



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 11 AUGUST 2017

Flexible Courts Pilot

[Law Society Gazette](#), [Legal Futures](#), [Local Government Lawyer](#) – Further coverage appears of the Bar Council’s warnings over plans by HMCTS to pilot flexible court operating hours.

A [letter](#) from Andrew Langdon QC, Chair of the Bar, in response to Fulford LJ on the issue of the pilot is quoted in the media.

The Gazette and Legal Futures also report on opposition to the pilot in the judiciary, including the Association of Fee-Paid Judges (AFPJ), as well as from the Law Society.

Local Government Lawyer reports that the Chair of the Bar has demanded clarification of the approach to be taken to evaluating the court flexible operating hours pilots and warned that unless barristers’ concerns are addressed, then they will be “very unhappy about engaging with the experiment.”

Court reporting

[Law Society Gazette](#) – The Gazette reports that Westminster Magistrates’ Court has closed its press room, in a move that will further stoke fears about the growing lack of oversight and transparency of local courts.

The Gazette reports that in a recent [column](#) Andrew Langdon QC, Chair of the Bar, said that a decline in court reporters meant that justice is operating “essentially unseen and unheard by the public.”

He wrote: “A large majority of cases, although conducted in public hearings up and down the land, and although producing outcomes that often dramatically

affect the lives of the citizens concerned, operate essentially unseen and unheard by the public.”

Zimbabwe

[IBA](#) – The IBA website publishes details of a joint letter, co-signed by the International Bar Association’s Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI), the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales, the Bar Council of England and Wales, and other lawyers' organisations, which was sent to President Mugabe of Zimbabwe on the 3rd of August, calling on him to veto a bill proposing changes to judicial appointments which will undermine the independence of the judiciary and threaten the rule of law in Zimbabwe.

The Bill will amend the Constitution to give the President the sole discretion to appoint the Chief Justice, Deputy Chief Justice and Judge President of the High Court. The Bill has been passed by the Lower House of Parliament, and if approved by the Senate, it will be up to President Mugabe to veto or sign the Bill into law.

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



The Bar Council ✓
@thebarcouncil



Judges join chorus of concern about
[@HMCTSgovuk](#) flexible courts pilot
[@legalfutures](#) [@TheLawSociety](#).

Legal Futures @legalfutures

Judges speak out against flexible court hours pilots ow.ly/ZQcz30efVoA

8:57 AM - 10 Aug 2017

21 Retweets 6 Likes





Shoaib M Khan ✓

@ShoaibMKhan

Follow



Timely by @thebarcouncil's @westcrct on troubling insinuation that lawyers' personal beliefs are relevant to cases.

lawgazette.co.uk/analysis/comme ...?



Justice is not a popularity contest

Reflecting on the Charlie Gard case, bar chair Andrew Langdon QC warns of the dangers of personalising the role of lawyers.

lawgazette.co.uk

3:42 PM - 9 Aug 2017

9 Retweets 5 Likes

