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February News Bulletin

(NAO report, Criminal Legal Aid JR and Rwanda Bill)

Introduction

It's been another difficult few days in Parliament. Yesterday, after months of uncertainty, Labour formally scrapped their pledge to invest £28 billion a year in green infrastructure blaming fiscal uncertainty caused by the government. The start of the week, and a painful misstep in Prime Minister's Questions and finally, dozens of Conservative MPs have already confirmed that they will not seek re-election at the next general election. Currently expected to be held in the Autumn, fifty-four conservative MPs including former Cabinet ministers Sajid Javid, Dominic Raab and Kwasi Kwarteng have announced that they will not be standing.

Slightly closer to home, Co-Chair of the APPG on Access to Justice Karen Buck MP has announced that she won't be contesting the next election provoking an outpouring of support and gratitude on X. Harriet Harman described her as 'the sort of person who gives politics and Parliament a good name. Her every waking moment is dedicated to improving life for her constituents and the country'. Simon Mullings of Hammersmith and Fulham Law Centre, spoke for the sector when he described Karen as 'amongst the very best of us… [adding that] we have been lucky to have her as the brilliant public servant she has been.' On a personal level, it has been nothing short of a privilege to work with her.

This week we also gave sincere thanks to MP and Chair of the Justice Select Committee Sir Bob

Neill KC (Hon) who will also be standing down ahead of polling day. Throughout his time in Parliament, and particularly in his role as Chair, Sir Bob has been recognised as a passionate defender of both judicial independence and the legal profession and as a consistent and reliable advocate for the justice system. He has developed close links across the legal profession and has worked with the Bar Council, Law Society, and specialist Bar and solicitor associations. In doing so he has successfully raised the concerns of the profession in Parliament and directly with ministers, for example, the challenges posed by Brexit to the legal services sector, the impact of legal aid cuts on access to justice, reform of personal injuries claims and technical issues with sanctions legislation.

On the subject of change, the past few weeks have seen further developments in the justice world. Events have been moving so quickly that we decided to write an extra bulletin to cover all of the relevant goings on in a more bitesize format. We discuss these in further detail below. As ever, please do get in touch with us with any comments or suggestions for things to include in the next bulletin.

Breaking: National Audit Office Releases Report on Government's Management of Legal Aid

Today the National Audit Office published it's report on the government's management of the legal aid system recommending that the MoJ do more to ensure that legal aid is available to all those who are eligible. Until it does, the report concludes, it cannot demonstrate that it is meeting its core objectives and securing value for money. It's pretty damning as reports go with clear recommendations including the urgent need for more data to be collected around legal aid.

Key Findings:

MoJ has achieved its aim of making significant reductions to its legal aid spending since the LASPO reforms, with real-term expenditure reduced by over a quarter. In real terms, spending on legal aid fell by £728 million (from £2,584 million to £1,856 million, a 28% reduction) between 2012-13 and 2022-23 (in 2022-23 prices) as case volumes fell.

MoJ still does not know the full costs and benefits of LASPO as it has not made progress in understanding how the reforms may have affected costs in other parts of the criminal justice system and wider public sector.

MoJ recognises that changes introduced by LASPO reduced access to early advice and unintentionally reduced publicly funded mediation referrals, but more than a decade on it has not been able to increase take-up. Providing access to early legal advice and mediation has the potential to reduce wider costs to the system. MoJ acknowledges that removing early legal advice through the reforms may have caused additional costs elsewhere, but it does not hold the data it needs to understand the cost–benefit case for early advice.

Ed: Readers may recall the recent ill-fated pilot scheme seeking to obtain data and make the case for early legal advice which failed to quantify the costs and benefits of early legal advice because it recruited just three participants against a target of 1,600.

Access to legal aid

MoJ does not collect sufficient data to understand whether those who are entitled to legal aid are able to access it. Delivering access to justice is one of MoJ's **three key priorities**. However, MoJ lacks a good understanding of both the demand for legal aid and the capacity of existing providers so it cannot ensure advice is available to those entitled to it.

The evidence suggests that limited provision in some areas of the country may make it harder to access legal aid. Reducing the scope of legal aid naturally led to a smaller number of firms doing legal aid work as the market adjusted to fewer cases being eligible for funding. The report's analysis shows that sustained decreases in the number of legal aid offices means a smaller proportion of the population are now within 10 kilometres of an office in most categories of civil law. For example, the proportion of the population in England and Wales within 10 kilometres of a legal aid office for housing advice, for issues including eviction, fell nine percentage points, from 73% in 2013-14 to 64% in 2022-23. The proportion in 2022-23 falls to 57% when looking only at housing offices that actively took on new cases.
The lack of a local office does not automatically prevent people from accessing support, for example, firms can provide some advice remotely. However, MoJ and LAA recognise there are some areas of England and Wales where there may be unmet need in certain categories of law, including housing, immigration and advice in police stations. It also acknowledges that remote support will not be suitable for everyone.

The proportion of the population eligible for support has reduced, as MoJ has not yet changed financial eligibility thresholds. MoJ recently reviewed its financial eligibility criteria for legal aid, the financial thresholds for which have not increased in cash terms for over a decade. The impact of static thresholds, set against wage inflation, means that a smaller

proportion of the population are now eligible for legal aid.

The exceptional case funding scheme routinely approves certain types of immigration cases, but MoJ has not updated its approach to bring them into the scope of legal aid. This approach may not be cost effective and presents access to justice risks.

Sustainability of the market

MoJ has been slow to respond to market sustainability issues. MoJ and LAA are aware that there are some areas of England and Wales where there may be unmet need for certain categories of law and of stakeholder concerns around the sustainability of the sector. For example, between 2018 and 2020, LAA ran retendering exercises for 14 schemes for on-the-day emergency housing advice, but no provider was found across eight schemes covering 11 courts.

In 2021, Lord Bellamy published his review of criminal legal aid, which found that the current fee schemes do not accurately reflect work undertaken by providers. He recommended that MoJ increase overall fees for barristers and solicitors by at least 15%. In response, MoJ implemented a 15% increase to most fees for criminal cases in September 2022, but it only committed to raising overall fees for solicitors by 11%. MoJ stated that this was because it was still considering reforms to certain fee elements aimed at removing perverse incentives, following another review recommendation. This led to a Judicial Review which reached a judgment on 31 January 2024 (more on this below).

Civil fees have been frozen since 1996, then MoJ reduced them by 10% between October 2011 and February 2012. In real terms, civil legal aid fees are now approximately half what they were 28 years ago. MoJ has only recently begun to review civil legal aid fees as part of its wider review of the system and has not committed to proposing changes to specific fees following this.

LAA has started to explore how different contracting approaches may make the market more attractive for providers.

Demand for criminal and some types of civil legal aid is likely to increase at a time when the market is in a fragile position to respond. MoJ expects that the government's Illegal Migration Act (IMA) will increase demand for civil legal aid. An increase in the number of police officers, which will likely lead to more arrests, is likely to increase demand for criminal legal aid.

MoJ cannot routinely identify emerging market sustainability risks, which undermines its ability to ensure the sustainability of legal aid. MoJ aims to assess the sustainability of legal aid through periodic large-scale reviews but does not do this regularly or routinely. Outside of these reviews, it relies on information from LAA to identify and respond to risks to market sustainability

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Conclusion

MoJ has succeeded in its objective of significantly reducing spending on legal aid, which has

fallen by more than a quarter in the last decade in real terms. Since we last reported, MoJ has done some work to better understand the impact of its reforms and is aware of several areas where changes may have shifted costs elsewhere within government. But it still lacks an understanding of the scale of these costs and so cannot demonstrate how much its reforms represent a spending reduction for the public purse overall. MoJ must now build its evidence base on the costs and benefits of providing legal aid at different stages to ensure that it is achieving value for money from its choices.

MoJ has set providing swift access to justice as one of its primary objectives. Theoretical eligibility for legal aid is not enough to achieve this objective if there are an insufficient number of providers willing or able to provide it. MoJ must ensure that access to legal aid, a core element of access to justice, is supported by a sustainable and resilient legal aid market, where capacity meets demand MoJ must take a more proactive approach and routinely seek early identification of emerging market sustainability issues, to ensure legal aid is available to all those who are eligible. Until then, it cannot demonstrate that it is meeting its core objectives and so securing value for money.

Recommendations

a. MoJ should work with others to improve its understanding of the costs and benefits of legal issues removed from scope during legal aid reforms, to ensure that changes have not led to less efficient public spending. It should focus on the following areas and work with external stakeholders e.g. HMCTS to improve data collection:

- the removal of early advice for issues such as housing and debt;
- increases in people representing themselves in court; and
- reductions in immigration advice on local authorities.

It should respond to any additional costs identified with an action plan to bear down on any wider costs or inefficiencies.

b. MoJ should, working with LAA and others, ensure that those who want (and are eligible for) legal aid can access it in future by improving:

- its view of demand and capacity in the legal aid market
- how it monitors whether those who apply for its exceptional case funding scheme individually are able to find a provider and acting to address any issues found.

c. MoJ should assess whether it could reduce the cost of its exceptional case funding scheme by streamlining its approach to processing categories with high approval rates, and act upon its findings.

d. MoJ should work with providers and representative bodies to establish a workforce strategy that considers the pipeline of future legal aid lawyers and their training to ensure future supply is sufficient to meet its objectives for access to justice.

e. LAA should continue to develop its contracting approach to improve the attractiveness of legal aid markets to providers for civil legal aid as well as criminal legal aid.

f. MoJ should work with providers to ensure its fees are set at a level that optimises the balance between cost effectiveness, affordability and access to legal aid (for those who are eligible).

Ed: The report itself is comprehensive and well worth a read if you can spare a few moments. It contains few, if any surprises for practitioners, but it's publication is timely given the call for evidence issued in respect of the civil legal aid review.

Criminal Legal Aid: Judicial Review

Regular readers of this bulletin will be familiar with the 2018 criminal legal aid review (CLAR) and our commentary over the years on the same. Last week saw the High Court rule in the Law Society (and other interested parties') favour in a judicial review against the Ministry of Justice. We decided to take a deep-dive into the case and what this might mean for crime practitioners. We asked criminal defence solicitor Stephen Davies for some of the background to this decision and his thoughts on the ruling.

Background

But first, a note or two on the background to this case. The subject of both this judicial review and it's 2017 predecessor (**The Queen (on the application of The Law Society) v The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice [2018] EWHC 2094 (Admin) (03 August 2018)**) is the publicly funded payment mechanism for Crown Court defence litigation known as the Litigators Graduated Fee Scheme (LGFS).

The fee, payable to solicitors' firms, is dependent on a series of proxies on top of a nominal base fee. The main proxies are offence type, trial length and the number of Pages of Prosecution Evidence (PPE) – the latter is capped at 10,000 pages.
In 2017, the then Lord Chancellor Liz Truss sought to cut the LGFS by capping PPE to 6,000 pages resulting in a cut £30m. Judgment was handed down on 03 August 2018 with The Law Society succeeding; the decision being held to be unlawful and the Regulations being quashed.

CLAR was announced on 10 December 2018 by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) when it provided its response to Amending the Advocates' Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS).
It's oft-publicised purpose was to review of the entire 'criminal legal aid cycle', from fixed fees in the police station and Magistrates' Court, to graduated fees in the Crown Court (AGFS and LGFS) with the intention of two main outcomes:

(1) To reform the criminal legal aid fee schemes so that they: fairly reflect, and pay for, work done; support the sustainability of the market, including recruitment, retention, and career progression within the professions and a diverse workforce; support just, efficient, and effective case progression, limit perverse incentives, and ensure value for money for the taxpayer; are consistent with and, where appropriate enable, wider reforms; are simple and place proportionate administrative burdens on providers, the Legal Aid Agency (LAA), and other government departments and agencies; and ensure cases are dealt with by practitioners with the right skills and experience.

(2) To reform the wider criminal legal aid market to ensure that the provider market: responds flexibly to changes in the wider system, pursues working practices and structures that drive efficient and effective case progression, and delivers value for money for the taxpayer; operates to ensure that legal aid services are delivered by practitioners with the right skills and experience; and operates to ensure the right level of legal aid provision and to encourage a diverse workforce.

The Lord Chancellor opted to amend CLAR to make a major part of it an independent review. Sir Christopher [now Lord] Bellamy KC published the *Independent Review of Criminal Legal Aid* (29 November 2021) on 15 December 2021:

"My central recommendation is that the funding for criminal legal aid should be increased overall for solicitors and barristers alike as soon as possible to an annual level, in steady state, of at least 15% above present levels, which would in broad terms represent additional annual funding of some £135 million per annum."

The Lord Chancellor responded the following March by stating:

"…we are proposing not to implement the full 15% increase in LGFS due to CLAIR's analysis, with which we agree, on the problems caused by the Pages of Prosecution Evidence (PPE) element of that fee scheme…We are proposing up to around £10m of additional funding for solicitors to be delivered alongside wider reform of LGFS, subject to further policy development and data collection." – *Response to the Criminal Legal Aid Independent Review* (CP 645, 15 March 2022)

The problem was the notion of 'perverse incentives' connected with the LGFS. In other words, the financial incentive associated with a case that has a high volume of PPE, where the Defendant pleads not guilty and contests the matter at trial. Lord Bellamy professed that it "*does not incentivise providers to do the actual work they are supposed to do but rather incentivises firms to try to obtain cases with a large amount of served material, and then delay the outcome until the trial begins*."

The Lord Chancellor maintained the position in the Government's *Interim Response to CLAIR* (July 2022) stating the PPE proxy is not a good indicator of work done. Further, in the *Response*

to CLAIR & Consultation on Policy Proposals (30 November 2022), he went on to say LGFS reform would take a "*minimum of 30 months to complete*", followed by a "*long-running period of review (at least 24 months*)."

Whilst the Lord Chancellor did not increase the proxies by 15%, he did increase the nominal base fees of LGFS cases by 15% in September 2022, resulting in an overall increase of less than 15%. Given that proxies are the main driver behind the graduation and that of Lord Bellamy's central recommendation, The Law Society instigated judicial review proceedings.

The King (on the application of The Law Society) v The Lord Chancellor [2024] EWHC 155 (Admin)

The claim for judicial review arose from recommendations made by Lord Bellamy KC. The Claimant, The Law Society, along with interested parties (The Criminal Law Solicitors Association (CLSA) and the London Criminal Courts Solicitors Association (LCCSA)), challenged two aspects of the above responses to Bellamy's Review, namely:

(1) the failure to implement the central recommendation in full (an overall increase of 15%) and

(2) the MoJ (in conjunction with the Advisory Board) failed to establish the extent of unmet need in criminal legal aid and how those needs should be met.

The parties disputed whether CLAR's central recommendation was linked to the structural reform. Given that Lord Bellamy concluded that average net profit margins of those specialising in criminal legal aid had fallen from 0 to 5% (18/19) to -10 to -5 (20/21), The Law Society challenged the Lord Chancellor on four grounds in that he:

- breached his statutory duty to provide criminal legal aid in accordance with s.1, LASPO 2012 (Ground 1);
- acted irrationally (Ground 2);
- failed to provide adequate reasons (Ground 3); and
- breached the duty to make adequate enquires (Tameside Duty) (Ground 4).

Ground 1 – Breach of Statutory Duty

The Court concluded the system is dependent on an unacceptable degree of goodwill, but at present there are no legal deserts and no unmet need. Whilst the Court did not find the Lord Chancellor breached his statutory duty (Ground 1), they were nevertheless, troubled by the depressing picture.

Ground 2 – Irrationality

It was only on the third day of the hearing that the Lord Chancellor finally disclosed the modelling that was utilised in CLAR which had been conducted overnight. The Court found this troubling, far from ideal and surprising. However, it was not for this reason that irrationality succeeded. The Court found that HM Treasury may have refused to make more money available, but there is no evidence that it was ever asked. This was a question which, in the Court's judgement, had to be asked.

Ground 3 – Failure to Provide Adequate Reasons

The Law Society contended that the Lord Chancellor was under a duty to give adequate reasons

for rejecting CLAR's central recommendation. The Court considered the ground, but felt it raised a moot point, or overlapped with the second limb of Ground 2. The Court held that reasons existed and had been considered.

Ground 4 – Failure to Make Adequate Enquiries [Tameside Duty]
The Law Society contended that the Lord Chancellor breached his duty of sufficient enquiry in relation to discharging his s1 duties under LASPO 2012. In the alternative, what measures could be taken to bring about sustainability if Bellamy's Central Recommendation was not accepted in full?

The court preferred the alternative. It was incumbent on the Lord Chancellor to conduct further data collection, research, and analysis in relation to the process. The Court held "***it could hardly be suggested that the information obtained from any re-modelling exercise could not be of value***" [para 209] and that the reasons provided did not provide scrutiny. For these reasons, Ground 4 succeeded, but only in relation to the failure to undertake due enquiry.

Commentary

The case seems to highlight a distinct lack of trust between the profession and the MoJ. A monopsony exists between the parties as the Lord Chancellor is the sole buyer of the provision of legal aid, and thus has complete control of the seller (the profession) when it comes to setting a price for the service.
The judgement highlights MoJ Officials did not submit capacity risks in relation to areas of concern with the Ministers before the Government's November 2022 Response; Officials were aware of the impact and took it into account (did not engage with any evidence of it), but it is unclear in what way; and advice given to the Lord Chancellor (in one example at least), was, at best, confusing.

The Future

Powerful evidence was submitted before the Court; it heard how one solicitor is the remaining duty solicitor on his scheme and on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It also heard evidence from an anonymous solicitor who said he had a nervous breakdown due to the job, and contemplated suicide. The impressive body of consistent evidence from honest, professional people working up and down the country was regarded as cogent by the court. The essential service depends mostly on goodwill and a sense of public duty. The Court held *"new blood in significant quantities will not and cannot be attracted to criminal legal aid in circumstances where what is on offer elsewhere is considerably more attractive both in terms of financial remuneration and other benefits. Unless there are significant injections of funding in the relatively near future, any prediction along the lines that the system will arrive in due course at a point of collapse is not overly pessimistic."*

The Court also recognised that it is reasonable to infer that increasing funding by a smaller amount will worsen the dire straits of the criminal justice system and create a real risk of lack of access to justice. On the other hand, the Court also held that it is *"impossible to say that it is highly likely that the outcome for The Law Society would not have been substantially different if the errors of methodology which we have found had not occurred."*

It is therefore, a partial, technical win. There is no guaranteed avenue of redress as the Lord Chancellor is entitled to make the same political decision but do so lawfully. The case before the

court in 2018 resulted in the regulations being quashed as they resulted in a financial cut. The recent judgment did not result in the regulations being quashed. Had the court of done so, the money injected into lower crime would have been removed.

The lack of data and troubling picture in relation to the Lord Chancellor's statutory obligations is a warning shot for future conduct. The Court is clear: without adequate funding, the system will collapse soon.

What is also clear is that the Lord Chancellor is not equipped to tinker with the LGFS and PPE; he does not have the data to do so and in any event, focusing solely on the base fee ignores the 'swings and roundabouts' principal, and the notion that Crown Court remuneration cross subsidises lower crime.

Further, it also ignores the fact PPE is rising due to the digital explosion, which in turn risks undermining CLAR's main objective of supporting the sustainability of the market. There is a danger that metropolitan areas of the jurisdiction would benefit given that is where the most serious crime is encountered. The difficulty is that we simply do not know, without the data. This mirrors the findings of today's NAO report and paints a depressing picture of the gaps in data across the sector as a whole.

Unless and until data is captured, analysed, and transparently modelled, the only way to ensure CLAR's objectives are met is ex post facto payments. The position is unlikely to change as the risk of action by solicitors is lower than for barristers.

Rwanda Bill

The Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill (the Bill) has successfully passed its second reading in the House of Lords with 206 votes in favour and 84 against, rejecting a motion to block the Bill (more on that below). This legislation enables the government to relocate asylum seekers to Rwanda, **a move previously deemed unlawful by the Supreme Court** which ruled that genuine refugees sent there would be at risk of being returned to their home countries, where they could face harm. This in turn would breach the UK's obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which prohibits torture and inhuman treatment.

The ruling also cited concerns about Rwanda's poor human rights record, and its past treatment of refugees. The Bill was the government's legislative response to the Supreme Court's concerns and allowed Parliament to confirm the status of Rwanda as a safe third country, thereby enabling the removal of persons who arrive in the UK under the Immigration Acts. Is this something that the government can do? Yes. The separate question is whether it is something that government should do. The underlying principles that we have signed up to as a country in a myriad of international treaties is that we will not send individuals who come to our country claiming asylum back to a country where they may face persecution, degrading treatment or torture.

The terms of the Bill:

- confirm that Rwanda is a safe third country for the purposes of removing individuals to Rwanda

- confirm that Rwanda has agreed to fulfil its obligations under the UK's treaty with Rwanda UK-Rwanda treaty
- make clear the very limited scope for individuals to challenge their removal to Rwanda; and
- applies in its entirety on a UK-wide basis, including in Northern Ireland

The **Equality and Human Rights Commission has also warned** that the Bill may jeopardise human rights and undermine the rule of law by limiting court oversight.

Last week's House of Lords Rwanda debate shed light on growing concerns, not only regarding the government's perceived shift towards the rule of law but also on the apparent shortcomings of the second chamber in its role safeguarding liberal democracy in the UK. Despite the Lords' efforts to introduce pragmatic amendments, many have called **for Labour's frontbench to play a stronger role** in opposing unfavourable legislation, recognising the potential victory the government might secure without significant resistance. Convention allows the Lords to do this, as there is no electoral mandate for this policy.

Condemnation for the deportation plan also comes from Conservative peers, historians, and bishops, including figures like **Ken Clarke and the Archbishop of Canterbury**, expressing reservations about its constitutional implications.

Lord German's speech highlighted that the reliance on a treaty regarding Rwanda's safety, not ratified by Parliament, poses a significant flaw in the legislation; the bill jeopardises international commitments, risks breaching human rights, and undermines the rule of law domestically. He added that the Bill "seeks to exclude a group of people from accessing the legal protections we grant to everyone else in our society", and with "eye-watering costs", fails to achieve its aims and lacks focus on real solutions that could be found through a comprehensive strategy and constructive engagement with European neighbours on asylum cooperation.

So what next?

The proposed legislation proceeds to the committee stage on the 12th February.

What does the committee stage involve? This stage allows for a thorough examination of each part of a Bill by members of the House of Lords and occurs in the main chamber or as a Grand Committee. In Grand Committees, unanimous agreement is required for motions. Committee stage typically lasts up to eight days, starting about two weeks after the second reading. All clauses must be agreed upon, and amendments are voted on. The government cannot limit discussions or impose time constraints, distinguishing it from the House of Commons. After committee stage, the Bill, if amended, is reprinted, and it proceeds to the report stage for additional scrutiny.

Justice Committee Oral Evidence Session

The Justice Committee held an oral evidence session on 6 February with the Rt Hon Edward Argar MP, Minister for Prisons, Parole and Probation at the MoJ, alongside Director General for Policy – Prisons, Offenders and International Justice, Ross Gribbin, and Director General Chief Executive at HM Prison and Probation Service, Amy Rees. The session examined pressures on the prison system, including overcrowding, deteriorating facilities and staff shortages, while also scrutinising the government's reforms, plans to rent prison space abroad, and the effectiveness of its strategy for managing the prison population.

On the issue of the future prison population and estate capacity Chair, Sir Bob Neill MP, asked about allocation of funding for prison maintenance to double the existing headroom and reduce overcrowding within prison cells, to which Minister Argar revealed that £246 million had already been expended for maintenance. Later during the session, Edward Timpson KC MP asked when an annual statement may be made on prison capacity before Parliament, and also whether this statement ought to be a statutory requirement as it is for other annual statements that the Lord Chancellor makes i.e. in regards to the Courts and Tribunals. The Minister could not answer when such a statement would be published, but offered to write to the committee with an *estimate* as to when they hope to have the statement. When asked about the content of such a statement, the Minister responded that a solid projection on prison capacity could not be made on demand, but is "reassured of the robustness" of the data and projections available.

Sir Bob Neill MP also inquired whether figures for how many prisoners have been released are available, to which the Minister responded that there are "internal management figures" which are not deemed appropriate to be published. Sir Bob deemed this "most unsatisfactory".
The full recording of the session is available **here**.

We hope that you've found this edition helpful (if not quite as bitesized as we originally promised!) We'll be back later this month with an update on the Review on Civil Legal Aid call for evidence and other justice news and written questions. See you then.

Rohini Jana
Director of Parliamentary Affairs
09 February 2024

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About the APPG on Access to Justice

We strive to highlight the importance of access to justice as a fundamental pillar of society, and to empower individuals to exercise their rights, challenge discrimination, and reduce social inequalities. We foster parliamentary and public understanding of access to justice by acting as a forum for discussion and debate, providing an interface between Government, Parliament, and the justice sector.

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