



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 25 MAY 2018

Chair and Vice Chair of the Bar

[Politics Home](#), [Law Society Gazette](#), [City AM \(print & online\)](#), [The Times](#), [The Barrister](#) – The media report that Richard Atkins QC has been elected as Chair of the Bar for 2019. Amanda Pinto QC and Grant Warnsby have been elected as Vice Chair of the Bar and Treasurer of the Bar respectively.

Harassment

[The Guardian](#), [Politics Home](#), [The Barrister](#) – The media report that barristers' chambers and courts are "plagued with sexual harassment, bullying and abuse of power", according to a group dedicated to delivering justice to exploited lawyers.

The inaugural meeting of [Behind the Gown](#), held in central London on Wednesday evening, heard complaints of inappropriate behaviour and discriminatory conduct by judges, QCs and senior lawyers.

Sam Mercer, head of equality and diversity at the Bar Council, is quoted. She said: "The Bar Council is absolutely against any abuse of power in any organisations in which barristers work. Tackling issues of harassment and bullying is a top priority.

"We welcome the Behind the Gown initiative and look forward to working in conjunction with it to find additional and better ways to prevent harassment from happening in the first place – and to ensure that there are appropriate remedies and solutions when it does."

Personal injury

[New Law Journal](#) - Barristers have joined MPs on the Justice Committee in criticising government proposals to raise the threshold for small claims.

The MPs' report, Small claims limit for personal injury, warned last week of significant access to justice concerns if plans to raise the small claims limit from £1,000 to £2,000 for employers' liability and public liability claims, and to £5,000 for

road traffic accident-related personal injury, go ahead. The change would be made by secondary legislation.

A Bar Council spokesperson said: “Many who suffer such injuries are not in a position to afford legal help, often because an accident has resulted in a loss of income, yet they will be up against large and well-resourced insurance firms.

“The Justice Select Committee rightly points out that the likely impact of raising the small claims track will be a substantial increase in the number of unrepresented litigants. This will place further strain on the resources of already stretched court services.”

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Amanda Pinto QC @33CL elected as Vice Chair of the Bar, 2019. Third woman in 8 years. Richard @AtkinsQC to become Chair and Grant Warnsby Treasurer of the Bar for 2019 - barcouncil.org.uk/media-centre/n ...



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