



**Minutes of the Bar Council meeting
held on Saturday 16 July 2016 at Lincoln's Inn (Old Hall)**

Present:	Chantal-Aimée Doerries QC	Chairman
	Andrew Langdon QC	Chairman Elect
	Lorinda Long	Treasurer
	Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP	Solicitor General

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Robin Allen QC, Rachel Ansell QC, Gary Blaker QC, Stephen Bramley CBE, Alexandria Carr, Gemma de Cordova, Joseph Curl, Malcolm Dodds, John Elvidge QC, Guy Fetherstonhaugh QC, Francis Fitzgibbon QC, James George, Richard Gibbs, Michael Jennings, Richard G Jones, Rupert Jones, Christopher Kennedy QC, Rachel Langdale QC, Paul Lewis QC, Athena Markides, Philip Marshall QC, Stuart McCracken, Andrew Morgan, Stephen Morris QC, Benjamin Myers QC, Andrew O'Byrne, Peter Petts, Angharad Mary Price, Laurie Rabinowitz QC, Robert Rhodes QC, Alison Saunders, Rachel Spearing, Daniel Sternberg, Geoffrey Tattersall QC, Nick Vineall QC, Grant Warnsby and Rt Hon Jeremy Wright QC MP.

The following did not attend and did not send apologies: Colin Address, Simon Broomfield, Tom Cockcroft, Melissa Coutinho, Anita Davies, Michael Duggan QC, Courteney Griffiths QC, James Kitching, Anna Macey, Neil Mercer, Bill Mousley QC, Giles Powell and Mark Trafford QC.

58 further members attended.

1. Minutes of the last meeting

Richard Atkins QC reported that he has identified three corrections for the minutes of the previous meeting that have been sent to Natalie Zara, Head of Governance, for amendment.

The minutes of the last Bar Council (21 May 2016) were approved subject to these amendments.

2. Chairman's statement

The Chairman explained the shift in the agenda, circulated and communicated to Bar Council members the day before. The agenda was reorganised to allow discussion of the *CPS Guidance on Speaking to Witnesses in Court* item earlier in the meeting.

The Chairman presented the highlights of her written report to those members present.

EU Referendum

Referring to her statement attached as Annex 2a, the Chairman noted that it is an interesting time for politics and the Bar as the outcome of the EU Referendum, and, the selection of the new Prime Minister and new Lord Chancellor, will inevitably lead to a number of changes.

A working group has been established to deal with the issues surrounding Brexit. Chaired by Hugh Mercer QC, the group can be contacted via its own email address brexitwg@barcouncil.org.uk. The purpose of the group, which had its first meeting earlier in the week, is to explore the implications of Brexit for the profession more widely, including what Brexit will mean for chambers and for justice more generally. It is not intended to be a political lobbying group but it will lobby on behalf of, and provide guidance and assistance to, the profession.

The Chairman encouraged those who are interested in becoming involved with the work of the group to get in touch with her or Hugh Mercer QC, or to contact the group via the email address.

Regulatory independence

The Chairman reported that, on 28 June, she had given evidence to the Justice Select Committee at its hearing on legal services. In addition, the CMA interim report has been published and the Government consultation on regulatory reform of ABSs has been launched. This consultation does not, at this stage, extend into any consultation on legal services, as had been expected when initially consulted. The Working Group on Regulatory Independence continues to give thought to the issues surrounding regulatory independence in the background.

In memoriam

The Chairman noted the sad passing of two Lords: Lord Neill of Bladen QC, Chairman of the Bar in 1974, on 28 May 2016; and, Lord Mayhew of Twysden, a former Attorney General and Solicitor General, on 25 June 2016.

Bar Council members

The Chairman gave thanks to Penelope Reed QC, the outgoing Chair of the Chancery Bar, and Mark Fenhalls QC, the outgoing Chair of the Criminal Bar. She said that it is a pleasure working with the Specialist Bar Associations who carry out all of their work on a pro bono basis.

Amanda Tipples QC, who takes over as Chair of the Chancery Bar, was welcomed to her first meeting.

The Chairman reported that Simon Clements, an elected employed Junior over seven years' call, has tendered his resignation due to other commitments and she thanked him for his input.

The North Eastern Circuit has replaced one of its representatives, Katherine Goddard, with Gordon Stables who was welcomed to his first meeting.

Bar Council representative appointments to external bodies

Recent appointments have been made to three diverse external bodies: the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting; the JAC Advisory Group; and the Extradition Working Group.

The JAC are carrying out a review of the latest recruitment exercise for recorders and the Chairman appealed to Bar Council members for any thoughts to be emailed to her.

Attendance at Bar Council meetings

The Chairman explained that Natalie Zara, Head of Governance, is carrying out a review of attendance at Bar Council meetings and she reminded members of their obligations.

The Chairman drew to the attention of the Bar Council members' one member of Bar Council who has failed to attend any Bar Council meetings since joining and who has attended only one or two meetings of the sub-committees for which he is a member. She explained that she felt it only right to raise that the GMC have approved the termination of his appointment.

Natalie Zara will be looking more widely at mechanisms for managing issues with attendance, for example, alternates.

Ten things the Bar Council did in May and June

The Chairman encouraged Bar Council members to take a look at the lists attached as Annex 2b.

Bar Conference

The Chairman said that Gerard McDermott QC, Chair of this years' Bar Conference, had asked her to remind members of the date of the conference: 15 October 2016.

A question was asked about the Chairman's attendance at the Bakers' Annual Ladies Dinner on 16 June. The Chairman explained that she had been asked to be a guest speaker standing in for Dame Fiona Woolf, former Lord Mayor and former President of The Law Society. Her attendance is an example of ways in which the Chairman is able to represent the importance of legal services to the wider public.

Richard Atkins QC identified a typo in Annex 2b relating to the Chairman attending the Northern Circuit Mess in Manchester.

LN reminded member that the early bird rate for the Bar Conference finishes on 29 July.

Max Hill QC made the point that while he welcomes Elizabeth Truss to the post of Lord Chancellor, she will need encouragement from the Bar to enable her to decide which parts of

the reform to put into place. Progress on remuneration for the employed Bar, which is of vital importance to the Bar Council, remains stagnant. In addition, an enormous amount of work has been done nationwide to make sure that better use is made of the money made available to the Bar regarding the AGFS scheme. Significant progress had been made on persuading the Government to do something about this and constructive conversations held with Michael Gove had almost reached the point of ministerial sign off. In view of this, it is frustrating that there is now a new Lord Chancellor in place and he encouraged the Solicitor General to pursue the cause.

The Solicitor General replied that, in his opinion, Elizabeth Truss is an economic liberal who is almost certain to ask searching questions about the way in which legal services will be delivered. He suggested that if the Bar 'gets in early' to demonstrate a sustainable package, she will likely 'give us a hearing'. He promised to do all he could for the cause, assuming that he remained Solicitor General.

Mark Fenhalls QC endorsed the comments made by Max Hill QC concerning the hard work that has already been done. He thanked the Bar Council for this work and noted the good opportunity to move forward.

Gordon Nardell QC made the point that the Bar Council sought to intervene, on the basis of providing assistance, in the Brexit debate and he offered the same assistance to this cause.

The Solicitor General thanked Gordon Nardell QC for his offer and explained that there is now a new department that will require assistance, not just in terms of policy, but in terms of managing the process.

The Chairman informed the Bar Council members that she has written to the new Lord Chancellor, Richard Heaton, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Justice, and, Jonathan Jones, Treasury Solicitor.

Louisa Nye said that the Young Bar, who are willing to help and capable of providing assistance, endorses the offer made by Gordon Nardell QC. She said that she would like to ensure that opportunities are made available to the Young Bar. To this, the Solicitor General assured Louisa Nye that he would bear this point in mind and spoke about the possibility of secondments.

Shobana Iyer suggested that the Attorney General brings forward panel adverts. The Solicitor General agreed to put this suggestion to the Attorney General.

A Bar Council member suggested that the subject of Tribunal Fees could be added to the 'to do' list. Agreeing with this, the Chairman proposed the inclusion of Court Fees also.

3. BSB report

Those present from the Bar Council were Sir Andrew Burns, Chairman of the BSB; Dr Vanessa Davies, Director General of the BSB; Naomi Ellenbogen, Vice-Chair of the BSB; and, Wilf White, Director for Communications and Public Engagement.

Saying that it is a busy time of year, Sir Andrew Burns noted the ongoing events in Westminster, Ankara and France that are distracting the BSB from its work. He said that, in light of the recent attack in Nice, his thoughts are with our French neighbours and commented on the importance of the Rule of Law.

Women at the Bar report

The main BSB news is the publication of the Women at the Bar Report. The Women at the Bar survey attracted over 1,300 responses, which equates to almost a quarter of women practising at the Bar. The reluctance of many women to report experiences has been observed, however, there are some encouraging signs. The Director General will be writing to Heads of Chambers with a view to improving compliance. The BSB are committed to ensuring effective supervision visits and are clear that enforcement action will be taken where necessary.

The Report shows that the experiences of women at the Bar are better in those chambers where equality processes are in place. The Bar Council and BSB will be working together to improve awareness of the BSB's Equality Rules and the Bar Council's Guidance throughout the Bar. The BSB are pleased to report that the Institute of Barristers' Clerks and the Legal Management Association have also indicated that they want to work with the Bar Council and BSB on this initiative.

ABS pilots

Sir Andrew Burns explained that the BSB are seeking Alternative Business Structures (ABS) to participate in a pilot scheme in order to help the BSB prepare for the authorisation of ABSs later this year. He invited willing participants to email the BSB. Extending regulation to ABSs will allow the BSB to regulate businesses that are owned by both lawyers and non-lawyers thereby widening customer choice.

Justice Select Committee

Sir Andrew Burns reported that the Director General of the BSB, Dr Vanessa Davies, appeared alongside the Chairman of the Bar Council, the Chief Executive of the Law Society and the Chief Executive of the Solicitors Regulation Authority to give evidence before the Justice Select Committee.

Future Bar Training (FBT) Event

The FBT event on 7 July was well attended, lively and attracted a wide range of views and a similar discussion was held at the BPTC Conference on 15 July. The three options presented on 7 July are:

- 1) The "Evolutionary" option which would preserve the current stages with less regulatory prescription for training;
- 2) The "Managed Pathways" option which would allow students to combine some stages; and
- 3) The "Bar Specialist" option which would require students to have completed a law degree or graduate diploma.

The BSB remain open about the best way forward and are keen to understand the knock on effects of each course of action. Sir Andrew Burns appealed to Bar Council members for their input and reflections.

EU Referendum

The BSB have issued a statement to reassure barristers that there is no immediate impact for anyone currently practising as a barrister in England and Wales or registered with the BSB as a European lawyer.

Consultation on the CPD Rules

Sir Andrew Burns drew the attention of Bar Council members to changes in the new CPD regime. The consultation closes on 1 September.

Katie Drummond asked why the Women at the Bar survey had not been sent to female pupils. Explaining that she has heard some particularly 'hair-raising' stories, she said it was a 'great shame' that the survey had not extended to pupils.

Vanessa Davies answered that the reason for not sending the survey to pupils lies in the research design. A separate survey is sent to pupils and, although this may not include a specific question about women at the Bar, it provides an opportunity for pupils to share their experiences.

Naomi Ellenbogen QC, Vice Chair of the BSB, talked about the various options open to people to report instances of unfair treatment. She was clear that no pupil should feel that they cannot report. Chambers have E&D officers, there are routes through the BSB website and the Bar Council provides a helpline. She invited those present to emphasise this message at similar forums and reassured members that reports will be taken seriously and people listened to.

The Chairman supported Naomi Ellenbogen's words and talked briefly about the Bar Council helpline. She made the point that one of the main things to focus on is ensuring a wider awareness of the issues throughout the profession. A number of the Circuits and SBAs are setting up mentoring schemes as it is often helpful to have the assistance of someone outside the immediate structure.

Sir Andrew Burns emphasised that the BSB is taking the findings of the survey very seriously.

Gerard McDermott QC said that he had been shocked by two instances of behaviour reported by a young barrister on the Circuit. He was clear that while the complaints system should be used to report, there is a wider need to re-educate those barristers at the Bar who consider such behaviour reasonable. Whatever people might have thought or tolerated previously, it is not acceptable.

Sir Andrew Burns acknowledged that it is 'great' to have rules but said that rules do not work unless they are devised in neutral discussions.

Max Hill QC said that it is important to maintain a sense of balance and perspective. As an example of good behaviour, he reported that he had been in Leeds County Court Robing

Room last week where he had observed four or five junior members of the Bar coming to the mess and politely introducing their pupil or mini-pupil to the opponent.

Andrew Granville Stafford reminded members that he had raised concerns regarding a key finding in the Public Access Survey at the last Saturday Bar Council meeting. He reported that he has since been in dialogue with the BSB who have conceded that the way that the findings are presented on the websites is unhelpful and agreed to amend this.

Mark Fenhalls QC enquired whether Brexit can be used to cap the number of students on courses to stop students being 'ripped off'. Vanessa Davies replied that the number of EU students on the law courses is low.

To a point made by Ruth Hughes concerning competition law, Vanessa Davies explained that it is the nature and structure of the law courses that drive costs. High numbers of overseas students keep costs down.

4. Draft CPS Guidance on Speaking to Witnesses at Court

The Chairman introduced Neil Moore, Legal Advisor to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), to the meeting. She thanked Neil Moore for attending and explained that he had been invited to talk about the CPS Guidance on Speaking to Witnesses at Court and to take questions on its content. She drew the members' attention to the guidance at Annex 5b and to the Bar Council's response at Annex 5a.

Neil Moore thanked the Chairman for inviting him to the meeting and apologised that the DPP herself had not been able to attend. He explained that he has been the DPP's Legal Advisor since October 2014 and the guidance is one of the first pieces of work that he was asked to work on.

The consultation process for the guidance ran from January 2015. 179 returns were received, 20 of which were from the legal profession. The responses were generally positive with the majority of respondents saying that they believed that the guidance struck the right balance.

The new guidance and processes were piloted from November 2015 – February 2016 in 901 trials across Sheffield, Ipswich, Liverpool and Southwark. 1410 witnesses assisted with the pilot. No practical issues or challenges to the procedures were raised and judges commented that the pilot had been very helpful. Neil Moore said that the pilot had demonstrated that if witnesses are better assisted they will provide better evidence and their overall court experience will be improved.

Before opening up the floor to questions, Neil Moore said that he intended to address two areas of concern:

- 1) Practical considerations; and
- 2) Concerns about the coaching of witnesses and tailoring of evidence.

In terms of practical considerations and time constraints, Neil Moore said that a number of measures had been taken. For example, some information can be provided in advance; a

leaflet containing basic examples has been prepared for witnesses in advance of court; and, a 'roles and responsibilities' document outlining who does what at the court, has been developed. In addition, court resources have been reallocated so that all courts now have paralegal cover with paralegal managers at the larger courts to assist with the implementation of the guidance.

Neil Moore emphasised the importance of clear note taking and said that all those responsible for rolling out the guidance have received a days' training. Once the guidance is rolled out, continued monitoring will take place with a review conducted in the autumn.

Addressing concerns that the new guidance will result in the coaching of witnesses and the tailoring of evidence, Neil Moore suggested that there is no conflict with the guidance. Witnesses will be told what the defence is but not in context. Telling the witnesses what the issue is, will make the process clearer and the guidance is there to provide clarity.

Neil Moore finished his introduction by saying that two years ago research showed that only 42% of victims and 62% of witnesses were satisfied with their court experiences. Following the pilot, 89.5% of witnesses indicated that they were fairly satisfied which is some evidence that witnesses feel better with the new guidance in place.

Max Hill QC said that the guidance has excited fierce debate at the South Eastern Circuit Committee. While there are positives around prosecutors talking to witnesses, there are serious concerns about Counsel being inserted into an evidence chain and some suspicion about whether the CPS will be able to deliver on its paralegal plan.

Neil Moore said that it is very clear that the new guidance will only work with suitable support. Paralegals will now be at the courts. On the issue of advocates being inserted into evidence chains, he acknowledged that this could happen but reiterated that no substantial issues have been raised to date. The issue of what to do if you witness says something you know is incorrect about what you said to them has been covered in the training and further training is available for the Bar via the Advocates Panel website.

Max Hardy suggested disclosure notes could be taken in open court in the presence of parties but absence of the jury.

Neil Moore conceded that Max Hardy's point was interesting one which, no one, to his knowledge has advanced previously. He said that he expected that the answer would be that prosecutors have to see witnesses beforehand anyway and that is an appropriate time to take disclosure statements, but promised to check.

Richard Atkins QC said that he had three topics to raise:

- 1) Time and resources;
- 2) Effect on witnesses; and
- 3) Reaction of witnesses.

With regards to the first point, Richard Atkins QC raised concerns about the length of time, perhaps up to half an hour per witness, it will take to meet all witnesses and to go through all

the points covered in pages 4-6 of the guidance. Added to this is a further 10 minutes at the end to thank the witness. He described the guidance as 'unrealistic' and suggested that one paralegal between two courts is not enough.

Neil Moore referred to the 'roles and responsibilities' document saying that it sets out how some of these issues can be dealt with in advance. He said that he appreciated that the additional inclusion of a paralegal makes the process more difficult but stated that there have been no concerns raised about this to date.

Regarding the second point, Richard Atkins QC noted that the guidance is clear that witnesses may be informed of the general nature of the defence case, and he cited consent as an example, but warned that some witnesses will not know what this means. He made the point that because the advocate is prevented from answering any questions from a confused witness, the witness will begin to worry and find themselves in a worse position. Some will refuse to give evidence.

In reply, Neil Moore was clear that the guidance discourages entry into discourse. He said that, in his experience, witnesses want to give more information.

Moving on to his third point, Richard Atkins QC said that there are occasions where, as a prosecutor, you watch and wait for the defence to put their case because you want to see the reaction of the witness to the defence suggestion. If the witness has been informed what the defence is prior to the case, their reaction is not so genuine. This will inevitably have an effect on how the jury sees the case and may harm the prosecution case. He called for a review of this in the guidance.

Neil Moore informed Richard Atkins QC that this point was one that he had also raised. However, juries are capable of deciding cases without the shock factor and the CPS believe that it is beneficial for the witness to have more understanding.

Amanda Pinto QC enquired about what a prosecutor is supposed to do when dealing with a five count indictment. It would be very difficult to contain any conversation with a witness in such circumstances and she suggested that the only way to deal with the situation would be to ensure the automatic disclosure of the conversation to the defence. Given this, she asked if this would be permissible under the new guidance.

Neil Moore was clear that the approach is not permissible. He noted Amanda Pinto QC's point on five count indictments as a good one that has not been raised previously and acknowledged that in multi-handed cases, defences will vary making it difficult to say which defence applied. He promised to take her point back to those at the CPS and said that the likely response will be that prosecutors are advised to outline the main defence issues of the case.

Amanda Pinto QC continued saying that when defending, an advocate is entitled to know what the witness has been told. She made the point that she cannot see how it would be possible for the prosecution to say in advance if it meets the test. To this, Neil Moore replied

that the advocate will already know what the witness has been told. If the witness says something else, a note will be taken.

Jenny Josephs said that she had attended local CPS training that involved watching a video depicting poor experiences of three or four female victims. She was clear that barristers recognise these experiences and are taking steps to deal with them but stated that the evidence goes far wider. Effectively prosecutors are being asked to say to the witness “we are going to give you some information, please don’t respond”. This places a burden on the advocate and damages the relationship between the advocate and the complainant. She asked what is wrong with putting witnesses in comfortable position without discussing the nature of the evidence.

Neil Moore explained that the conversation should not be a discussion of what the evidence is and urged members’ to listen to what the witnesses have to say. To this, Jenny Josephs requested that any review looks specifically at providing assistance to prosecuting Counsel. Neil Moore acknowledged that one of the weaknesses of the survey is that it looks at the role more generally.

Eleanor Mawrey said that the guidance assumes that the defence will be consistent. Speaking from personal experience, she reported that last week one of her defendants changed his mind to the point that the nature of his defence is now unclear. There are difficulties with advocates speaking to the witness each time the defence changes as the witness will inevitably ask questions.

Neil Moore recalled that the question of what to do if the defence changes was in the training at one stage and the CPS advised that the appropriate course of action is to raise this with the opponent so that the judge can decide whether or not you should speak to the witness again. If the witness responds a note will be taken and it will be disclosed.

Mark Fenhalls QC argued that the initial stress testing is not realistic. Advocates frequently find no CPS representatives at the court and moving people out of offices won’t assist. He said that it is critical that the CPS explore this further.

Andrew Langdon QC, Chairman Elect, said that he finds it interesting that discussions have been approached on the basis that witnesses will tell the truth. He asked how it will be possible to assess the impact of forewarning witnesses and suggested that monitoring witness satisfaction is only a part of a bigger picture.

Neil Moore assured members that quality assurance work will be carried out in the next few months. It would be a rare situation where a dishonest witness is not exposed.

Richard Posner said that much of the guidance outlines things that advocates should be doing anyway and, from this perspective, the guidance is important and to be welcomed. However, he raised concerns that for the most vulnerable witnesses the nature of defence disclosed could bring about distress. He warned that some advocates will abandon the policy because they are unable to meet the demands in full and this will lead to inequalities in the way that witnesses are treated. The degree of work required by the guidance is too great.

Gordon Stables, attending his first Bar Council meeting, said that discussions in Sheffield have echoed those in the Midlands, as described by Richard Atkins QC. Advocates have been so scared of obeying the guidance that they have been spending 20-30 minutes at various points in the day, including lunch hour and breaks, going through everything required of them. However, this is no longer the case as such attention to detail is no longer being adhered to. The result is that witnesses are getting a 'light' version. He warned Neil Moore that notes are not being taken in the way the CPS would anticipate. In reality, witnesses are told "You do understand Mr X that your evidence is in dispute" and that is the extent of it.

Louisa Nye said that she understands the need for victims and witnesses to be treated well in court but ultimately the Crown prosecution is bringing a case for the public good. Justice is the most important thing in the court room. She asked if any evidence existed beforehand that witnesses were very dissatisfied.

Neil Moore replied that a survey was carried out before the guidance specifically asking whether assistance was given. On the issue of whether the guidance is in conflict with common law, there have been no challenges so far. He also said that action would be taken if, on investigation, blank sheets in place of notes are found.

Neil Moore finished by thanking Bar Council members for inviting him and reassuring them that he will continue to monitor the guidance in the next few months and years.

5. Chief Executive's report

Stephen Crowne thanked Lincoln's Inn for providing the room for the meeting. He reported that the intention from now onwards is that most Saturday Bar Council meetings will be hosted by one of the Inns.

At an earlier meeting of the Bar Council, Stephen Crowne had discussed a new process for a strategic plan as the Bar Council is currently in the final year of its existing three year plan. Given the impending consultation on regulatory independence it is not a good time to relaunch a new plan that might cut across issues. Therefore, there is little choice but to roll over the current plan for another year and the Bar Council would hope to be in a position to consult on its new strategic plan early next year.

Stephen Crowne said that he wanted to make two points on internal governance:

- 1) The Bar Council is implementing big changes to its flexible working practises to reduce accommodation costs by 30%. The lease on the building runs out in 2019 and the changes introduced by this initiative will need time to bed in. Bar Council members can expect to see a new building layout that will give staff flexibility around how and when they work with more staff working from home on a regular basis.
- 2) The Bar Council is investing in the Information Management (IM) programme which will, effectively, bring about a complete change in the ways that information is used. The signing of a new contract for the development of a new customer relationship management (CRM) system is imminent and a new portal to improve the way that

barristers interact with the Bar Council is being implemented. Development work is beginning now and Bar Council members will soon see benefits.

Both programmes will drive cash savings which is important as the delivery of savings is part of a deal made with the LSB concerning the level of PCF.

6. Treasurer's report

Lorinda Long said that she did not propose to go through the financial statements as they will be put formally to the Bar Council at its AGM in September.

Looking back on her experience as Treasurer over the last two years, she recounted that her first year had been a happy one. However, reality has hit in the second year as the Bar Council is now experiencing financial losses with Bar Council income down £490k against the budget. Too much money has been spend on recruitment.

The pension scheme is no longer subject to such a rigid structure but the Bar Council is still looking at a deficit. A discussion on the value of future contributions is scheduled for 21 July. The Bar Council currently pays £493k per year and this figure is likely to rise.

BMF subscriptions are down but we seem to have stemmed the annual falls in subscription levels that have been present in the last three years putting us in a better position for next year.

7. Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility Committee: for report

In the absence of Robin Allen QC, the Chairman noted the report attached as Annexes 6a and 6b and invited questions from Bar Council members.

No questions were asked.

8. Education and Training Committee: for report

In the absence of Guy Featherstonhaugh QC, the Chairman introduced the Committee Executive, Alex Cisneros to speak to the report. She congratulated him on securing a pupillage at No 5 Chambers.

Alex Cisneros reported that the Pupillage Gateway timetable has changed. A new programme of information sharing is being implemented and a marketing campaign will take place in November.

Alex Cisneros said that he would take the rest of the report as read and asked for any questions to be emailed to him.

9. Any other business

There is still a window for 'early bird' registration for the Bar Conference. This year's Conference will have a more international angle.

Richard Atkins QC noted that those who pay the BRF are eligible for discounted Conference tickets and said that there are discounts available for Circuiters to help offset the cost of travel.

The Chairman encouraged Bar Council members to tweet details of the Conference and to think about attending. She made the point that, with Brexit and the new Government, there has never been a better time for barristers to gather.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Bar Council will be held on 17 September 2016 at 10.00 and the AGM will follow at 11.00 at the Middle Temple's Rutledge Suite.

The meeting closed at 11.50am.