online](#)), [Lawyer Monthly](#), [LawCareers.net](#), [PoliticsHome](#), [New Law Journal](#), [Global Legal Post](#) - The Bar Council’s [July survey](#) of the barristers’ profession has been released, with results that illustrate the damage dealt to the justice system by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the results, publicly funded barristers have seen a 69% reduction in fee income, while self-employed barristers have seen a 59% drop in fee income in addition to their work hours being halved.

“The huge drop in working hours, brought about by courts not operating at anywhere near capacity, has a direct impact on the public – barristers not working means citizens cannot access justice now,” explained Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar.

“Recovery looks a long way off and, when barristers cannot afford to stay in their profession, the public will lose out on vital help in exercising their legal rights. The government cannot avoid intervening any longer.”

Justice Select Committee report

[The Independent](#), [PoliticsHome](#) - Rising numbers of remote court hearings during the coronavirus pandemic may have an impact on the “fairness” of justice, MPs have warned.

A report by the Justice Committee warned that there had been no evaluation of how remote hearings affect verdicts and sentences, or access to proceedings for participants, the media and public.

Amanda Pinto QC, chair of the Bar Council, said it was “crucial” access to justice for the public was at the heart of recovery plans, adding: “We know technology has played a huge part in how the justice system has adapted to the current crisis, but the right balance must be struck.

“Some cases and participants are not best served by remote hearings.”

Race working group

Evening Standard (print and [online](#)), [Msn.com](#), [Yahoo.com](#) - Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of the Bar, announces that a new ‘race working group’ has been set up by the Bar Council to improve diversity, saying she is ashamed by the low numbers of black lawyers at the Bar.

She suggested that stereotypes and the unfair allocation of work were among the factors inhibiting black barristers from progressing. She said that action was necessary because only 3.2 per cent of barristers were from a black British background, while only 8.1 per cent of QCs were from a black, Asian or other ethnic minority background.

She added: “We shouldn’t be glossing over the fact that we haven’t managed to attract and retain the undoubted talent that there is among the black community.”

“What we want to be able to do is look at factors that are hindering access, retention, progression and work out what we need to do to address that and put that in place. Every part of the chain needs to be addressed.”

Impact on legal services

[Legal Futures](#) - Speaking at an online session of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Amanda Pinto QC, chair of the Bar Council, said that the pandemic would have an “enormous impact” on the demand for legal services, both because of the backlog of existing cases and new kinds of cases “coming out of the pandemic”.

She went on: “There is a real concern that because of the decimation of work for the profession at the moment and the lack of support from government, there will be a real reduction in the availability of legal services. It’s a really worrying picture for the future.”

Ms Pinto said the “real positive” from the pandemic was the way the justice system has been able to keep going using virtual platforms, which had boosted its position on the international stage. However, she called for an “impact assessment” in every area of law to determine where remote justice had been a success and where it was “not appropriate”.

Ms Pinto questioned why the government’s package of pay rises for many public sector workers, including 2% for judges, did not include legal aid lawyers.

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



The Bar Council @thebarcouncil · Jul 29

The EU does itself no favours by avoiding the very real injustices in its jurisdiction and beyond, writes Fergus Randolph QC, member of our EU Law Committee and Future Relationship Working Group, in @FT today



Letter: EU has turned a blind eye to injustices within its jurisdiction
From Fergus Randolph QC, London WC2, UK
ft.com

2 3

You Retweeted



The CBA @TheCriminalBar · Jul 20

Amanda Pinto QC, Chair of @thebarcouncil is on fire @APPGLegalAid

CrimeLine @CrimeLineLaw · Jul 20

Amanda Pinto QC has yet to draw breath, being cross-examined by her must be near to an abuse of process, I would just plead guilty. Amanda has that 'disappointed in you' tone.

1 3 20



The Bar Council  @thebarcouncil · Jul 24

NEW COURTS ADDED: Croydon Magistrates is now operating the Professional Users Access (ID card) scheme and Luton Justice Centre will be operating the scheme from Monday.

Find the full list here: [gov.uk/guidance/profe...](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/profe...)

@HMCTsgovuk @FamilyLawBar @YoungBarristers



Professional users' court and tribunal access scheme
Access to HMCTS buildings via a smartphone identity application (ID app) or ID card for professional court ...
[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

2 5 4



The Bar Council  @thebarcouncil · Jul 24

Reminder: From Monday 27 July 2020, @HMCTsgovuk is asking all court and tribunal users to wear a face covering in the public areas of their buildings in England, unless they have a practical reason not to.

Find all the details on our website here: [barcouncil.org.uk/uploads/assets...](https://www.barcouncil.org.uk/uploads/assets...)

1 5 6



The Bar Council  @thebarcouncil · Jul 20

Latest update from Chair of the Bar, Amanda Pinto QC: Small Change for Justice (less than a red pepper), preview of shocking survey findings, more courts opening, increasing work volumes, modernising the Bar Council + more.

Read it here: r1.dmtrk.net/4CGD-VNSY-F4F1...



2 10 9