



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 31 MAY 2019

Criminal Bar

[PoliticsHome](#) - Responding to the announcement by the Criminal Bar Association to ballot its members on whether to take action over prosecution and defence fees, the Bar Council and the Young Barristers' Committee (YBC) said:

“The lack of investment in the criminal justice system over many years has been highlighted by the Bar Council and YBC at every available opportunity. The Bar Council and YBC share the widespread concerns of those practising at the criminal Bar.

“Prosecution fees have been cut over the last 18 years and defence fees are no longer fit for purpose. These issues must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

“We encourage the criminal Bar to respond to the CBA's ballot. In addition, we welcome and endorse the proposals to remain engaged with the reviews being undertaken by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in relation to prosecution and defence fees for the Bar. We are committed to supporting the criminal Bar in these reviews and beyond.”

CPS

[The Barrister](#) – Richard Atkins, Chair of the Bar, writes for the Barrister:

“Unlike some, I am not upset by the increases for the CPS employees. They too have suffered over many years because of cuts to the CPS budget and reductions in CPS staffing levels [...] I am actually faintly encouraged that the Treasury appears to have realised that our prosecution system is in need of increased funding, although time will tell whether my optimism is mis-placed. What does concern me however is that this is not simply an issue that affects CPS employees but is one which applies across the entire prosecution system.

“A major concern is that whatever proposals are made as a result of this review, it will ultimately be for the Treasury to decide whether it is prepared properly to fund the justice system. Whichever Government we have in power or whatever the make-up and personalities of that Government are anybody’s guess. [...] Those who prosecute (and defend) provide a vital public service and this message must be carried loudly and clearly to the Treasury. [...] If investment is not made and the cuts reversed, our criminal justice system, once the envy of the world, will wither and die. Action must be taken by those holding the purse strings before it is too late.”

Wales smacking ban

New Law Journal (print) - The Bar Council's Law Reform Committee has provided advice on a proposed smacking ban in Wales. The National Assembly is currently consulting on the proposed Children (Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment) (Wales) Bill. The Bill aims to abolish the common law defence of reasonable punishment so it is no longer available in Wales to parents or those acting in loco parentis as a defence to assault or battery against a child. The Bar's Committee agreed the Bill achieved its intended objective but suggested a less complicated way to do so via a small amendment to the Children Act 2004.

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HMCTS @HMCTSGovuk · May 22

'A lot of hard work and investment has gone into this scheme. It will be of immense benefit to members of the Bar initially.' - @AtkinsQC @thebarcouncil
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The Bar Council @thebarcouncil · 22h

SPEAKING OPPORTUNITY: Apply by 10 June to speak at the English-Cypriot Law day. The conference will take place on Friday 13 September 2019 in Limassol, Cyprus, and you can find more information here: thebarcouncil.symbols-online.com/registrationinfo...

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Black Barristers' Network @BBN_Tweets - May 29

The BBN Committee would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who came to our formal launch event last night and helped to make it a thoroughly enjoyable and successful evening. We are now even more excited about the growth of the Network and our forthcoming ventures!



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