



The Bar Council

Meeting of the Bar Council

Saturday 7 February 2026 at 10:00

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

held via Video Conference

Present:

Kirsty Brimelow KC	Chair of the Bar	KBKC
Heidi Stonecliffe KC	Vice-Chair of the Bar	HSKC
Lucinda Orr	Treasurer	LO
Dame Maria Miller	Commissioner for Conduct	DMM
Prof. Christopher Bones	Chair, BSB	CB
Cassia Rowland	Senior Researcher, Institute for Government	CR
Mike Horne KC	Co-Chair, Remuneration Committee	MHKC
Marina Faggionato	Co-Chair, Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee	MF

Members in attendance (in alphabetical order):

Abigail Bright, Adam Baradon KC, Aimee Stokes, Alexandra Sutton, Amanda Jepson, Amelia Clegg, Amrit Dhanoa, Amy Mannion, Andrew Brooke, Andrew Duncan, Andrew Howe, Andrew Thomas KC, Anneli Howard KC, Anton van Dellen, Anushka Kangesu, Aoife Kennedy, Asad Maqsood, Barbara Connolly KC, Bella Dennis, Ben Bentley, Beth Crocker, Brittany Buckell, Caroline Goodwin KC, Cathrine Grubb, Celina Colquhoun, Charlie Woodhouse KC, Christopher Rees KC, Claire Davies KC, Cleon Catsambis, Daniel Sheridan, Danielle Buckett, David Christopher Taylor, Deshpal Panesar KC, Dilpreet Dhanoa, Dominic Boothroyd, Elaine Banton, Eleena Misra KC, Emily Formby KC, Emma Hughes, Emma Southern, Emma Walker, Faisal Sadiq, Fenner Moeran KC, Gaynor Wood, Hannah Smith, Harpreet Sandhu KC, Harry O'Sullivan, Harry Stratton, Henry King KC, Hollie Gilbery, Ian Clarke KC, Ivor Collett, Jaime Hamilton KC, James Kane, James Lewis KC, James Pickering KC, James Roberts KC, Jasmine Chan, Jeffrey Jupp KC, John-Paul Swoboda, Jonathan Foy, Kate Lumsdon KC, Lachlan Stewart, Laurie-Anne Power KC, Leanne Targett-Parker, Lee Marklew, Leslie Samuels KC, Linda Turnbull, Lorinda Long, Luka Krsljanin, Luke Wygas, Maddy Charlesworth, Margaret Haig, Marion Smith KC, Matthew Butt KC, Matthew Keliris-Thomas, Melissa Coutino, Michael Polak, Michelle

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www.barcouncil.org.uk

289-293 High Holborn, London WC1V 7HZ DX: 240 LDE Tel: 020 7242 0082 Fax: 020 7831 9217

Butler, Mike Jones KC, Minka Braun, Dr Mirza Ahmad, Nancy Kelehar, Nicholas Johnson KC, Owen Thomas KC, Peter Grieves-Smith, Philip Stott, Philippa Hopkins KC, Rabby Fozlay, Rachel Crasnow KC, Richard Wright KC, Riel Karmy-Jones KC, Ruth Kirby KC, Saira Kabir Sheikh KC, Sam Kharabanda Groom, Sam Thomas, Samantha Hillas KC, Samantha Singer, Sara George, Sarah Gaunt, Sean Jones KC, Sarah Williams, Shobana Iyer, Simon Atkinson, Simon Regis, Sophie Stevens, Stephanie Hall, Tony Singla KC, Verity Bell, William Dean, Winston Hunter KC, Yaa Dankwa Ampadu-Sackey.

In attendance:

Anna Pinch	Director of Services	AP
Justina Naik	Governance (minutes)	JN
Malcolm Cree	Chief Executive Officer	MC
Mark Neale	Director General, BSB	MN
Phil Robertson	Director of Policy	PR
Piran Dhillon-Starkings	Adviser to the Chair	PDS
Sally Burnell	Director of Communications	SB

Apologies were received from:

Christina Michalos KC, Katrina Mather, Martyn McLeish, Shazia Akhtar.

1. Conflicts of interest and announcements

None noted.

2. Minutes of the last meetings and matters arising

The minutes from the meeting held on 15 November 2025 were APPROVED as an accurate record, subject to the following amendments:

- *Item 11 to read:* thanks were expressed to the Chambers Management Panel (which produces guidance and model policies for sets of chambers)
- *Item 13 to read:* 3 December 2025

3. Statement by the Chair of the Bar Council

The Chair highlighted the following points from the report:

Representative Appointments

The Chair welcomed and congratulated newly appointed and re-appointed Bar Council members for 2026, including new Circuit and Specialist Bar Association (SBA) leaders and representatives:

Ex officio members

Circuit Leaders

- Caroline Goodwin KC, North Eastern Circuit Leader
- Christopher Rees KC, Wales and Chester Circuit Leader
- Samantha Hillas KC, Northern Circuit Leader

Specialist Bar Association Chairs

- Leslie Samuels KC, Chair, Family Law Bar Association
- Sara George, Chair, Bar Association for Commerce, Finance & Industry

Circuit Representative

- Danielle Buckett, South Eastern Circuit Representative

Specialist Bar Association Representatives

- James Roberts KC, Family Law Bar Association Representative
- Luka Krsljanin, London Bar Association Representative
- Philippa Hopkins KC, Commercial Bar Association Representative

A particular welcome was addressed to Dame Maria Miller, the new Commissioner for Conduct to who had joined the meeting as an Observer.

New CEO

The Chair highlighted the newly announced appointment of Jim Morris CB DSO, as the new Chief Executive of The General Council of the Bar, joining 23 March 2026.

Silks List 2026

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

- Andrew Powell
- Eleanor Mawrey
- Rory Brown

Bar Council Public Affairs

The Chair updated on a series of engagements and events in Parliament and constituencies as part of the Bar Council campaign against jury trial curtailment:

- The Bar Council briefed ahead of the Opposition Day debate on jury trials, referenced by MPs from all parties
- A 'Justice Needs Juries' information drop-in session in Parliament was organised for MPs and Peers to hear about the collective opposition to the proposed reforms
- A Constituency Court Day was held as an initiative to give MPs the opportunity to observe the day-to-day work of courts
- The Chair appeared before the Justice Select Committee twice for oral evidence sessions on access to justice and the Leveson proposals.

Meetings

The Chair had meetings with Jake Richards MP (Minister for Sentencing, Youth Justice and International), Baroness Levitt KC (Lords Minister leading on family justice), Baroness Smith of Cluny KC (Advocate General for Scotland), Helen Grant MP (Shadow Solicitor General), Jess Brown-Fuller MP (Lib Dem Spokesperson for Justice), Ben Maguire MP (Shadow Attorney General), Baroness Chakrabarti, and Rt Hon Liz Saville-Roberts MP (Plaid Cymru MP).

Harman Report

The Chair took part in a number of media interviews on the Harman Report and priorities on becoming Chair.

International Activities

The Chair's international activities, meetings and attendances were outlined including a Bar Council delegation visit to Brussels.

4. Bar Standards Board Report

Professor Christopher Bones, BSB Chair, presented the Bar Standards Board report taken as read. The following points were highlighted:

Commissioner for Conduct

Congratulations were given to Dame Maria Miller on her appointment as Commissioner for Conduct, with a noted induction process underway.

Director General to Retire

The present BSB Director General, Mark Neale would be retiring and leaving the BSB at the end of March 2026.

The Chair recognised and thanked Mark Neale for his contribution to the work of the BSB, ahead of his retirement.

5. Statement by the Chief Executive

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

Practising Certificate Fee (PCF) Consultation

Following the practising certificate fees and budget submission to the Legal Services Board (LSB), there had been a subsequent increase to the BSB budget by £1.5m, relating to reporting complexities and outsourcing.

BSB Board Vacancy

The Bar Standards Board was actively recruiting to a Board Member vacancy.

6. Treasurer's Report

Lucinda Orr, Treasurer, presented an overview of the December 2025 Management Accounts:

- A forecast year-end surplus of £172k was reported for the current year, against the budgeted position of £122k
- There was an underspend on staff costs due to delays in recruitment of staff
- An overspend in non-staff costs related to the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme Buy-Out.

7. Leveson Reforms

Cassia Rowland, Senior Researcher from the Institute for Government delivered a presentation on *The Impact of Jury Trial Reforms*, as related to the proposed Leveson Reforms.

Following the presentation, members discussed and sought further clarification on matters including the historic Crown Court demand figures, cost saving and productivity factors, and court administration and maintenance.

The Chair thanked Cassia Rowland for an insightful and informative presentation, which would be circulated to members following the meeting.

8. Remuneration Committee

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

- Legal Aid CLAAB Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme sub group meeting held to discuss a recommendation on fees.
- A joint Bar Council and Criminal Bar Association Working Group meeting was held to discuss its submission to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), its response was outlined including no scope to make the requested fee improvements.

- A meeting was held with the Family Law Bar Association and the Ministry of Justice on family legal aid fees, the Bar Council had produced its report “*System overload: a report on family legal aid*”.

Members queried the final guidance in relation to the VAT treatment of contingency payment recoupments from the Legal Aid Agency, and the current impact arising from ongoing uncertainty on the matter. Members were advised that guidance from the HMRC remained awaited. The Chair advised that this would be brought to the attention of Sarah Sackman MP.

9. Employed Barristers’ Committee

Simon Regis, CBE, Chair of the Employed Barristers’ Committee presented a report to the Bar Council, and highlighted the following points:

- The Committee had welcomed new members to its composition
- Planned activity for the next period included a focus on Bullying and Harassment and support to the KCA Working Group
- The prior Committee Chair (for 2025) had attended the Honorable Society of King’s Inns’ Annual Conference in Dublin.

10. Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee

Marina Faggionato, Co-Chair of the Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee presented a report to the Bar Council, and highlighted the following points:

- The Pro Bono Recognition List of England & Wales would close for submissions on 6 March 2026
- The Committee would broaden its remit to include *Climate* and Social Responsibility
- Work would be completed to publish ethical guidance relating to climate.

11. Any other business

Thanks from the Chair

The Chair expressed thanks and well wishes to Malcolm Cree, CBE, ahead of his retirement as CEO of The General Council of the Bar. This was noted as his last Bar Council meeting. Malcolm was acknowledged for his longstanding impact on the integrity and reputation of the organisation and his diligent work.

Members expressed sincere appreciation for the impact and contribution to the Bar achieved over this time.

12. Date of next meeting:

Tuesday, 14 April 2026, 17:00