



BAR COUNCIL NEWS UPDATE – FRIDAY 16 JULY 2021

Judicial diversity

[BBC](#), [The Times \(print, p.16\)](#), [Legal Futures](#) – The media reports that lawyers from most minority backgrounds are now more likely than their white counterparts to want to become judges, but less likely to succeed.

Recommendations for judicial appointments are 73 per cent lower for black lawyers than for their white counterparts, the latest Diversity of the Judiciary 2021 statistics show.

Legal Futures frames the story around the comments of shadow Lord Chancellor, David Lammy MP, who said the situation was an “absolute scandal.

Bar Council Chair, Derek Sweeting QC, is quoted as saying:

“Until we understand whether there is a problem in the appointment process, or whether the issue is experience - or both - we are operating in the dark” and that the statistics “show that more work needs to be done” but argued that the legal professions were “playing their part” and the council operated “an extensive programme . . . to support fairer distribution of work”.

Courts backlog

[York Press \(online and print, p. 7\)](#) – Regional press has picked up the Bar Council’s response to the latest official court figures which show that the backlog of cases in both the crown courts and magistrates’ courts is increasing.

York Press report notes that the York Crown Court had a backlog of 407 cases in March this year - including 81 cases relating to alleged violent attacks and 51 for sex offences. The Bar Council is mentioned as saying the pandemic has only compounded decades of underfunding and court closures.

CPS diversity declaration rule

Legal Futures – The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is to use a new annual online declaration by panel barristers of any protected characteristics to analyse the proportionality of case allocation and fee payments within chambers.

Writing on the Bar Council website, Rebecca Lawrence, chief executive of the CPS, said the new diversity and inclusion statement aimed to give barristers and chambers “a clear understanding of the role they, and their colleagues, are expected to play in respect of CPS casework”.

BAR COUNCIL TWEETS

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We're delighted to announce that the winner of the Bar Placement Scheme Blog Competition 2021 is 'Digital Courtroom' by Kinjell Singh.

Read Kinjell's fascinating account of her mini-pupillage – including a virtual trip to the magistrates' court – here:

 Winner of the Bar Placement Scheme Blog Compet...
Read Kinjell Singh's winning blog entry about their experience of the Bar Placement Scheme
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Now, Chair of the Bar Council's @YoungBarristers @JoanneKane_ updates #BarCouncil on work of the committee and recent young Bar survey, which found impact of lack of networking opportunities due to Covid.

#BarCouncilLive

 Joanne Kane

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