

Representing the Bar

The Bar Council. Integrity, Excellence, Justice.

Annual Report 2014-15





Introduction from the Chairman of the Bar

On behalf of the Bar Council I am pleased to present the 2014 to 2015 Annual Report, which sets out our representational activities conducted for the benefit of the Bar and in the wider public interest from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

This is the Bar Council's fourth annual report. Our Financial Statements for the relevant period are published separately on our website, however this report contains a brief summary of our sources of income and expenditure.

The year 2014 to 2015 saw a surge in our campaigning and lobbying work in response to a number of important issues affecting the profession and the general public. We successfully ensured, through talks with the Ministry of Justice, that planned cuts to the Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS) did not go ahead. We also opposed the Government's restrictions of judicial review, increases to court fees for civil claims, the introduction of differential charges for those who are subject to criminal proceedings, the re-structuring of the Litigators' Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS), breaches of legal professional privilege (LPP) by intelligence agencies and we continued our efforts to support the most vulnerable, who were abandoned as a result of cuts to legal aid. We have also been concerned about the increase in the number of paid McKenzie friends. The year was also characterised by expanding our international reach and focussing on health and wellbeing at the Bar as well as promoting equality in the profession.

In January 2015, the Government announced it would be introducing 'enhanced court fees' for money claims, which include



late payments, debt and compensation. This means a blanket 5% fee on businesses and individuals bringing claims worth between £10,000 and £200,000, with fees of up to £10,000 payable up-front.

Having participated in the initial consultation of December 2013, the Bar Council responded to the announcement by raising concerns about the difficulties for small and medium-sized enterprises in chasing late payments; the threat to the attractiveness of the UK as a jurisdiction for litigation and dispute resolution, and access to justice for people with personal injury and professional negligence claims.

The Bar Council also raised concerns about the consultation process, during which no proper evidence was produced to support the Ministry of Justice's assertion that enhanced court fees would have no impact upon the international competitiveness of UK courts.

We campaigned tirelessly against restrictions to judicial review in the Criminal Justice and Courts Bill. The Bill, as introduced, made it harder for groups or individuals to hold public authorities to account and prevent decisions being made unlawfully. The Bar Council, the Law Society and the Chartered Institutes of Legal Executives (CILEx) rallied together in a bid to secure amendments to Part 4 of the Bill in order to protect judicial review. However, after significant defeats in the House of Lords, the Commons disagreed with Peers and the Bill was enacted in 2015.

The Belhadj case, heard before the Investigatory Powers Tribunal in November 2014, revealed regular interception by UK intelligence



agencies of legally privileged communications. It also made abundantly clear how far the protection of legal professional privilege (LPP) could be breached by authorities in targeting communications between clients and their lawyers.

The Bar Council has argued for years that the current levels of protection in the Codes of Practice under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000 are insufficient. RIPA itself makes no reference to LPP. The Bar Council joined forces with the Law Society and the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland in making the European Lawyers' Day Declaration, which calls for LPP to be afforded proper protection through primary legislation.

Other campaign work included giving evidence to the Commons Justice Committee as part of a concerted effort to raise awareness about the devastating impact of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012, which drastically reduced the scope of civil and family legal aid. We also commissioned a report by His Honour Geoffrey Rivlin QC, Chair of the Criminal Justice Reform Group, which sets out ways of sustaining the criminal justice system in England and Wales.

Additionally, we continued the work of the Criminal Justice reform group, which was established in April 2014 with the purpose of formulating proposals for the future of the criminal justice system and the role of barristers within that system. The Group also contributed to the Leveson and Jeffrey Reviews in late 2014 and early 2015.

In the period leading up to the General Election in May 2015, we published a Manifesto for Justice with the CILEX, the Law Centres Network, the Legal Action Group and AdviceUK. The manifesto put forward the case for an effective and efficient system of justice, which is accessible to all.

The Bar Council launched an important survey in October 2014 to assess health and wellbeing at the Bar, and to identify risk factors which may affect the performance of a barrister. This was the first time that the whole profession has been surveyed in relation to wellbeing in any country.

An overwhelming response saw nearly 2,500 members complete the survey, demonstrating the importance of wellbeing to the profession. The results will help us develop practical tools and learning materials to support barristers in sustaining their performance, whilst managing the demands of practice.

Meanwhile, throughout 2014 and 2015, we continued to expand our international presence by launching a new Brazilian British Lawyers Exchange Programme for young lawyers, in partnership with the Law Society, BPP Law School, the Ordem dos Advogados do Brasil (OAB) and Lex Anglo-Brasil. We welcomed the first wave of Brazilian lawyers in November 2014. We will also play a prominent part in facilitating the visit of a large number of Brazilian judges to England and Wales for their annual conference in the Autumn of this year. We also launched a mentorship programme for Omani lawyers in early 2015, in collaboration with Beyond Borders, which

builds on our growing relationship with the Omani legal profession.

The Bar Council was a founding partner of the Global Law Summit, which was held in London in February 2015. Strong contributions were made by many members of the Bar, including the Chancery Bar, Commercial Bar and the Criminal Bar Association, the content of which demonstrated the importance of an independent profession ready and able to hold Government to account. In addition, the Bar was able to demonstrate its strength in the global market for legal services and further emphasise its standing on the international stage.

It has been another important year for the Bar Council and we should indeed be proud of our efforts throughout 2014 and 2015. I should like to thank our dedicated, hardworking staff and the many members of the Bar, who generously give their time to serve on the Bar Council and its committees. I am particularly grateful to Chantal-Aimée Doerries QC, Vice-Chairman for 2015, who has provided invaluable support during my tenure as Chairman, Stephen Crowne, Chief Executive, who has done so much to improve the efficiency of the Bar Council, Mark Hatcher, Special Advisor to the Chairman, whose knowledge of parliamentary procedures and personnel is second to none, and Lorinda Long, who has made a successful start as Treasurer, having taken over from Stephen Collier during the course of the year. Stephen merits special thanks for all his work in transforming and explaining, with clarity, the financial affairs of the Bar Council.

I am also grateful to the Circuit Leaders, Specialist Bar Associations,

the General Management Committee and the members of Bar Council for their valued contributions to our work.

We are all in this together. We must continue to ensure the profession speaks with a united voice about the issues we face, and that the resources of the Bar Council are harnessed to protect and promote a strong and independent Bar. That is in the public interest as well as that of the profession, which plays such an important part in the maintenance of the rule of law and the practical administration of justice at all levels.

I am confident we can meet the challenges in the year ahead and continue to fight for an effective and efficient system of justice which is accessible to all.

Alistair MacDonald QC
Chairman of the Bar



Message from the Chief Executive

In our 2013-14 annual report, my first as Chief Executive, I talked about ensuring that the Bar Council had a clear sense of direction and the capacity to meet the challenges of the future. 2014-15 saw real progress in the development of the organisation. As the Chairman's introduction so eloquently shows, this has been a period of intense activity right across the Bar Council. A great deal has already been achieved and, inevitably for an ambitious organisation, there is still much to do.

The quality of our work, and the impact we have, depends critically on making the most effective use of the talent of all of our staff, and of the many barristers who contribute to our work. In last year's report I set out our plans to restructure our Representation, Policy and Services functions. This process went very smoothly, and the new structure was implemented on 1 September 2014. I am very grateful to colleagues for their patience and professionalism during this time of change. We have already had positive feedback from the profession - that the Bar Council is seen as more supportive and responsive.

The restructure is supported by new governance arrangements which include clear processes for identifying business priorities, supporting effective decision-making and increasing our flexibility to respond to new and emerging priorities. The overall aim is to increase transparency, accountability and the organisation's ability to respond to the profession's needs.

To help staff understand the skills and behaviours expected of them at their particular level, we have developed a new competency



framework. Initially trialled at the end of 2014, this framework provides essential underpinning for our enhanced staff performance review process. Feedback from staff about this framework has been positive - it is better structured than the previous system, less complicated, and provides a greater opportunity to quantify performance and recognise achievements.

We recognise the need to understand how our staff feel about working here. In April 2015, we conducted a staff survey, focusing in particular on employee engagement and how committed staff feel to the organisation. We will be working with People Insight, industry leaders in this field.

We recognised that we needed to do more to encourage individual staff to come forward with ideas and proposals to improve the organisation. A key development has been the establishment of a reinvigorated staff committee, known as The Forum. We listened to staff feedback on our previous arrangements and launched The Forum with a new name, made membership more representative of the organisation as a whole, and developed clearer functions and terms of reference.

The Bar Council and its representative committees, and the Bar Standards Board (BSB) and its committees, are supported and underpinned by an executive governance structure that I put in place on my arrival in 2013. This is built around the cross-organisation Senior Leadership Team (SLT) - comprising staff at Director level - and the wider Leadership Group (LG) - which includes middle



managers. We have since reviewed how SLT and LG operate and revised their terms of reference and mode of operation to improve efficiency and effectiveness. I am very keen to build a culture of clear and confident leadership to ensure that we make the most of our skills and resources, and turn individual motivation into a strong collective sense of drive and purpose. To that end we are working on a leadership charter, designed to specify clearly the leadership behaviours we expect from all senior staff.

We continue to look for ways of increasing efficiency and effectiveness. As I mentioned in last year's Annual Report, we took advantage of office lease breaks to reduce significantly our expenditure on accommodation. We are no longer the sole occupants of our premises in High Holborn - new tenants have now been secured for all available floors. We are working on options for when our lease expires in 2019. We have invested in improvements to enhance facilities available to staff and committee members. Feedback has been very positive.

We took a very important step last year to modernise the way that the organisation is funded. In September 2013, the Bar Council agreed to alter the method for calculating a barristers' Practising Certificate Fee (PCF), basing the fee on declared earnings rather than the number of years since a practitioner was called to the Bar. The majority of the profession were in favour of this change and I believe it was the right step to take given the pressures that the Bar now faces. The first year of the new system went remarkably smoothly, given the scale of the changes. I am very grateful to

many colleagues, in Records and IT in particular, for their efforts in delivering this vital operation.

We still have much to do to modernise our systems and processes. We launched an Information Management Programme to identify current and likely future information and data needs across the whole business, and how we can integrate IT to help meet these needs. We reviewed and documented all team processes and the information and data we need to manage and deliver our business. This is assisting us with creating a long-term strategy and an operational plan to deliver a range of improvements on quality, accessibility, availability, safety and reporting on information. As part of this we are planning a new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) which will provide much better data to support our HR operation. We have also set up a staff intranet, which provides a much more effective platform for disseminating and sharing information across the organisation.

I have heard a very consistent message in all the feedback we have received from the Bar about the Bar Council. What we do is still not well understood by barristers. When we have the opportunity to outline what we are doing and why, the Bar is keen to get behind us and to contribute. We are working hard to engage better with the Bar to ensure that what we do is shaped by what the Bar wants and needs. To help us to do this, we launched BarTalk, a new fortnightly update from the Bar Council, intended to show members how we are representing their interests and supporting them, and to ensure that the profession is up to date with the full range of initiatives and

activities that we undertake on their behalf. And as you will see in this report, there is plenty on which to update the profession.

I would like to thank our staff and the many members of the Bar who contribute to the work of the Bar Council. We are grateful to have so much expertise on hand and are thankful for their support in tackling the considerable challenges encountered throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to thank the Officers for the invaluable leadership they have provided to the organisation and the wider profession.

Stephen Crowne
Chief Executive of the Bar Council



About the Bar Council

The Bar Council represents and, through the independent Bar Standards Board (BSB), regulates over 15,500 barristers in self-employed and employed practice. The Bar Council promotes:

- The Bar's high quality specialist advocacy and advisory services
- Fair access to justice for all
- The highest standards of ethics, equality and diversity across the profession, and
- The development of business opportunities for barristers at home and abroad.

In its representative capacity, the Bar Council Executive provides support to the Chairman's office and a number of representative committees, panels and working groups.

- Communicating regularly with the profession about key matters affecting its interests
- Influencing the development of public policy and legislation affecting the provision of specialist advocacy and advisory services and, more widely, in the profession's and the public interest
- Developing and promoting the work (and the values) of the Bar at home and abroad, to governments, legislatures, the media and other stakeholders, and
- Working to improve entry to the profession (with the aim of ensuring that the Bar is open to all with the requisite ability), to provide rewarding careers and to sustain the long-term future of the Bar.

Fairness

Respect

Integrity

Excellence

Value for money

For more information on the Bar Council's structure and representational work, please visit www.barcouncil.org.uk.

Our strategic aims

Looking ahead, we want to focus our efforts to achieve clear strategic aims, underpinned by three-year objectives. These are set out below. We recognise that we need to prioritise our activities so that we invest sufficiently in those which have the biggest impact, and are prepared to scale back or stop lower impact work.

We have set eight strategic aims that will govern everything we do in future.

Aim 1

To be a powerful influence on the development and implementation of Government policy in order to secure the highest standards of justice, equity, integrity, access and efficiency in our justice system.

Aim 2

To provide leadership to equip the whole Bar to meet current and future challenges, and to help barristers to maintain and enhance the quality of their work, adapt to changing circumstances and operate more efficiently and effectively.

Aim 3

To secure a sustainable role for the Bar as a key player in the

maintenance of the rule of law and the efficient administration of justice as well as being the leading provider of high quality, value for money advocacy and specialist advice, and of candidates for the judiciary of the future.

Aim 4

To promote the work of the Bar in the interests of the Bar, the wider economy and society at large.

Aim 5

To promote equality and diversity across the Bar.

Aim 6

To promote and support the effective, independent regulation of the Bar through the BSB to ensure the highest standards of professional practice and to protect the public interest.

Aim 7

To work with the Council of the Inns of Court (COIC) and with each of the Inns to support their work in educating and training barristers, in maintaining the ethos and values of the Bar and helping them in their dealings with government, regulators and other external audiences.

Aim 8

To improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Bar Council to ensure that we can achieve these challenging aims.



The Bar Council is founded

1894

One cup of coffee each week, or less than £8.40 a month, is how you can fund the Bar Council's vital work in representing the Bar's interests through the Bar Representation Fee (BRF)



30

Responses to consultations external consultations from the Government, Law Commission and other bodies*



14

Committees and panels that help us undertake representational work

960

approx.

Barristers attended direct access top-up training conducted by the Bar Council. About 80 courses were delivered by the Bar Council during the year*

*Data reported for the period April 2014 to March 2015



6000+ telephone enquiries
500+ emails made to our Ethical Enquiries Service*



120 school students participated in Bar Placement Weeks in London, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester*

Applications made through the Pupillage Gateway*

17,527



15,500+ Barristers are represented by the Bar Council (including approximately 2800 employed barristers)



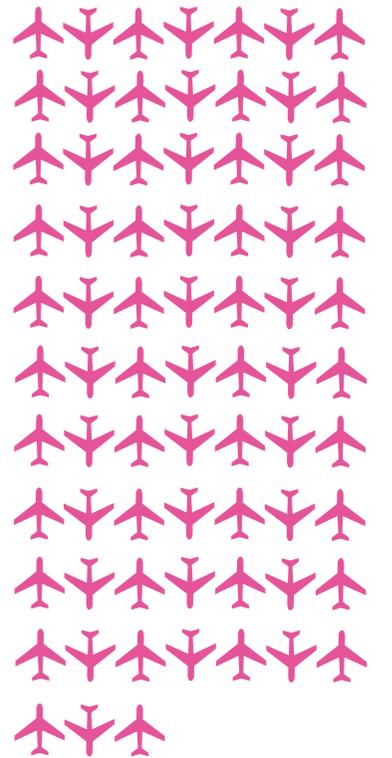
6,700+ are public access trained Barristers



500 volunteer barristers who give careers advice in schools and actively take up Bar Council-led initiatives aimed at improving social mobility

News and press releases issued by the Press Office*

109



25 international activities, including business delegations, exchange and mentoring programmes, training schemes, and events*

Our highlights

The Bar Council's Representation, Policy and Services group works very closely with and supports the representative committee structure of the Bar Council. Together they act as the representative arm of the Bar. The directorate consists of the Executive Office, Policy, Council Services, and Communications. This section reports on the key highlights and achievements for Representation, Policy and Services during 2014-15.



Policy

The Bar Council's Policy Team is at the heart of the Representation, Policy and Services group. Working with Bar Council's representative committees, which are made up of barristers, clerks and others who work with the Bar, the Policy Team drives most of the representative functions of the Bar Council and creates policy positions, new initiatives, support tools for the Bar and reports.

The Policy Team consists of:

- Equality and Diversity and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
- Legal Affairs, Practice and Ethics
- Regulatory Issues and Law Reform
- Remuneration and Employed Bar, and
- International.

These teams work with and support a number of committees, many of which are supported by panels providing specific expertise across a range of policy areas.

Employed Barristers' Committee

Equality and Diversity and Social Mobility Committee

- BME Policy Panel
- Disability Policy Panel
- Retention Policy Panel

Ethics Committee

EU Law Committee

- Common European Sales Law Panel
- Criminal Law Panel
- Financial Services Panel

International Committee

- International Business Development Panel
- Rule of Law Panel

Law Reform Committee

Legal Services Committee

- Direct Access Panel
- Alternative Dispute Resolution Panel
- Information Technology Panel

Member Services Board

- Bar Conference Organising Board

Remuneration Committee

- Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme Panel
- Civil (Public) Panel
- Taxation Panel
- Very High Costs Cases Panel

Training for the Bar Committee

Young Barristers' Committee

Equality and diversity at the Bar

In October 2014, the Bar Council launched a survey to assess health and wellbeing at the Bar, and to identify risk factors which may impact on a barrister's performance. The survey forms part of a larger wellbeing project coordinated by the Bar Council, which aims to provide valuable insights into the unique aspects of a barrister's working environment and how this impacts on psychological health and wellbeing. Please read the case study on page 18 for more details on this project.

The Bar Mentoring Service, which aims to provide all members of the Bar with support and resources to help them advance their career at the Bar, was expanded following the successful pilot of the Silk and Judicial Appointments Mentoring Scheme.

The scheme was the first to be launched under the Bar Mentoring Service and aims to increase the success rate of mentees in securing silk and judicial appointments.

Improving social mobility

The Bar Council is committed to improving access to the profession and encouraging greater equality and diversity at the Bar.

Four successful Bar Placement Weeks were held during 2014-15 in London, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester, with more than 120 students participating in these events. The week offers high-achieving years 12 and 13 students from low-income backgrounds an insight into life at the Bar.

The Bar Council will be holding a pilot for a new e-Mentoring Scheme for Students, which forms part of the Bar Council's broader Bar Mentoring Service. The scheme, which will be piloted for 12 months, will be available to students from non-traditional backgrounds who are interested in pursuing a career at the Bar. Students will be partnered with volunteer barrister mentors who will help mentees navigate the path to becoming a barrister via a specialist online platform.

Looking ahead, the Bar Council is doing more to support the Bar and chambers, as well as students, with the first Bar Council Pupillage Fair set to take place in November 2015.



Case study:

Bar Council focuses in on health and wellbeing at the Bar

The Wellbeing at the Bar programme was developed to better understand levels of wellbeing across the Bar and to identify what interventions and resources might be put in place to support practising barristers. The programme also aims to encourage discussion on mental health and shift current attitudes towards a subject rarely spoken about within the legal profession.

In October 2014, the Bar Council launched a survey to assess health and wellbeing at the Bar. Nearly 2,500 members responded anonymously, indicating the significance of this topic. Data collected from the survey will help the Bar Council develop practical tools and learning materials to help barristers and those who work closely with them to manage wellbeing in the working environment. Results from this survey were expected to be available in 2015.

Our planned initiatives for the wellbeing project include:

- Extending the Bar Mentoring Service beyond its current focus on silk and judicial appointment to ensure suitable mentoring (social support) is available to barristers whatever their life stage or need
- Producing practical support for chambers - chief executives, heads of chambers and clerks - to help identify when stress is becoming a problem for a barrister
- Developing educational resources for new practitioners and pupil supervisors
- Working with stakeholders such as LawCare to improve the quality of service and support provided to the profession.

To do this, we will work with representatives from the Bar Council, Inns of Court, Circuits, Institute of Barristers' Clerks and Specialist Bar Associations.

The programme is supported by the Inns of Court, the Institute of Barristers' Clerks, the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust, and LawCare.

Corporate Social Responsibility and pro bono

The Bar Council continued to promote a range of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities and pro bono initiatives both as an organisation and on behalf of the profession.

The 13th annual National Pro Bono Week was successfully held in November 2014. The Bar Council was a proud sponsor of the event, which celebrates the contribution lawyers make each year in providing pro bono work to the most vulnerable in society.

The Bar Council continued its support for the Annual Bar National Mock Trial Competition, which is organised by the Citizenship Foundation. The competition provides an opportunity for school students aged between 15 and 18 to gain a practical insight and understanding of the legal system. The 25th anniversary of the competition will be celebrated in 2015/16.

Many barristers continued to commit their time to support the commendable work of the Bar Pro Bono Unit (BPBU) and the Free Representation Unit. The Bar Council supports the work of these organisations financially, and looks into ways of helping the Bar's pro bono community to thrive on a more financially sustainable basis.

- Over 3,600 barristers - including one third of all QCs - sit on the BPBU volunteer panel
- In 2014, the BPBU gave legal assistance on various aspects of cases in over 1,120 instances to members of the public, and
- Nearly half of all barristers voluntarily contribute upwards of £30 a year to the BPBU to maintain the functioning of the unit.



Representing the interests of barristers

A key aspect of the Bar Council's work is engaging with Parliament and the Government on legislation and other issues which impact on the administration of justice. During 2014-15, the Bar Council actively communicated its concerns on a number of areas affecting the profession, including (LPP), judicial review, court fees, and legal aid, and closely monitored the Serious Crime Bill and the debate around repealing the Human Rights Act.

Legal Professional Privilege

The Bar Council worked hard campaigning for protection of LPP in primary legislation over the past year. Currently, the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 'codes of practice' offer little or no protection for LPP against government surveillance.

The recent Belhadj case, which revealed unlawful spying on privileged communications between client and lawyer, reinforces the Bar Council's message that LPP is fundamental to a fair trial. The Bar Council responded to two consultations highlighting the inadequacies of the codes and lobbied parliamentarians in the lead up to the release of David Anderson QC's investigatory powers review report.

In December 2014, the Bar Council and the Law Society joined forces with the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland in making the European Lawyers' Day Declaration, which calls for a robust and transparent legislative framework that protects lawyer-client confidentiality.

We continue our efforts to make the case for statutory protection

of LPP ahead of the draft Investigatory Powers Bill, expected to be debated in the autumn of 2015.

Enhanced court fees

In January 2015, the Coalition Government announced it would be introducing 'enhanced court fees' for money claims, which include late payments, debt and compensation. This means a blanket 5% fee on businesses and individuals bringing claims worth between £10,000 and £200,000, with fees of up to £10,000 payable up-front.

Having participated in the initial consultation of December 2013, the Bar Council responded to the announcement by raising concerns about:

- Difficulties for small and medium enterprises in chasing late payments
- The threat to the attractiveness of the UK as a jurisdiction for litigation and dispute resolution, and
- Access to justice for people with personal injury and professional negligence claims.

The Bar Council also expressed concerns about the consultation process, during which no proper evidence was produced to support the Ministry of Justice's assertion that enhanced court fees would not impact the competitiveness of UK courts.

Judicial review

The Bar Council carried out a sustained campaign against restrictions on judicial review in the Criminal Justice and Court Bill. The Bill

severely limited the ability of individuals or groups to challenge public authorities when they make unlawful decisions. The Bar Council worked tirelessly with other legal bodies in urging peers to vote in favour of the Lords' amendments to Part 4 of the Bill, which were intended to protect the legal process of judicial review. The Bill reached ping-pong stages in Parliament and after two defeats in the House of Lords, it was passed in 2015.

Legal aid

Discussions continue to be held with the Government on cuts to fees for advocates in Very High Cost Cases (VHCCs) and the Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS). This follows intense lobbying by the Bar Council, the Criminal Bar Association and other legal bodies in early 2014, whereby an agreement was reached with the Ministry of Justice to defer the implementation of cuts to fees and undertake a review of the AGFS. Shortly after the General Election in May 2015 the new Government announced that it had decided against implementing planned cuts to advocacy fees covered by criminal legal aid.

The Bar Council has been working with the Circuits and the Criminal Bar Association to review new funding arrangements for criminal defence advocates and to protect and enhance the integrity of advocacy in criminal justice proceedings.

However, concerns remain about the implementation of the Two-Tier contract scheme, which the Bar Council has consistently opposed.

Meanwhile, the Bar Council has, through its reports, LASPO – One

Year On, drawn attention to the devastating impact of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012, which drastically reduced the scope of civil and family legal aid.

The Bar Council submitted written and oral evidence to the House of Commons Justice Select Committee on LASPO and will continue to regularly review the impact of Act on access to justice in future.

Contracting

Following on from the support provided to the Bar on entities over the past year, the Bar Council has developed a new project to understand how the Bar is currently, or would like to, contract or bid for work, and what the Bar Council can do to better support the Bar in this area. The project focuses on contracts with businesses, local authorities and the Legal Aid Agency for family and civil work.

Criminal Justice Reform Group

The work of the Bar Council's Criminal Justice Reform Group continued throughout the year. The Group was established in April 2014 to ensure that the Bar Council provides co-ordinated and consistent approaches to the multiplicity of reforms proposed for the criminal justice system and criminal legal aid. The Group also contributed to the Leveson Review of the criminal justice system and Sir Bill Jeffrey's review of advocacy in late 2014 and early 2015.

In other work, the Bar Council responded to 30 external consultations from the Government, Law Commission and other bodies during 2013/14.

The Bar Council also commissioned a report by His Honour Geoffrey Rivlin QC, Chair of the Criminal Justice Reform Group, which sets out ways of sustaining the criminal justice system in England and Wales. The Bar Council's Young Barristers' Committee is working on a new toolkit for members of the Bar in the very early years of practice with practical information about managing life at the Bar. This will include information about developing a practice, accessing resources on financial and taxation issues and managing your personal wellbeing. The Toolkit is expected to be launched in October 2015.





Ethics and Practice Assistance

The Bar Council provides an Ethical Enquiries Service for the benefit and assistance of barristers to help them identify, interpret and comply with their professional obligations in the BSB Handbook.

The Bar Council responded to over 500 email enquiries and 6,000 telephone enquiries made to the Ethical Enquiries Services in 2014-15.

In addition to this, the Bar Council has published materials to assist barristers and chambers on matters of professional conduct and ethics. These documents are available on a dedicated A-Z section on the Bar Council's website and include guidance on ethical issues, equality and diversity, practice management, and the development and use of information technology.

International business development and promoting the rule of law overseas

International initiatives flourished during 2014-15 as the Bar Council continued to strengthen ties with international legal bodies and identify and promote opportunities for the Bar in overseas jurisdictions.

The inaugural Brazilian-British Lawyers Exchange Programme for young lawyers and a new mentorship programme for Omani lawyers were two important initiatives launched during the year.

The Brazilian-British Lawyers Exchange Programme is a joint initiative between the Law Society, BPP Law School, the Ordem

dos Advogados do Brasil (OAB) and Lex Anglo-Brasil. The Bar Council welcomed the first wave of Brazilian lawyers to England in November 2014. The return leg of the programme saw a group of British junior barristers and solicitors visit Brazil in May 2015.

The Omani Mentorship Programme for Omani lawyers, in partnership with Beyond Borders, builds on the growing relationship between the Bar Council and the Omani legal profession. Participating lawyers were partnered with mentors in the UK to help them gain an understanding of the English legal system, enhance their legal skills, and enable them to develop valuable contacts.

This year, the Bar Council celebrated the 25th anniversary of its China Training Scheme, which provides a valuable opportunity for Chinese lawyers to experience practice at the English Bar.



Services

Serving the commercial and business requirements of the Bar

The Bar Council provides a range of products and services to help members of the Bar operate effectively in the current legal services market. Amongst the wide portfolio of Bar Council services available to barristers are training and career development opportunities, discounts on a range of services and products specifically for the Bar, the Annual Bar Conference, the Chambers' Workplace Pension Scheme and the BARCO escrow account.

The Services Team consists of the following teams:

- BARCO
- Client Relationships
- Fees Services
- Marketing and Business Development
- Member Services
- Training and Events

Over the last year, the Bar Council has made significant strides in establishing and implementing bespoke support services for its members.

Helping barristers reach new clients

Over the last year the Bar Council has over delivered Public Access top-up training to meet demand and ensure the 6,700 public access trained barristers have an opportunity to complete the training before October 2015, in line with BSB guidelines.

Listening to our members

In 2014 the Bar Council established the Relationship Management function to develop more focused dialogue between barristers and the Bar Council.

The Bar Council appointed Relationship Managers to open a new channel of direct communication with barristers, adding to the Bar Council's outreach programme with the Bar.

Case study:

BARCO benefits realised

Mike Ryan, Senior Clerk and Practice Manager, New Walk Chambers, Leicester

In the past few years, my chambers witnessed a significant growth in public access work. It did come with challenges relating to fee payment such as client trust, payment in advance, and credit card fees, to name a few. A lot of these issues involved increased administrative work, general inconveniences and sometimes loss of work. When Carol Harris, Head of the BARCO Team at the Bar Council, proposed a meeting to discuss the opportunities of using the escrow system, we were eager to explore the possibilities.

The BARCO Team were very instructive and introduced us to the various processes and implications of using BARCO. We integrated it with our database and linked in with our public access client care letters to more readily facilitate the process.

The BARCO escrow facility was very swiftly adopted by all of our public access barristers as its benefits became apparent. With BARCO, we can not only take the normal cheque and bank transfer payments but also credit cards, which BARCO deals with on our behalf.

There has also been an unexpected benefit to chambers. Clients appreciate the benefit of the escrow account and do not now shy away from paying in advance. The escrow account protects counsel, clerks and the lay client and it is a persuasive selling point for your chambers. Being backed by the Bar Council it gives clients a strong sense of security.

I believe BARCO's role will be crucial in the development of returns between chambers in relation to public access work. BARCO lends certainty and clarity to counsel that payment will be made and received securely and promptly.

BARCO's escrow account works very well for chambers, we utilise BARCO for 100 per cent of our public access work multiple times a week and escrow is now an essential part of our public access offering.





Making life easier for barristers

The Bar Council's newly structured Member Services Team is dedicated to improving the Bar's access to the Bar Council's services such as training, seminars, events and commercial products, services and publications.

New initiatives include Direct Debit payment of the Bar Representation Fee (BRF), which funds a large part of the Bar Council's representative functions. Members of the Bar can spread the £100 annual fee over one year through monthly payments.

Recruitment support continued to be provided to chambers by the Bar Council through the Pupillage Gateway, a flexible and cost-effective platform for chambers and Authorised Training Organisations (ATOs) to advertise pupillages and manage applications. This will make it easier for users to run a modern, online, recruitment process without a huge investment in their own systems. Now in its third year under Bar Council management, chambers using the Gateway for recruitment in 2014-15 increased from 86 the previous year to 95 this year. 17,527 applications were made through the Pupillage Gateway during this period.

Looking ahead, the Bar Council aims to do more to support the Bar and chambers, as well as students, in the recruitment process, with the first Bar Council Pupillage Fair set to take place in November 2015.

Supporting barristers outside work

The Bar Nursery at Smithfield House, which was launched in April 2013, offers flexible childcare facilities in central London to barristers who need childcare services. The Nursery continued to receive positive feedback from users. The Bar Nursery offers flexible childcare facilities near the Inns of Court and special rates for all members of the Bar.

A tendering process is currently underway to offer a similar services to Bar Council members in Leeds.

"I have nothing but good things to say about Smithfield House. It is a fantastic nursery, with a wonderful, caring atmosphere, in which our daughter is thriving. The nursery has also been enormously flexible, given our unpredictable hours... I would not hesitate to recommend the nursery."
(Member of the Bar)

In partnership with Close Brothers, the Bar Council continued to provide the Chambers' Workplace Pension Scheme, an umbrella pension arrangement for chambers' employees throughout England and Wales, enabling smaller employers to access a cost effective pension service. This service has become ever more relevant for the Bar and chambers following the introduction of auto-enrolment rules for work pensions.

Annual Bar Conference

Now preparing for its 30th year, the Annual Bar Conference remains the biggest Bar event in the calendar. In 2014, more than 200 delegates attended the conference, which provides a vital platform for discussion on issues affecting barristers, the wider legal sector and the rule of law, as well as offering a major networking opportunity for the Bar. For the first time, this year's conference will be combined with the Young Bar Conference to bring the whole Bar closer together.

BARCO

The BARCO escrow account receives funds from clients for legal services provided to them before being pooled in segregated bank accounts for the term of the legal services. As confidence in the facility grows, the versatility of BARCO has been on display in the courts: the account was used to fund a class action case against a mortgage company by a set of chambers leading the case for the claimants.

As the wider legal sector sees the potential benefits of the service, BARCO is expected to grow further in the year ahead.

Communications

Voice of the Bar

The Bar Council acts as the voice of the Bar, representing the views of its members to a range of audiences including policymakers, the public, international audiences and the business community. The Bar Council's communications strategy is largely focused on promoting a profession which is relevant, maintains high standards and operates in the public interest. The Bar Council Communications Team delivers this strategy through:

- Media Relations – proactively promoting the Bar Council and the profession through the media, as well as reacting to breaking news
- Public Affairs – lobbying government and other policy makers, as well as MPs and Peers on key issues affecting the Bar and justice, and
- Member Communications – keeping members of the Bar and other stakeholders informed about of the valuable work the Bar Council is doing on their behalf.

Communicating with the profession and stakeholders

BarTalk, a new fortnightly member e-newsletter was successfully launched in February 2015. The newsletter is delivered to all members of the Bar as well as other key stakeholders, such as chambers chief executives, clerks, students and others with an interest in the Bar, via email. BarTalk is a key communication tool for the Bar Council to share with its members work carried out on their behalf, as well as highlighting important consultations, new guidance and policies, events, vacancies, and important

announcements relevant to the profession.

A blog page was launched on the Bar Council website in March 2015 to host a series of blogs by the Chairman of the Bar and Bar Council Chief Executive. In addition to this platform, a guest blog page was launched to give members of the Bar as well as other key voices in the legal sector an opportunity to share views on issues affecting the profession.

The Bar Council's Twitter feed reached 20,000 followers in 2014-15 and continued to grow. Engagement through Twitter has been strong, with high retweet rates and a following that cuts across the legal sector, student community, business sectors and government. In 2014-15, the Bar Council re-activated its LinkedIn page in order to reach wider audiences. The Bar Council Facebook page was also created specifically to make the Bar Council more accessible for the student community, and a new Bar Council YouTube channel was launched. A Bar Council Instagram account provides a behind the scenes view of the work of the Bar Council through photographs.

Campaigns

The Bar Council led on a range of high-profile media and lobbying campaigns related to the administration of justice. These included campaigns against the previous Coalition Government's increases to court fees, restrictions on judicial review, legal aid reforms and more.

In the lead up to the 2015 General Election, the Bar Council led a

coalition made up of the CILEx, the Law Centres Network, the Legal Action Group and AdviceUK to create the Manifesto for Justice, which put forward the case for an effective and efficient system of justice which is accessible to all. Current and aspiring Members of Parliament, as well as existing members of the House of Lords, received the Manifesto as part of an integrated communications campaign.

Engaging with the media

The Bar Council issued 109 official press releases in 2014-15, excluding rapid reactive media statements and face-to-face media briefings, as well as strategically placed comment articles from the Chairman and other Bar Council office holders in key publications. Media coverage was secured for the Bar Council across a range of media, including The Times, The Independent, The Guardian, Financial Times, Daily Mail and a number of legal sector publications and broadcast channels, including the BBC and LBC radio in 2014-15.



Our goals: what next for the Bar?

The Bar is a profession whose values and qualities are rooted firmly in principles dedicated to serving the public interest and justice. A number of legislative reforms have presented many challenges for the profession during 2014-15, including enhanced court fees, breaches of LPP, impact of legal aid changes, and restrictions on judicial review.

The challenges facing the wider Bar have also been felt acutely by the young Bar. The Bar Council is committed to supporting the young Bar in diversifying their practice areas amidst the austerity of government cuts and severe restrictions on access to justice. Similarly, the Bar Council is looking at ways to broaden its student outreach to demonstrate that a career at the Bar is open to everyone of ability, irrespective of background.

The Bar Council will continue to develop and promote the Bar's services and expertise through direct access. Several thousand barristers are now trained to undertake direct public access work and the public, businesses and other organisation can save money by accessing a barrister directly.

As we celebrated the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta in 2015, the need to maintain and develop the structures and processes that have safeguarded our rights and freedoms remains. Under the current Chairmanship of Alistair MacDonald QC and Vice-Chairman Chantal-Aimée Doerries QC, the Bar Council remains committed to ensuring the highest levels of quality advocacy, and access to our system of justice is available to all, especially the most vulnerable in society.

Our Finances

Funding the Bar Council

The Bar Council's work is funded from various sources, and the different streams of income fund different functions and activities within the organisation as a whole, inclusive of the (BSB).

Overall, total revenue was £17.0m in 2014-15. The Bar Council's operating income was £14.3m, a drop of £0.4m on the previous year (£14.7m). Non-operating income, including support for the Legal Services Board (LSB), Legal Ombudsman (OLC), was £2.7m, up £0.7m on last year.

Practising Certificate Fee (PCF)

The compulsory PCF funds the expenditure that falls within the 'permitted purposes' as defined in accordance with s51 of the Legal Services Act 2007 (LSA) and the rules made thereunder. This fee is paid by all practising barristers and has been maintained at the same level as 2013/14.

In 2014-15, PCF collections increased 0.3% to £9.5m following a small rise in the number of practising barristers paying PCF. Collected PCF funds are apportioned between the BSB and the permitted purposes activities of the Approved Regulator (the Bar Council) to cover the direct costs and overheads of both parts of the organisation. In 2014-15, 62% of the PCF income (£5.9m) was allocated to the BSB, equivalent to an average of £375 per barrister. £3.6m (38%) was allocated towards the Bar Council's permitted purposes representational activity, equivalent to an average of £229 per barrister.

Bar Representation Fee (BRF)

The BRF, a voluntary fee set at an annual £100 per member per year, funds the Bar Council's vital work in representing the Bar's interests and promoting and supporting fair access to and the administration of justice. All of the funds raised from the BRF are used exclusively for this work. It does not fund the commercial activity of the Bar Council, which in itself is a valuable source of additional income that funds campaigns and support for the Bar.

Key activities that were BRF-funded in whole or in part in 2014-15 include:

- The Bar Mentoring Service to help barristers develop their career and secure Silk and judicial appointments
- Publications and newsletters on important practice management issues such as remuneration, taxation and business efficiencies
- Promotion of Public Access and the benefits of directly instructing the Bar to gain access to specialist advisory and advocacy services, and
- The Bar Council's Bar Placement Week which promotes wider access to the Bar by working with talented students who might not otherwise have that access.

In 2014-15, BRF subscription income fell 11% to £1.1m. This is an important income stream for Bar Council providing much of the revenue that supports the activities that cannot be funded by PCF, and we have a set measures in place to encourage a greater contribution rate.

Salary Band	Up To £19,999	£20,000 - £39,999	£40,000 - £59,999	£60,000 - £79,999	£80,000 - £99,999	£100,000 - £119,999	£120,000 - £139,999	£140,000 - £159,999	£160,000+
Number Of Staff Employed In This Salary Band	7	89	40	9	5	0	1	0	2

Representation & Policy

The Bar Council's representational and policy activities are funded by a combination of the PCF, earned income and surpluses arising from the commercial activities of the Services Team. This arrangement allows the representation activities to extend beyond those of the permitted purposes set out in the Legal Services Act 2007.

Total funding for representation activities fell 3% to £4.6m for this period, while the total PCF received for the Bar Council's representative work increased 3% to £3.6m. £0.9m of non-PCF originated funds also applied, made up of a £0.7m surplus from the Services activities and £0.3m of other earned income. While direct costs associated with the representative function of the Bar Council increased slightly following an in-year restructure, the overall costs dropped £0.1m to £4.5m, reflecting the lower property overheads.

Services

The Services team department provides added value services, events and training for barristers and promotes the BRF subscriptions. These activities generate a surplus to reinvest in the non-permitted purpose representation activities.

This year, Services team made a surplus of £0.7m, most of which was used to subsidise representation activities. Although the total Services income dropped 12.5% to £2.1m, Bar Council training courses and seminars continued to prove popular with income growing 2% to £510k during the year.

Full details of the Bar Council's financial activities for 2014-15 can be found in the Bar Council Financial Statement which is published on the Bar Council website www.barcouncil.org.uk.

Sources of Bar Council income 2014-15

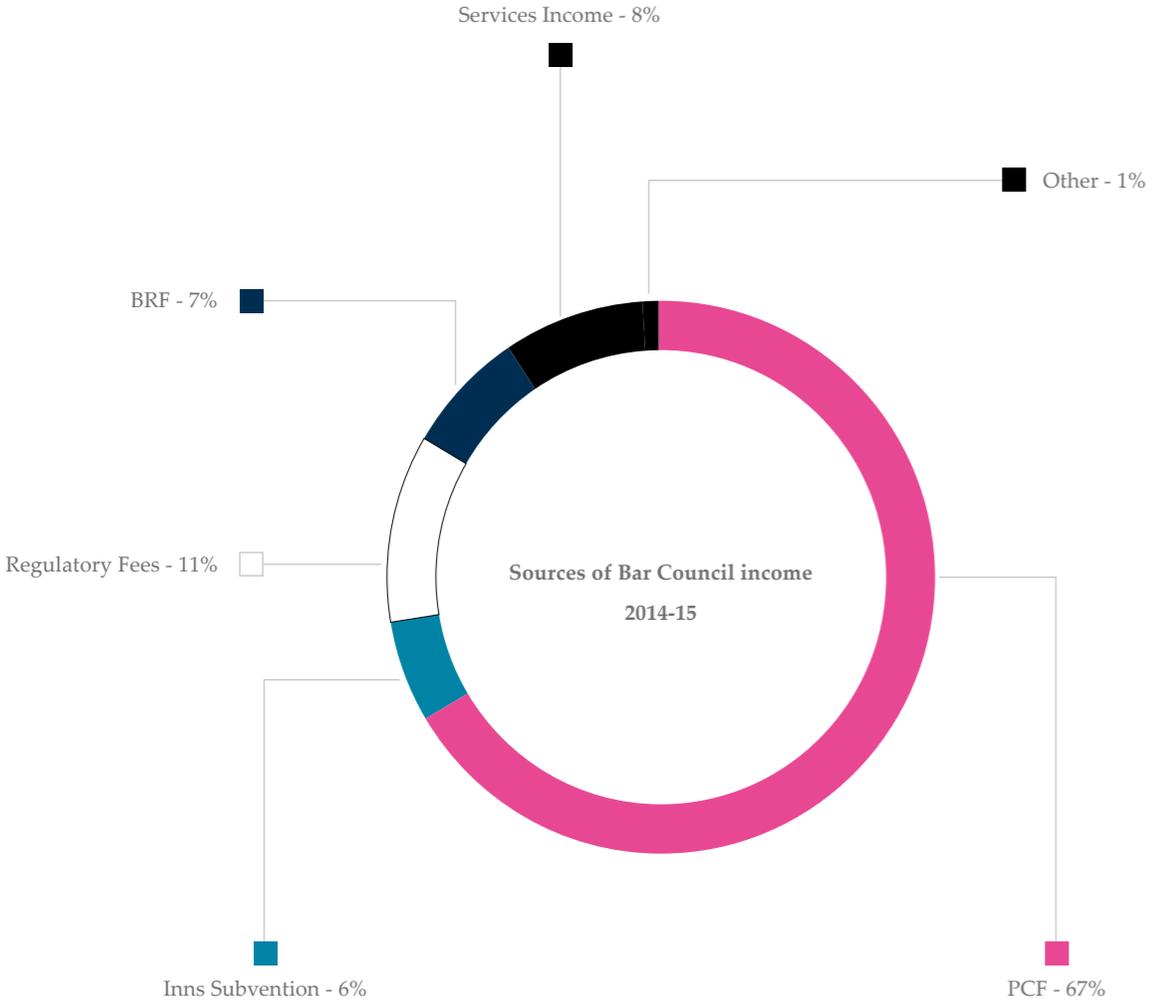
- Bar Representation Fee, £1.0m
- Income from Services, £1.2m
- Practising Certificate Fee, £9.5m
- Inns' Subvention, £0.8m
- Regulatory Fees, £1.6m
- Legal Services Board/Legal Ombudsman levy, £0.8m
- Pensions levy, £0.5m
- Other, £0.1m

What do we spend the money on?

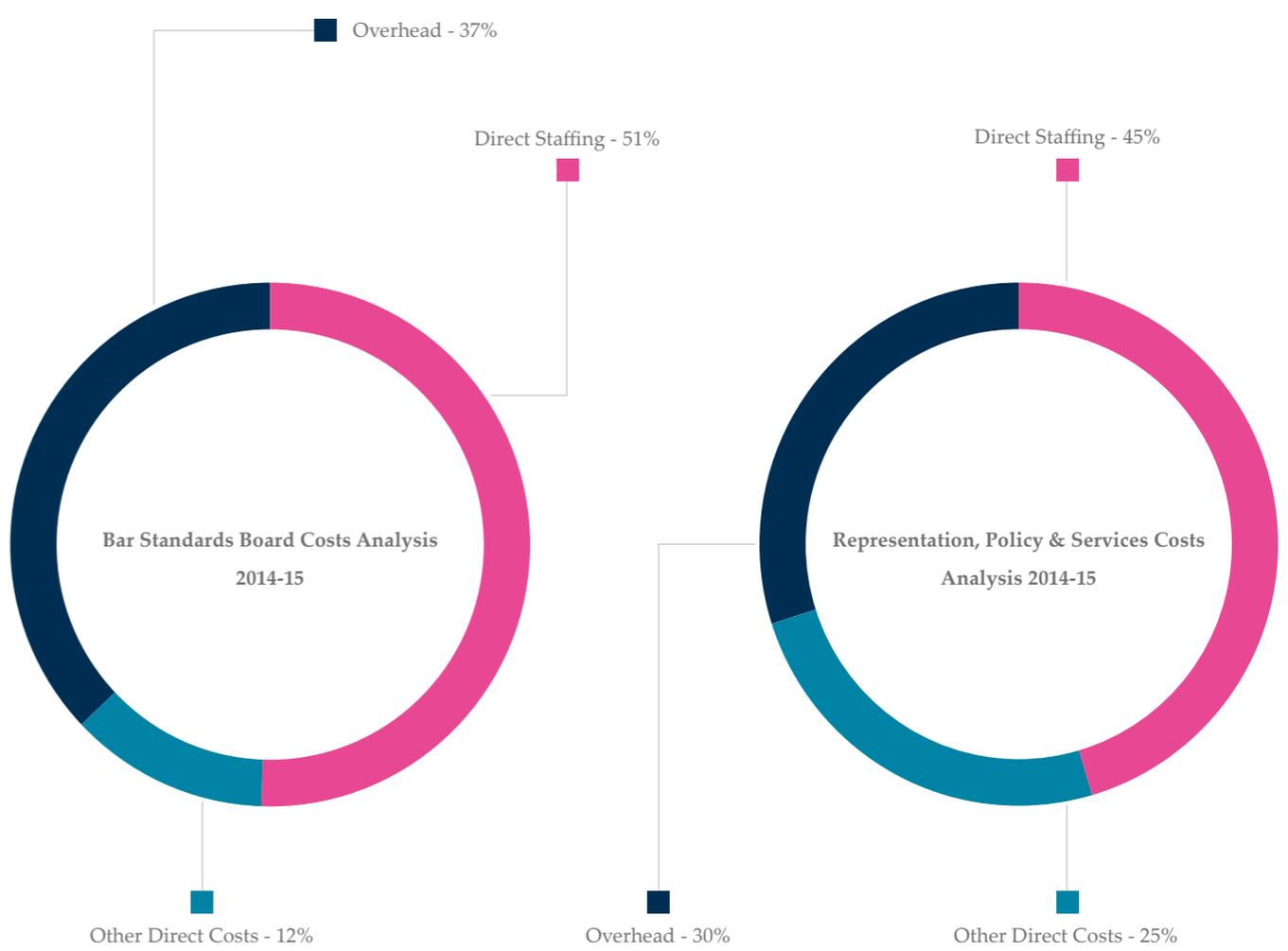
A simple break down of the organisation-wide costs in 2014-15 shows that total expenditure in the BSB was £8.2m, with approximately half of that total spend on staffing.

The Representation, Policy & Services activities of the Bar Council cost £5.9m.

Sources of Income 2014-15



Expenditure 2014-15



Further Information

Please visit the Bar Council's website for further information on its activities, structure and committees: www.barcouncil.org.uk.

Follow us on Twitter [@thebarcouncil](https://twitter.com/thebarcouncil) and visit our LinkedIn page: www.linkedin.com/company/general-council-of-the-bar.

To discuss any aspect of the Bar Council's representational work, please contact:

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Elected Officers

Alistair MacDonald QC

Chairman of the Bar

Chantal-Aimée Doerries QC

Chairman-Elect of the Bar

Andrew Langdon QC

Vice-Chairman Elect of the Bar

Lorinda Long

Treasurer

Chief Executive of the Bar Council

Stephen Crowne

Representation, Policy and Services staff at the Bar Council (as at 31st August 2015)

Representation, Policy
and Services Leadership Team

Mark Hatcher

Special Advisor to the Chairman
of the Bar

Phil Robertson

Director of Policy

Paul Mosson

Director of Services

Executive Office/Business
Development and Governance

Charlotte Hudson (Head)

Mark Stratton

Helena Zara

Judy Green

Brussels Office

Evanna Fruithof

Consultant

Communications

Steve Rudaini (Head)

Sarah Hunt

Jennifer Duncan

Luke Robins-Grace

Legal Affairs, Practice and Ethics

Sarah-Jane Bennett (Head)

Averil Session

Melanie Mylvaganam

Regulatory Issues and Law
Reform

Natalie Darby

Sarah Richardson

Remuneration and
Employed Bar

Adrian Vincent (Head)

Julie Demeritt

Equality and Diversity and CSR

Sam Mercer (Head)

Alex Bloom

International

Christian Wisskirchen (Head)

Jessica Crofts-Lawrence

Commercial Services and
Development

Lois Clark (Head)

Training and Events

Kush Kanjia

Aishah Malik

Emma Pateman

Petra Majzlikova

Marissa Diheen

Jade Price

Marketing and Business
Development

Rossodivita Marc

Jezelle Greenaway

Fees Services

Christine Power

BARCO

Carol Harris (Head)

Michelle Moxon

Member Services

Wendy McLaughlin

Hayley Boatwright

Jyoti Kandola

Jasmyn Kalikas

Nicole Cottle

Relationships Team

Danielle Wright

Darren Moss

Integrity. Excellence. Justice.

The Bar Council represents barristers in England and Wales.

It promotes:

- The Bar's high quality specialist advocacy and advisory services
- Fair access to justice for all
- The highest standards of ethics, equality and diversity across the profession, and
- The development of business opportunities for barristers at home and abroad.

The General Council of the Bar is the Approved Regulator of the Bar of England and Wales.

It discharges its regulatory functions through the independent Bar Standards Board.

Phone: 020 7242 0082

Web: www.barcouncil.org.uk

Twitter: @thebarcouncil