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2008

I was called to the bar in 2008 and my practice is predominantly criminal legal aid cases. I both defend and prosecute around the Country.

I am asking for your vote so that I can continue the hard work that the CBA began in March 2022 when we took the historic decision to withdraw our services.

As everyone is aware this has been a tumultuous period for the criminal bar with vast numbers of practitioners leaving the profession, especially at our most junior call. The backlog is ever increasing, and we are being expected by the Government to work above and beyond to clear the issues caused by their chronic underfunding. We are also facing Dominic Raab back in the hot seat at the Ministry of Justice and sustained attacks from some areas of the press and certain MPs against the legal profession.

I was actively involved in the action over the summer and was incredibly proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with many of you at the protests outside the Old Bailey, Royal Courts of Justice and Supreme Court, assisting in their organisation and attending each one. As a result of this, the opportunity has been presented to me to regularly speak with the national media. I appeared on ITV, BBC and Sky and provided comments to The Times, The Guardian and The Express about what is happening in our profession and to campaign for reform. Everyone has made great sacrifices and the deal that was voted on by the bar was hard fought. I have put my name forward for the role of Assistant Secretary because I want to continue that work and make sure that our profession is attainable and sustainable for all.

The CBA has always been a democratic organisation and the majority of members voted to accept the deal for a variety of reasons. However, I recognise that this is also true for the 43% who voted against it. The voices of those that voted no, especially the most junior, must remain at the forefront of the conversation moving forward. We have achieved, through everyone's hard work, a result that looked at times improbable. However, this should be seen as the starting point and not the end of the battle. Our action has shown that the criminal bar is at its most powerful when we are all united. Everyone's

voice is important and I will aim, if elected, to unify those voices to secure our future.

The main considerations for the CBA going forward should include:

- CLAAB. This is vital to protect our future. While in its infancy we must ensure that the CBA has a strong voice and that junior members of the bar feel that they are being heard and represented.
- The Government must be reminded whenever possible what was agreed when the deal was accepted. We agreed to suspend our action and we have clear goals that must be achieved. Any suggestion that the deal can be tweaked or changed by the Government must be strongly opposed. Proper funding is vital throughout the justice system.
- We have to retain current members and encourage the next generation of talented barristers from all backgrounds. The profession has too few people already and we must not lose more.
- Prosecution fees must rise in line with the CBA deal. Most of us prosecute and defend and the lack of prosecutors will only get worse if this is not achieved.
- Section 28 and RASSO cases must be carefully looked at. The increased workload and number of hearings make these very unattractive. If the MoJ want this flagship policy to succeed they need to make sure that the bar is willing to undertake them.
- Use of CVP for administrative cases should be the norm and not exception. No barrister should be paying to work and long trips for very short hearings should not be simply part of the job.

All practitioners have horror stories about what is happening in our Courts and the extensive amount of work that is being undertaken by everyone to try and keep the system running. Our goodwill is loaned and can be taken away.

I feel truly privileged to be a criminal barrister and I want to do whatever I can to secure the future of our profession for everyone. If elected to the role of Assistant Secretary I will represent and work for all of you to achieve this.

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