



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 30 AUGUST 2019

Criminal justice

Daily Telegraph – In an article on the prison population falling to its lowest level for more than a decade amid a collapse in charging rates and delays in bringing offenders to court, the Telegraph points to a report from the Bar Council which found the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) had sustained 27 per cent cuts in real terms over a decade and the Crown Prosecution Service 34 per cent.

The Telegraph reports that “the MoJ predicts that the numbers being held in jail will drop from the current 83,116 to 81,200 in 2021, its lowest since 2007, when it was around 80,000 before jumping to 83,000.

“It admits the slump in the number of criminals being charged has led to a fall of nine per cent in the number of offenders being given immediate jail sentences.

“It follows warnings by Britain’s most senior criminal judge, Lord Leveson, that the criminal justice system is in danger of collapse with many crimes not being prosecuted.”

Diversity

Financial Times – The FT reports that lawyers and banks in the UK are demanding more diversity from the barristers they instruct as they attempt to end panels of “white, middle-aged men” on their high-profile cases.

Top law firms including Clifford Chance, Allen & Overy and Freshfields are among those requesting a gender diverse list when appointing legal counsel. “If we ask chambers for some recommendations and we get five white males, we will go back and ask them to give us other suggestions too,” said Michael Lyons, a partner at City firm Clifford Chance.

Clifford Chance started tracking the number of female barristers it instructed last year, by seniority, case and frequency of appointment.

Clerks said they were finally starting to feel the impact of these efforts and were increasingly able to challenge law firms that requested male barristers. “We are seeing a big push from the client end, which is enabling us to challenge solicitors and not give them a list of names that they would always turn to,” said Sian Hockett, joint deputy senior clerk at Fountain Court Chambers. “In the past, law firms have been more of a closed shop and work from a set list of barristers and it has been harder to make them deviate from that.”

Courts

[Kent Messenger](#) - The media continue to report on the Bar Council’s reaction to the recent news that nearly half of all crown courts across England and Wales were left empty, despite a backlog of criminal cases.

Richard Atkins QC, Chair of the Bar, continues to be quoted, stating that the trend is a 'devastating blow' to victims.

Protocols

[Legal Futures](#) - The outgoing chair of the Criminal Bar Association (CBA) has criticised senior judges for failing to follow their Family Division colleagues in adopting email and sitting hours protocols to aid wellbeing.

Chris Henley QC said it was disappointing that “the very modest requests” for sensible arrangements – made both by the Bar Council and CBA – have so far been ignored.

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



The Bar Council
@thebarcouncil

Calling all barristers - join us and @cpsuk to celebrate 100 years of Women in Law. Listen and engage with inspiring women including Lady Justice Nicola Davies and Chair-Elect of the Bar Amanda Pinto QC to discuss the #Next100Years.

Don't miss out. Book your places now.

THE CPS AND THE BAR COUNCIL INVITE YOU TO

100

YEARS OF WOMEN
IN LAW

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE
AND HEAR FROM INSPIRING WOMEN
INCLUDING LADY JUSTICE NICOLA DAVIES

WHEN: 24 SEPTEMBER, 17:30
WHERE: 102 PETTY FRANCE

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO
REGISTER YOUR INTEREST, EMAIL
NFEIFEI@BARCOUNCIL.ORG.UK
BY 4 SEPTEMBER



CPS and 3 others

3:42 PM - Aug 28, 2019 - [Twitter Web App](#)

[View Tweet activity](#)

21 Retweets 23 Likes