

Minutes of the Bar Council meeting held on Saturday 26 October 2013 at the Bar Council offices

Present:

Maura McGowan QC - Chairman

Nicholas Lavender QC - Chairman-Elect

Mr Oliver Heald QC MP - Solicitor General

56 further members of Bar Council attended.

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Rt. Hon. Dominic Grieve QC MP, Keir Starmer QC, Mr Stephen Collier, Lesley Bates, Michael Bowsher QC, William Boyce QC, Alexandria Carr, Tony Cross QC, Nicholas Cusworth QC, Mark Fell, Amina Graham, Peter Grieves-Smith, Susan Grocott QC, James Hampson, James Hines, Thomas Jaggard, Taryn Lee QC, Nigel Lithman QC, Christina Michalos, Stephen Murch, Benjamin Myers, Lucinda Orr, Dawn Pritchard, Muhammad Saley, Nigel Sangster QC, Zoe Saunders, Deana Smith, Joe Smouha QC, Toby Watkin and Nicholas Worsley.

The following did not attend and did not send apologies: David Anderson, Colin Andress, Julia Beer, Ayeesha Bhutta, Gregory Bull QC, Ruth Cabeza, Alex Carington, Lord Carlile of Berriew QC, Glenn Carrasco, John Cooper QC, Melissa Countino, Tamsin Cox, James George, Adam Hiddleston, Stuart Jamieson, Gregory Jones QC, Michael Kent QC, Ian Lawrie QC, Natalia Levine, Paul Lewis QC, Sailesh Mehta, Bernard Richmond QC, Martin Rose, Neil Ross, Richard Salter QC.

2. Approval of the minutes and matters arising

The minutes of the September 2013 Bar Council meeting were approved. There were no corrections or matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

3. Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, with particular thanks to the Solicitor General for attending.

The Chairman said that it was quite bizarre that despite it only being the October meeting, this was the last which she would be chairing. She apologised for not quite living up to the standards of Michael Todd QC in providing a detailed [written statement](#) before each of these meetings, but then of course, he had nothing else to

do!

The Chairman said that she would deal with a number of important matters in her oral statement. There are a number of issues which are at a delicate stage and she is very happy to speak to anybody in more detail if they have any queries.

The Chairman referred firstly to the recently-launched advocacy review. Both the CBA and the Bar Council had tried to convince the Lord Chancellor at the time of the first legal aid consultation the idea of some form of commission to look at the criminal justice system overall. This would include funding, how the courts work, case progression and how the profession works within the system. He may well have thought that this argument was a device to push his proposed reforms into the long grass, but in any event he was not persuaded. He has instead commissioned a six-month review of the provision of advocacy within the criminal justice system. This has got off to a rocky start owing to the Law Society's reluctance for the review to be chaired by a retired Judge, their view being that Judges are barristers and therefore may show bias. Instead, Sir Bill Jeffrey has been appointed. The Chairman has met with him to discuss the review and he seems open-minded; an advisory group is to be set up and the new Lord Chief Justice has identified a High Court Judge with criminal experience to join it. The Bar Council is in the process of identifying a Silk with criminal experience as their nomination; the Law Society's nomination should also be known next week. It is important that as well as having the relevant experience, the panel can work well together as personalities. The Chairman is aware that anybody who may be called upon to assist the review will do so; this is too important to get wrong.

One of the obvious problems at the moment is the Legal Aid: next steps consultation. The Bar Council is trying to find proposals that will find some sort of approval from the Ministry of Justice but is not meeting with much success at the moment. The Chairman is pushing on and on and will not give up. The CBA and the Circuit Leaders are working just as hard. The Chairman added that if there is any single publicly-funded practitioner who thinks the Bar Council is not working hard for them to pursue what is in their best interest, they are mistaken. Not everything is shouted from the rooftops. Practitioners involved in the Bar Council and GMC are giving up a vast amount of time on behalf of the publicly-funded Bar, even if not from that area of practice themselves.

A more immediate problem is the VHCC proposals which will affect ongoing contracts and trials. The Bar Council is, through GMC, investigating very carefully and liaising with the BSB, Legal Services Board and Ministry of Justice. As soon as all the angles are covered and the facts are right, the BSB will publish guidance. Efforts are being identified to find those members of the Bar involved in VHCC cases in order to approach them directly with advice, so any information that can be

provided about who holds such contracts would be very welcome.

The Chairman then spoke about the introduction of cameras in the Court of Appeal. This will affect most directly those who appear in the criminal division. The more interesting a case is - whether owing to the facts of the case or public interest - the more it will attract media attention and the more likely it is that there will be cameras in court. The pilot scheme has shown that some practitioners are not sufficiently aware that the cameras are present; the Chairman would like to raise awareness so as to ensure that everybody is alert to the cameras and acts accordingly.

The Bar Conference takes place on 2 November and will include the launch of the Bar Council's social responsibility programme. The Chairman is sick and tired of being kicked in the teeth for being a member of a profession which is so often misrepresented. It is time that the profession stood up and is clear about the work it does in society. For example, over 40% of barristers work pro bono in the public interest. It is a good story to get out there and coincides with the need to counterbalance public, government and press opinions about the public service provided by the Bar. The launch of the programme is an attempt to re-educate.

The Chairman remarked on the change that has come about within the Bar Council as an organisation; she is very grateful for Stephen Crowne's contribution to that. As those attending the meeting can see, there are contractors on site and moves taking place as the workspace is being reduced by nearly 50%. This is to cut costs and become more socially responsible. Everyone in the organisation is doing their bit and working very hard on the profession's behalf, not least to save them money.

The Chairman found out at 17.20 on 22 October (Tuesday) from a member of the Bar that the Law Society had made an application to intervene in the ongoing judicial review of QASA. Shortly afterwards, she received correspondence from the solicitors acting on behalf of the claimants asking the Bar Council to join that application. Given that the hearing was the next morning, it did not seem right or proper to make that sort of decision on the spot. At the very least, a decision that needs to be made by GMC. It has also come to light that there is a potential link between the QASA JR and the ongoing Hemming v Westminster case, which the Bar Council has an interest in; the Officers are taking legal advice (pro bono) and are meeting counsel next week. It does not seem possible to make a decision before then. If there are grounds to intervene, the Bar Council may decide to join the Law Society, apply separately or do nothing. A decision will be made at GMC as to what is in the profession's interests.

The Chairman said that she was personally extremely grateful to all the members of Bar Council who drag themselves to these meetings - and others - on a regularly

basis; they do a vast amount of work and give up a great deal of their own time. It would be invidious to deal with special mentions, but she thought she would anyway.

Firstly, she thanked Melissa Coutino and Amanda-Jane Field for the sterling work they have done on the Employed Barristers' Committee, particularly Melissa who has been a long-time attender of Bar Council and who has fought very hard to represent a part of the profession which is often overlooked. The Chairman is also very grateful to Kevin McGinty, who takes over the chairmanship of the committee.

The Chairman thanked Alexandra Healy QC, Ian Bugg and the executive staff working with the Remuneration Committee. The work they undertake is hard and complicated and often insufficiently recognised by the profession for the impact it has.

Robin Knowles QC deserves special mention for the work he has done pro bono to maintain the Bar's status, to hold us the profession to account if it forgets what needs to be done. He is an unsung hero and a star.

Chantal-Aimée Doerries QC also undertakes a lot of work on behalf of the Bar which is not always recognised. As Chairman of the International Committee, she has brought a lot of work into this jurisdiction and not just on behalf of the commercial Bar. Family practitioners and regulatory lawyers are now seeing the benefits of looking to work overseas. At a recent seminar in New York, Fiona Jackson -a former member of Bar Council - delivered a session on asset recovery and how US lawyers can instruct the Bar here. The Chairman urged people not to dismiss the work of the International Committee as just arbitration and litigation; doors are opening up for everybody thanks to their work.

The Chairman noted that Keir Starmer QC was not able to attend the meeting and would no longer be DPP when the Bar Council meets again. It should be recognised that he has had a very difficult term; over the last five years he has had to deal with the most swingeing cuts the CPS has ever had and against a legacy of being expected to do more with less. He has felt the brunt of public criticism. While the Bar may not have agreed with him all the time, it is undisputed that he has worked very hard and, whenever he has been able, he has supported the independent criminal Bar publicly. The Chairman wished his successor, Alison Saunders, good luck.

Sir Sydney Kentridge QC will turn 91 on 5 November. The Chairman attended a recent session in London arranged by the American Bar Association at which Sir Sydney was speaking at 9am on the Rule of Law. Speaking to him afterwards, the Chairman discovered that he had been at a speaking engagement the previous evening and was flying out to Canada that afternoon for another professional

commitment. The man is a phenomenon. He is humble and charming; the profession should remember how lucky it is to have him.

Finally, the Chairman wished to thank those members of the executive who have made her life bearable: Mark Hatcher, Charlotte Hudson, Victoria Carpenter and Toby Craig and the Communications Team.

4. [BSB report](#)

Baroness Ruth Deech QC (Hon) (RDQC) said that, in her opinion, the current Chairman has borne the heaviest burden of any of those she has known during her time as Chair of the BSB. She has done so with good grace and a backbone of steel.

RDQC wished to echo the Chairman's observations about Sir Sydney Kentridge QC; he rose to the Bar's defence to the LSB about the cab rank rule, producing a star paper in no time at all. There is no-one whose words could count for more.

RDQC said that she was sorry that it was the Chairman's last meeting, but that her last meeting may come soon too. Council members may be aware that the LSB is proposing that all regulatory bodies have a lay Chair; as RDQC is not a lay Chair, a decision to accept this proposal may mean that she is removed from post. RDQC said that Bar Council members may wish to respond to the LSB's consultation to express their opinion one way or another. RDQC said that the BSB's view is that each regulator should be able to appoint the best person for the job regardless of their background.

The BSB's report was circulated prior to the meeting; RDQC said that she did not intend to repeat any of it but would be happy to take questions.

Questions for the BSB

Eleanor Mawrey (EM) said that at the last meeting she asked for data relating to cost and attendance at the BSB's QASA roadshow meetings. She has received the former details but not the latter. Vanessa Davies (VLD) apologised as she had understood that these too had been provided. She undertook to provide the exact attendance data but confirmed orally that turnout figures were low.

There were no further questions for the BSB.

The Chairman stood to say that this Council has not always agreed with RDQC, but there is no doubt as to where her heart lies. She is a staunch defender of the profession in the House of Lords. The Chairman recently attended a conference and heard RDQC speak on a panel alongside Charles Plant; her defence of the Bar would have had Council members on their feet cheering. RDQC supports the Bar's ethics, ideals and right to practice without being impeded unnecessarily.

5. Chief Executive's report

Outcome of auditor tender exercise

Stephen Crowne (SCr) invited Bar Council to approve formally (pending final approval by the Audit Committee) the appointment of Haysmacintyre as the new auditors for 3 years effective from the end of this financial year. The appointment follows a competitive tender process.

Bar Council approved this appointment subject to the agreement of the Audit Committee.

Bar Council strategic plan 2014-17

SCr explained that the current plan runs out at the end of this financial year. A draft for 2014-17 has been circulated; if it were to have a by-line it would be: "raising our game".

Since his arrival at the Bar Council, SCr has found a great appetite for a clear sense of strategic direction and statement of what the organisation is and does. All staff have had an opportunity to contribute and there has been helpful input from chairmen of all committees. GMC has discussed and endorsed the draft. There is always a temptation to write a lot in a strategic plan, but this needs to be resisted; it must be accessible.

The intention is for the strategic plan to encompass everything that the organisation does. Each activity has to be assessed to see if it contributes to the aims set out in the plan; if it doesn't, then the organisation should not be doing it. That said, while the strategic plan includes clear statements, they cannot be set in stone as priorities may need to change over the years.

SCr considers the draft plan to be a challenging but achievable agenda for action. The organisation needs to raise its game. The next step is to engage with staff and integrate the strategy into business plans; it is key that there is confidence in the programme. The plan includes reference to key performance indicators (KPIs) as it is important that the organisation can be held to account by Bar Council. To that end, SCr asked Bar Council to provide its feedback, approve the plan in broad terms and delegate to him the responsibility to hone it before final sign-off by the Chairman.

Jolyon Maugham (JM) said that given the importance of the strategic plan, where in the process of drawing it together was the engagement with the rank and file of the profession to ascertain what they think the organisation's priorities are? SCr replied that the process had been for staff views being sought to create the initial draft

before that went before the Officers, GMC and Committee Chairmen. Bringing the plan to Bar Council is the next step is seeking views from the profession; if approved in principle it will go out to consultation on the website at the same time as the budget proposals.

JM queried the level of scrutiny the plan received at GMC and said that the profession has not been emailed for its views. As this document is aligned to the budget insofar as by committing to pursuing these strategies the Bar is committing to fund them, there should be more scrutiny by the profession. SCr said that if that is the view, then he can certainly take the draft plan out to formal consultation immediately and report back to Bar Council with advice arising from the feedback from that consultation.

Charlie Cory-Wright QC (CCWQC) commented that reference to lobbying should not be limited to only direct conversation with the Government. As those who have worked on previous lobbying campaigns will know, there are other very important methods e.g. through the Communications Team which should be included.

Alistair MacDonald QC (AMQC) said that he is not happy with the reference at paragraph 15 about the Bar as a 'brand'; he would prefer to stress the service element of the Bar to the Rule of Law. Paragraph 16 also undersells efforts of Bar to encourage equality and diversity and ought to be more positive.

It was suggested that the plan focuses on equality and diversity at entry level to the Bar and does not recognise the work undertaken in relation to retention and encouraging diversity at more senior levels.

Another suggestion was that the plan does not address changing public perceptions of the Bar; there should be more emphasis on the interests of the public.

SCr thanked everybody for their valuable input and encouraged anybody with specific feedback to email him with their comments.

6. Budget proposals 2014-15

SCr gave apologies on behalf of the Treasurer, Stephen Collier.

A supporting paper and the headline budget proposals were circulated before the meeting. SCr explained that he would go through the main features more thoroughly at this meeting with the benefit of some slides. The headlines are:

- The space efficiency project is now beginning to deliver and in next financial year will make a significant contribution to reducing running costs;

- Absorption of a further reduction in the Inns' subvention (£300k)
- Reducing total expenditure year on year;
- Strong in-year contribution to reserves which were depleted;
- No increase to PCF collection

There are four key objectives:

- To deliver value for money, and lay the foundation for an efficiency gain to the practising Bar;
- To include a realistic contingency to address the likely financial risks in-year;
- To build back general reserves consistent with the prudent reserves policy and to meet the known future challenges;
- To invest in staff and systems to enhance the organisation's capacity to deliver

In order to keep the practising certificate fee at the same level, the following actions have been taken:

- No exceptional charge for pensions; the separate pensions levy is absorbed into the PCF
- Keeping the headcount flat on 2013-14 budget assumptions; staffing costs go up slightly due to the annualisation effect of vacancies held open for some time this year
- Reductions in operating costs across all areas
- Capturing benefits from this year's SPACE investment; reducing the office footprint by over £600k pa and improving the return on this investment as implementation costs reduce.

The budget process comes in two stages: Stage 1

- Establishing 'control totals' within which the overall spend and total income is contained
- Capturing the needs of the organisation from the bottom-up, driven by assuming 5-10% efficiency gain

This is the stage at which the organisation is at now and approval is sought as to the overall shape of the budget. If this is given, stage 2 can commence.

Stage 2

- Shaping the detail, to ensure that the final budget supports the strategic plan, yet works within the control totals
- Creating a detailed business plan for 2014-15

- Following the same pattern to enable detailed planning to follow the initial target setting in future years.

The intention is to develop the draft strategic plan in parallel with initial budget proposals and SCr is confident that the outline budget is a good basis for delivering the plan. The next step is to review priorities within the proposed budget total so as to ensure that all aims and objectives are covered.

SCr explained that the organisation has a strong start to the strategic period, owing to:

- Major cost reductions already embedded in future plans
- The operating surplus is strong
- PCF requirement in 2014-15 flat, year on year
- The movement of regulatory activity to operate on a cost effective risk management basis
- Building back reserves and capacity to meet known financial risks and uncertainties

However, there remain some challenges:

- Efficiencies are not yet embedded throughout the organisation
- PCF needs in medium term may need to rise steeply unless active steps are taken now to reduce costs further and permanently
- Other income streams need to be maximised to help balance rising costs and lower PCF desires.

SCr concluded his presentation, asking for support for the overall budget envelope, and the underlying process efficiencies being targeted.

David Nicholls (DN) said that he was delighted to see that the PCF would not be going up this year; the new approach to the budget and organisational strategy is a welcome improvement. However, the plans for a contingency of £525k seem to wipe out the benefits from the space efficiency project. What is it for?

SCr replied that there have always been contingency budgets, they just have not been held centrally. This approach is about looking across the whole business and putting a monetary value on identified risks materialising. There is a lot of judgment involved and the Finance Committee and BSB Board have taken the view that the assessed risk is at the right level.

SCr was asked what the estimated cost is of the risk of the criminal Bar not complying with QASA. SCr said that this is not the only risk arising - the outcome of

Hemming v Westminster being another - and everything has been assessed by Finance Committee. The individual components of the total risk are not identified here. SCr added that this money is not being spent, it is being held back in case it must be spent.

SCr was asked how the movement to a risk-based regulatory management system sits next to the BSB's support for QASA, which has not been properly assessed for risk? SCr said that this budget has been put together as the first phase of a three-year plan; the general direction of regulatory policy is towards a risk-based approach and that has been taken into account. VLD said that given the current circumstances, it would not be appropriate to comment further on the BSB's approach to QASA.

Tim Fancourt QC (TFQC) referred to the risk of a significant increase to the PCF in the future; it seems that in 2015-16 a 7.5% increase is likely. He has tried very hard to sell the new PCF proposals - the income-based allocation - to his constituents who are not going to benefit from the change. The risk is that with their PCF increasing, they will not pay the Member Services Fee (MSF). SCr said that the numbers for 2015-16 are not part of this budget but have been provided for information at this stage. They are based on current assumptions which will need to be refined; he encouraged members not to over-interpret the future figures at the moment. The organisation is still working very hard to deliver efficiencies, but it is important when looking at a three-year plan to be transparent. That does not mean that the position will not change.

SCr was asked whether the Council should be satisfied that BARCO's performance is being properly scrutinised, given its ongoing deficit position and the impact that has overall? SCr confirmed that BARCO was taking longer to get off the ground than anticipated but gave an assurance that Finance Committee is scrutinising performance robustly. It is their position that it needs a little while longer. SCr was asked for a commitment that if it continues to underperform it will be canned? SCr replied that interest is growing in BARCO but that it will be necessary to make a decision one way or another soon. The meeting was reminded that part of the reason BARCO was created was to support the regulatory liberation that would come into force with the new Handbook. That had been expected to come into force earlier this year but will now not be published until 6 January. This has contributed to BARCO's underperformance.

SCr asked Bar Council to support this outline budget and process recommendations. Approval was given.

The Chairman stood to thank Stephen Collier in his absence. With no detriment meant to former Treasurers, Stephen has transformed the way the Bar Council is informed about the budget process. He is clearly a great advocate as he makes the

unintelligible intelligible. The Chairman considers herself lucky that she is the first (and possibly the last) Chairman to be able to announce that the PCF will not increase for that year.

Tim Devlin (TD) noted that the strategic aims do not mention achieving value for money for the membership. The Chairman responded that this is one of the stated values of the organisation upon which the strategy is based and suggested that TD emails SCr if he has any suggestions for imbedding value for money further in the strategic plan.

7. Bar Conference Board: for report

Saba Naqshbandi (SN) reported as Chair of the Bar Conference Board. The Bar Conference takes place on 2 November and as well as the report which was circulated as an annex to the agenda, there is also a programme for the day on every seat.

The conference is on target financially but SB would like to increase numbers. There has been an investment of over £70k in sponsorship and she would like those sponsors to feel that they have a return on their investment and come back next year. SB urged Chambers to sponsor a delegate to attend if at all possible.

SB thanked the Bar Council events team led by Lois Rolfe, who have put in a huge amount of effort to organise this conference and secure sponsorship.

Rick Pratt QC (RPQC) said that it is very difficult to encourage constituents to attend when the conference is always held in London.

The Chairman said that she had raised this at the start of the year with a view to having the 2013 AGM or the 2014 Bar Conference in Birmingham. In practical terms, investigations showed that the numbers would most likely drop even further and the cost would be prohibitive. It is absolutely right and proper that consideration should be given to doing more on Circuit, but when it is looked into there is no support for it.

The Chairman added her thanks to SN and the events team. She also reminded members that the Bar Conference is an excellent opportunity for networking, not least with a substantial media presence there.

8. Member Services Board: for report

Richard Atkins QC (RPAQC) presented this item as Chair of the Member Services Board. A report was circulated prior to the meeting. In something of a first for a Council meeting, RPAQC encouraged audience participation with prizes of sweets distributed throughout the room at high velocity. Readers can be assured that no Bar

Council Members were hurt by the butter mint missiles, although there were a few near misses!

As Vice-Chair of the Bar Conference Board and next year's Chair, RPAQC expressed sympathy for the position on holding the conference outside of London but feared that the reality is that people just will not attend in sufficient numbers. He is therefore looking at the possibility of reducing the cost of attendance for those on Circuit to cover or at least make a contribution to their travel costs. This has not yet been costed but is something that he wants to give serious consideration to. It may not happen, but he would like it to.

RPAQC asked those present who pays the MSF and found that only two did not. He said that a recommendation is to go to GMC shortly which proposes that the name is changed to the 'Bar Representation Fee'; TD asked whether the word 'Bar' was necessary and whether it could not simply be 'Representation Fee'. This is a result of misinterpretation as to what 'Member Services Fee' means and what practitioners get for paying it. Funds raised by the MSF are put towards representational activities undertaken by the Bar Council which are not funded by the PCF. It is not merely a way of getting discounts, as some would (wrongly) believe.

The Bar Conference Board looks after the Bar from cradle to grave - literally. With the introduction of the Bar Nursery and with assistance in making pension arrangements, the Member Services team is looking to provide what the Bar needs. Additionally, there are retail discounts available through Xexec, but only for those who have paid their MSF.

The team also develops and rolls out training and development programmes, including the direct access course (for which there is a discount for those who have paid the MSF). The team is also responsible for running the Bar Conference and the World Bar Conference in-house and therefore providing value for money.

In relation to BARCO, there are concerns but it is properly scrutinised. The only way it will work is if people use it. RPAQC thanked the team: Paul Mosson, Carol Harris, Lois Rolfe, Sophia Kakabadse and all the others.

The Chairman thanked RPAQC. She added that, in addition to the courses the team already provides, she has been visiting business schools with the Member Services team with a view to seeing whether there is a possibility of offering courses to the Bar in skills which will help them diversify and grow their practices.

9. Any other business

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking everybody for their help and support. She will be returning to practice in January in a case for which she will be paid 40%

less than she was in a similar case only a year or so ago. This is based on cuts already made, not those which are proposed. She urged publicly-funded practitioners not to think that she doesn't know how hard it is.

The Chairman wished Nicholas Lavender QC and Alistair MacDonald QC all the very best of luck.

Nicholas Lavender QC (NLQC) rose to say some words about the Chairman. It is certainly slightly early to say good-bye as, by his reckoning, she has 66.5 days to go. It is therefore too early to arrange the usual presentation of a gift but it is right that whilst all gathered here to reflect on what she has achieved, not just as Chairman but for many years as a member of Bar Council.

NLQC remembers the Chairman first from her being a member of the Professional Practice Committee. Some people treat it as an exercise in philosophy; the Chairman dealt with the queries as practical problems and applied common sense, exactly as it should be.

NLQC said that he has been a member of Bar Council for 20 years. In his opinion, this has been the most interesting year to be Chairman and he is very impressed with how she has risen to that challenge. Taking for example the Brewer case, which -out of nowhere -was huge front page news. The Chairman was suddenly on the television and radio, being asked about incredibly sensitive matters and dealing with it extremely well. An important feature of her year has been dealing sensitively with the matter of vulnerable witnesses and the role of the advocate.

In April, the legal aid consultation was published. NLQC urged the Council to remember what happened before its publication and how it could have been a lot worse. Without the Chairman's lobbying, the proposals may have been much more far-reaching. An enormous amount of work went into making sure that did not happen.

It is not always easy to communicate with those the Bar Council represents. The Chairman continues to put the Bar's case forcefully. A highlight was her appearance on Any Questions. If she went into politics, there is no doubt that she would be better than Lord McNally, although that is faint praise indeed.

The Chairman has no magic wand and cannot turn the Lord Chancellor into a frog (or even a lawyer) but despite all the stresses and strains, she has carried on with good humour. She will be a hard act to follow as NLQC intends to demonstrate.

The Solicitor General stood to second NLQC's remarks. The Attorney General was sorry that he could not attend, but they are both very grateful to the Chairman and

would like to pay tribute to all her hard work. Comments are made very forcibly at Bar Council meetings and sometimes it is hard to assess what achievements have been made; this Chairman has achieved a lot against a difficult background.

10. Date of next meeting

Further to the communication to Bar Council members on 28 August, it may be necessary to hold a Bar Council meeting on 30 November 2013, should there be further business to transact before the end of the year. Otherwise, the next meeting will be at 17.30 on Monday, 9 December (incoming Chairman's inaugural meeting).