

Subject: President's Weekly Law Society Update 29 March 2019

Dear colleague,

As the professional body for solicitors, every week the Law Society is working hard to influence the legal and regulatory environment on behalf of our profession and to promote solicitors at home and abroad. We support practice excellence, are an informed source of legal sector news and support members at every stage of their career. Here are some highlights from this week.

Influencing on behalf of the profession and promoting the profession

The Law Society's media profile this week:

Richard Miller, our head of justice, appeared on *Talk Radio* to discuss the need for greater regulation of McKenzie friends.

Ian Bond, chair of our wills and probate committee, wrote for the [Gazette](#) earlier this week on the proposed probate fees hike. He also commented on the delayed implementation of the increase in the [Financial Times](#)(£). Additionally [Today's Wills and Probate](#) carries a comment piece by Ian on the government's proposals.

The [Gazette](#) carried a feature on how to make the most of PR whether you run a law firm or as an individual practitioner.

The [Gazette](#) covers a caution on using public Wi-Fi for work. "Public Wi-Fi should never be used for any work-related or business-critical activity as the risk to the business is simply too great," says Law Society law and technology committee member Peter Wright.

Zeena Luchowa, a member of the Law Society's immigration committee, was on the Vanessa Feltz show on [BBC Radio London](#) talking about the position of EU citizens in the event of a no deal Brexit. You can listen to her from 1:38. Her broadcast came ahead of a warning that EU citizens still in the UK could be stripped of freedom of movement, social security and housing rights. More in the [Guardian](#).

[The Times](#)(£) covered the launch of a long-awaited government consultation on capping the legal fees winning litigants can claim back from losing parties in civil litigation, and quotes Law Society me saying: "A regime to limit the costs of civil litigation could have both positive and negative impacts on access to justice and will need to be carefully calibrated if it is to be fair to everyone engaged in a claim." [The Gazette](#) also covers the consultation. Read the [Law Society position](#) in full.

The [Gazette](#) reports the Legal Services Board is demanding to see evidence that the SRA has not given up on extending its fining powers with the Ministry of Justice.

Also worth a read:

- A memorial service remembers the victims of the New Zealand terror attack two weeks ago - [BBC](#)
- Coverage everywhere of today's vote in parliament on the withdrawal deal – here's the [FT](#) (£) and the [BBC](#)
- [The Gazette](#) remembers a debate at the Law Society 100 years ago on the entry of women into the solicitor profession
- Graduate gender pay gap is widening, in the [Guardian](#)
- A new IT-led research project to mine historical case reports over the last 150 years is covered by the [Gazette](#)

Don't forget you can read all Law Society press releases by clicking on this [link](#). For live updates follow us on [Twitter](#).

Consultation responses and parliamentary activity, influencing on behalf of the profession:

Access to Justice

Court reform

We continue to engage with key stakeholders in HMCTS' virtual bail and remand hearing pilot and will be attending HMCTS' stakeholder workshop on the matter next week.

Fixed Recoverable Costs

The government has released its consultation on Fixed Recoverable Costs. Further detail in the Professional Update this week and in *Media* above.

Speeches

Deputy vice president David Greene spoke on Brexit no deal planning in Southampton and Norwich. He also spoke at the Isle of Wight AGM on access to justice, Brexit and regulation.

Criminal justice campaign

Our engagement on the criminal justice campaign continues with two further meetings with MPs. Written parliamentary questions continue to be tabled about our campaign. Our [criminal justice petition](#) has now been signed by more than 2,500 people.

Relationships

This week, the relationship management team organised three Brexit events (Southampton, London and Norwich) to inform members of our lobbying activities and guidance in this area. We were pleased to be joined by members of the Ministry of Justice and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy who were able to engage with members on this topic.

Our influencing work internationally:

This week I was in Sao Paulo, Brazil to speak at New Law's annual conference on the impact of technology on society. We had some great insights from lawyers, academics and legal-related businesses from Brazil, China, France and the USA, highlighting many of the opportunities arising from the rapid growth of technologies. It wasn't all about commerce though, and my speech focused on some of the wider ethical issues for lawyers and society – including the use of algorithms in the justice system. I highlighted my work and that of the Society in this area including on our Tech Policy Commission

It was also my great pleasure to chair three women in leadership roundtables, kindly hosted by Brazilian law firms – Velloza, Mundie and KLA. We had more than 100 women involved from private practice, judiciary and in-house. Many of the issues raised were familiar the world over, but I was surprised to learn that part-time working is prohibited in Brazil, which is an astonishing barrier for women in the work place – particularly those returning from maternity leave. On the flip side, I was pleased to see Mundie Advogados leading the way – with 60% female partnership, and a female managing partner. Despite continuing to encounter sexism and discrimination from some clients, they had made women friendly practices a key part of their business and as a result many of the participants highlighted that they had joined the firm after quitting their previous (male dominated) firms because of discriminatory practices and barriers to career progression there. Highlighting that equality in the workplace is a key business issue – nurture your female talent or lose it!

I had a range of meetings with the British Consulate, Clifford Chance and the president of the IBA, and with our counterparts at the OAB and at AASP to discuss our work in women in law, technology and cross border legal practice issues, and of course, Brexit. There are clearly some real opportunities to develop the relationship with Brazil and I hope we can take advantage of those in future. It was my first time in Brazil and I was delighted by the very warm welcome I received.

On 25th March, Helena Raulus, head of TLS Brussels' office, chaired a plenary meeting with the UK Brussels-based Offices and Organisations (BBUKOO). The meeting was hosted by UKRep.

Solicitor brand campaign

We're looking for business or consumer clients who would like to be photographed as part of our campaign to promote the value of solicitors. More details can be found [here](#).

Supporting members at every stage of their career

Supporting practice excellence

Some of our upcoming events are:

Nominations are open for the Excellence Awards

Firms, teams and solicitors across the legal profession have until Friday 3rd May to enter the Law Society Excellence Awards. With 22 categories to enter, including Human Rights Solicitor of the Year and Excellence in Client Service. The awards celebrate hard work and outstanding achievements from the past year.

https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/support-services/events/excellence-awards?utm_source=presidents-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=excellenceaw19

The Junior Lawyers Division (JLD) 2019 annual conference and ball - Saturday 6th April 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

The JLD will be hosting their twelfth annual conference and ball. The programme offers a mix of panel-led discussions and workshops for personal and professional development within the legal sector. Tickets are still available from £75.00 + VAT. www.lawsociety.org.uk/jld-conference-and-ball-2019

Competition Section seminar: Review of the Digital Competition Expert Panel report, London – Tuesday 9th April 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

In August 2018, the government announced the appointment of an expert panel to consider the potential opportunities and challenges the emerging digital economy may pose for competition and competition policy. It asked the panel to make recommendations on any changes that may be needed.

Private Client Section: Practical inheritance tax update, London – Wednesday 24th April 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

This seminar will provide a practical focus on recent changes affecting inheritance tax. This one-hour seminar will provide an update on: residence nil-rate bands and downsizing, business property relief, criminal facilitation of tax avoidance, and the future of inheritance tax and trust taxation.

Private Client Section: Practical inheritance tax update, Birmingham- Tuesday 30th April 2019

Location: Birmingham - venue TBC

This seminar will provide a practical focus on recent changes affecting inheritance tax. This one-hour seminar will provide an update on: residence nil-rate bands and downsizing, business property relief, criminal facilitation of tax avoidance, and the future of inheritance tax and trust taxation.

Civil Litigation Section Spring Conference 2019 – Wednesday 1st May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

The Civil Litigation Section will be hosting a half day conference Wednesday 1st May at the Law Society, London. The programme is split up into two sessions covering: what the civil litigator needs to know about Brexit, and current costs issues, including arbitration, mediation and tribunals will be covered in this session. This conference is inclusive for Civil Litigation Section members / £190 + VAT for non-members. www.lawsociety.org.uk/Civil-Litigation-Section-Spring-conference-2019

Law Management Section annual conference 2019: success in an ever-changing world - Thursday 2nd May 2019

Location: The Law Society, 113 Chancery Lane, London, WC2A 1PL

Registration is open to book your place at this year's Law Management Section annual conference!

Keeping members up to date

We have a number of newsletters for members. Below is a list, along with links for signing up to them.

Newsletter	Sign-up method
Advocacy Update	Update My Law Society preferences
Anti-money Laundering Update	Law Society newsletter page
City Update	Contact the City relationship management team
Diversity & Inclusion Update	Update My Law Society preferences
In-house Forum	Update My Law Society preferences
International Update	Law Society newsletter page
Junior Lawyers Update	Law Society newsletter page
	JLD sign-up page
Legal Aid Update	Law Society newsletter page
Professional Update	Law Society newsletter page
Regional Update	Contact your regional relationship management team
Risk & Compliance Update	Join the Risk and Compliance Service
Small Firms Focus	Contact the Small Firms Division
Solicitor Judges Update	Join the Solicitor Judges Division

You can also register for the Gazette daily update [here](#).

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www.lawsociety.org.uk