

## **Bar Council Minutes**

Max Hill QC (MHQC) said that as this was his last Bar Council meeting, he wanted to make sure that he made a few points about QASA. Last September, the Legal Services Commission told him point-blank that QASA would not be used to bring the rate of pay for Silks in line with their grading within the scheme. At a supervisory meeting with Sir John Thomas, the issue of plea-only advocates was raised and it was a somewhat volcanic meeting. Time has passed and the Criminal Bar Association has not budged an inch on their views of the principles of the scheme, whether that be in print, in speeches or in emails to the membership. However, ten months later, Silks are in the scheme and so are POAs. How can it be that the consultation is only about the practicalities of implementing the scheme and not its principles? Surely it is up to the profession to say where they stand on those principles; the CBA has always said that it will support the scheme if those principles are in place. This consultation is the first opportunity for the Bar Council and the wider Bar to comment; there has been no consultation since these two important issues came up in September.