



# Meeting of the Bar Council

Saturday 8 February 2025 at 10:30

The Bar Council, 289-293 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7HZ

**Present:**

|                    |  |      |
|--------------------|--|------|
| Barbara Mills KC   | Chair of the Bar                                       | BMKC |
| Kirsty Brimelow KC | Vice-Chair of the Bar                                  | KBKC |
| Lucinda Orr        | Treasurer  | LO   |
| Richard Wright KC  | Co-Chair Remuneration Committee                        | RWKC |
| Sean O'Sullivan KC | Co-Chair Remuneration Committee                        | SOKC |
| Sara George        | Chair, Employed Barristers'<br>Committee               | SG   |
| Samantha Singer    | Chair, Pro Bono and Social<br>Responsibility Committee | SS   |

**Members in attendance (in alphabetical order):**

Abigail Bright (AB), Aimee Stokes (AS), Alex Gunning KC (AGKC), Alexandra Sutton (AS), Alice Hands (AH), Amanda Jepson (AJ), Amy Mannion (AM), Andrew Howe (AnH), Anna Soubry (AS), Anneli Howard (AHo), Anushka Kangesu (AK), Aoife Kennedy (AoK), Asad Maqsood (AsM), Barbara Connolly KC (BCKC), Bella Dennis (BD), Brittany Buckell (BB), Cait McDonagh (CM), Caroline Rees KC (CRKC), Cathrine Grubb (CG), Charlie Woodhouse KC (CWKC), Christina Michalos KC (CMKC), Claire Davies KC (CDKC), Cleon Catsambis (CC), Daniel Sheridan (DS), David Bunting (DB), David Christopher Taylor (DT), Deshpal Panesar KC (DPKC), Dilpreet Dhanoa (DD), Dr Mirza Ahmad (DMA), Eleena Misra KC (EMKC), Emily Formby KC (EFKC), Emma Hughes (EH), Emma Southern (ES), Emma Torr (ET), Emma Walker (EW), Faisal Sadiq (FS), Fenner Moeran KC (FMKC), Gaynor Wood (GW), Guy Williamson (GuW), Harpreet Sandhu KC (HSKC), Harry O'Sullivan (HO), Harry Stratton (HS), Heidi Stonecliffe KC (HeSKC), Hollie Gilbery (HG), Ivor Collett (IC), Jacob Hallam KC (JHKC), Jaime Hamilton KC (JaHKC), James Kane (JK), James Lewis KC (JLKC), James Paterson (JP), James Roberts KC (JRKC), James Robinson (JR), Jasmine Chen (JC), Jason Pitter KC (JaPKC), Jo Martin KC (JMKC), John-Paul Swoboda (JPS), Kama Melly KC (KMKC), Kate Lumsdon KC (KLKC), Katrina Mather (KM), Lachlan Stewart (LS), Leanne Targett-Parker (LTP), Lee Marklew (LM), Linda Turnbull (LT), Lorinda Long (LL), Lucy Reed KC (LRKC), Luke Wygas (LW), Maddy Charlesworth (MC), Martyn McLeish (MM), Mary Prior KC (MPKC), Matthew Keliris-Thomas (MKT), Melissa Coutino (MeC),

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**THE BAR COUNCIL**

[www.barcouncil.org.uk](http://www.barcouncil.org.uk)

Michael Polak (MiP), Mike Jones KC (MJKC), Minka Braun (MB), Natasha Shotunde (NS), Nicholas Johnson KC (NJKC), Owen Thomas KC (OTKC), Paul Powlesland (PP), Peter Grieves-Smith (PGS), Philip Moser KC (PMKC), Rachel Crasnow KC (RCKC), Rory Brown (RB), Ruth Kirby KC (RKKC), Saira Kabir Sheikh KC (SKSKC), Sara Ibrahim (SI), Sarah Gaunt (SG), Sarah Gerrard (SGe), Sarah Williams (SW), Sean Jones KC (SJKC), Sean Summerfield (SS), Shazia Akhtar (SA), Shobana Iyer (ShI), Shoshana Mitchell (SM), Simon Atkinson (SiA), Stephanie Hall (SH), Stephen Kenny KC (SKKC), Tahmina Rahman (TR), Tomas McGarvey (TM), Tony Singla KC (TSKC), Winston Hunter KC (WHKC), Yaa Dankwa Ampadu-Sackey (YDA)

**In attendance:**

|                         |                            |       |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
| Anna Pinch              | Director of Services       | AP    |
| Justina Naik            | Governance (minutes)       | JN    |
| Kathryn Stone           | Chair, BSB                 | KS    |
| Malcolm Cree            | Chief Executive Officer    | MC    |
| Mark Neale              | Director General, BSB      | MN    |
| Michelle Heeley KC      | Criminal KC                | MH KC |
| Phil Robertson          | Director of Policy         | PR    |
| Piran Dhillon-Starkings | Adviser to the Chair       | PD-S  |
| Sally Burnell           | Director of Communications | SB    |

**Apologies were received from:**

Adam Baradon KC, Amrit Dhanoa, Anton van Dellen, Bella Dennis, Elaine Banton, Henry King KC, Hugh Mercer KC, Ian Clarke KC, James Pickering KC, Philip Stott, Riel Karmy-Jones KC, Simon Regis.

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**1. Conflicts of interest and announcements**

None noted.

**2. Minutes of the last meetings and matters arising**

The minutes from the meetings held on 16 November 2024 & 4 December 2024 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

**3. Statement by the Chair of the Bar Council**

The Chair highlighted the following points from the report:

### *Representative Appointments*

The Chair announced and welcomed representatives appointed and re-appointed to the Bar Council for 2025:

#### Ex officio members

##### *Solicitor General*

- Lucy Rigby MP

##### *Circuit Leader*

- Claire Davies KC, South Eastern Circuit

#### Inns Representative

- James Lewis KC, Gray's Inn

#### Circuit Representatives

- Harry O'Sullivan, South Eastern Circuit
- Hollie Gilbery, Western Circuit
- Tomas McGarvey, South Eastern Circuit

#### Specialist Bar Association Representatives

- Amy Mannion, Constitutional and Administrative Law Bar Association
- Anneli Howard KC, Bar European Group

The Chair further announced election results from Casual Vacancies as follows:

#### Employed Junior Counsel over 7 years

- Emma Torr

### *Silks List 2025*

The Chair announced and congratulated Bar Council members and committee members who would be appointed to Silk this year:

- Adrian Berry KC
- Amy Mannion
- John-Paul Swoboda
- Matthew Morrison
- Rachel Spearing
- Samuel Skinner

### *Bar Council Public Affairs*

The Chair updated members in relation to the Independent Sentencing Review, led by Rt Hon David Gauke. A working group had been set up to draft a response to the call for evidence. Included on the agenda for update, an Independent Review of the Criminal Courts, chaired by Sir Brian Leveson had been announced. It would report on long-term reform by late Spring 2025.

### *Meetings*

The Chair had met with the Lord Chancellor, Lord Timpson and senior Ministry of Justice officials.

### *Race at the Bar Report*

The Chair advised of the launch of the Race at the Bar: three years on report. Supporting content for ongoing action would be shared throughout the year.

### *Bar Representation Fee*

The Chair advised that the Bar Representation Committee had input to redesign the campaign to encourage barristers to subscribe to the Bar Representation Fee, which would be launched ahead of the Authorisation to Practise window opening.

### *General Management Committee Meeting Discussions*

The Chair provided a summary of the discussions held at the GMC meetings that took place over the previous quarter.

### *International Activities*

The Chair's international activities, meetings and attendances, were outlined including visits to the United Arab Emirates and Kenya, and meetings with the Delhi High Court Bar Association and the Ghanaian Bar Association.

## **4. Bar Standards Board Report**

Kathryn Stone, Chair – BSB, presented the Bar Standards Board report taken as read. *The following was highlighted:*

### *BSB Re-organisation*

- The BSB had re-organised as part of a wider reform programme to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- The new programme included implementation of the recommendations of the Fieldfisher review and changes to a number of departments.

### *Strategy Development Call for Feedback*

- A 12-week call for feedback had been launched for insights and evidence on the BSB five-year strategy, which would run until 9 April 2025.

### *Thematic Review of Training Providers*

- The BSB published a review of the admissions arrangements of vocational Bar course training providers and how they support student progression.

## **5. Statement by the Chief Executive**

Malcom Cree, CEO of the Bar Council highlighted the following points:

- Discussions were underway with the Inns of Court and the Legal Services Board in relation to the timing of call and unregistered barristers.
- The Budget and Practising Certificate Fee had been submitted to the Legal Services Board.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

Lucinda Orr, Treasurer, shared an overview of the December 2024 Management Accounts.

- The year-end forecast showed a surplus of £182k.
- There had been an increase in staff costs at the BSB, associated with the reform programme.
- The Defined Benefit Pension Scheme had successfully reached the buy-in stage. The buy-out stage was expected to be reached within the following 12-18 months.

## **7. Sir Brian Leveson Independent Review of the Criminal Courts**

Michelle Heeley KC provided an update on the Sir Brian Leveson Independent Review of the Criminal Courts and highlighted the following:

- A Working Group had been formed and a submission made to the review. The team's efforts to propose solutions to address inefficiencies in the system were outlined.
- Sir Brian had requested data from the Bar on the matter.

## **8. Remuneration Committee**

Richard Wright KC, Co-Chair of the Remuneration Committee presented a report to the Bar Council, and highlighted the following points:

- Representatives of the Committee and the Criminal Bar Association met the Crown Prosecution Services (CPS) to discuss the Graduated Fee Scheme. The CPS would consider the matters raised regarding a redesign of the scheme.

- A rate increase for travel and accommodation expenses had been implemented and further consideration of the Local Bar Rule was outlined.

Sean O'Sullivan KC, Co-Chair of the Remuneration Committee provided an update on the Civil Justice Council's (CJC) work to introduce Guideline Hourly Rates for barristers. A Bar Council team was working with the CJC on this topic, with an aim to provide robust data to support the process.

Members discussed and noted the importance of the forthcoming Working Life Survey and the role of Specialist Bar Associations in gathering data, of which members were encouraged to contribute.

#### **9. Employed Barristers' Committee**

Sara George, Chair of the Employed Barristers' Committee presented a report to the Bar Council, and highlighted the following points:

- Promoting careers, the Committee had held a jointly hosted session with the Kings' Counsel Appointments panel on the process of applying for Silk.
- Respect and Recognition was the theme for the year and the definition of advocacy required for KC appointments would be considered as undertaken in employed practice.

#### **10. Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee**

Samantha Singer, Chair of the Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee presented a report to the Bar Council, and highlighted the following points:

- Pro bono awareness had been raised during Pro Bono Week and the Committee had endorsed the creation of the Pro Bono Recognition List.
- The committee had supported environmental sustainability workstreams including advising chambers on ways to reduce carbon footprint and the promotion of the Sustainability Network.

## **11. Any Other Business**

*Items raised by members*

Members raised and discussed matters relating to *Court Sitting Days – Criminal Bar* and *Civil Legal Aid Review – The Family Bar*. The Chair advised of formal meetings and continuing discussions and actions in relation to each of these matters.

## **12. Date of next meeting:**

Tuesday, 15 April 2025, 17:00