



Members	Monica Burch (C)	Max Hill QC	Guests	Baljit Ubhey	Graham Ritchie
	Mark Hammond	Rebecca		Franzi Hasford	Gary Smith
	Caroline Wayman	Lawrence		Chris Sharp	
	Simon Jeffreys		Secretariat	Jade Whittle-Barnes	Lissa Matthews

Item 1: Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising

1. The Board reviewed and agreed the minutes of last meeting and progress was noted against outstanding actions.

Item 2: Covid-19 Update

2. Max Hill QC, Director of Public Prosecutions, provided an update on the department's work to address the issues arising from the Covid-19 outbreak. He encouraged Board members to engage with the senior team if they could identify any improvements to existing processes. His updated focused on:

- The dedication to and focus of all teams to this new way of working;
- Cross-Government engagement;
- Ministerial engagement, particularly with the new Attorney-General;
- Top 200 Civil Servant Cabinet Secretary Update meetings;
- Attendance at the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster's COBR Public Services daily meeting;
- Emergency powers created by the Coronavirus Act 2020;
- Judicial engagement with Senior Presiding Judge and the Lord Chief Justice;
- Live casework;
- A new Custody Time Limits Protocol had been agreed and published;
- A joint CPS/National Police Chief's Council interim charging protocol, designed control the volumes of new cases coming into the system;

- The increase in certain crime types including new offences and domestic violence; and
 - Internal communications plans with both live streams and recordings.
3. The Director confirmed that analysis had begun to establish the recovery work required for the Criminal Justice System (CJS).
 4. Rebecca Lawrence, Chief Executive Officer, provided an update on her work, this included:
 - Daily Gold, Silver and Bronze Command meetings;
 - Cross-CJS Strategic Command meetings;
 - Engagement with HMCTS on audio/visual hearings and hygienic and socially distanced courts;
 - Partnership working with policing and the judiciary;
 - Engagement with HM Prison and Probation Services;
 - The consistency of charging and casework decisions;
 - Staff wellbeing.
 5. The Board congratulated both the CEO and the Director on the fantastic job so far. The Board echoed their gratitude to all CPS staff for the work and dedication shown. Board members confirmed that they were available to test ideas or provide feedback if necessary.
 6. The Board discussed the risk around data and cyber security with the majority of members of staff now working from home. Both the digital and security leadership were involved in silver command meetings and were content that the cyber security systems were holding well; the CPS was not further exposed due to the increase in home working. The Board also discussed how the Digital Security team were supporting members of staff who were using their personal devices to video-conference into court hearings.
 7. The Board raised concerns regarding the deputising and support structure for senior leaders. There were systems of cover in place for all key people, but these had not yet needed to be activated.
 8. The Board also considered the impact on year-end financial reporting. The Director of finance had agreed with auditors that fieldwork would be completed off-site to ensure it was completed on time. The Board also received an update on the upcoming spending review, which had been delayed.

9. The Board considered the risk that current situation could lead to an erosion of trust in the CJS. He also updated the Board on his recent call with the Scottish Crown Agent and the Bill currently passing through the Scottish parliament allowing non-jury trials. The Board discussed the likely ramifications on the English and Welsh systems.
10. The Director confirmed that a review of decisions and reforms that had taken place due of the current crisis would be undertaken to ensure that they were delivering appropriately and fairly.
11. The Director also provided an update on the work of Chief Crown Prosecutors and their local engagement with judicial and police partners.
12. Finally the Board considered CPS independence; it was asked that a briefing was provided to Non-Executive Board Members prior to the next meeting. **[ACTION M1]**

Item 3: Government Priorities and Feedback from the Ministerial Strategic Board (MSB)

13. The Chair provided a readout from the MSB that had taken place earlier this month, it had been a positive meeting and the group were hopeful that this engagement would lead to a strong working relationship.
14. The CEO presented the paper, which outlined the how the CPS 2025 strategy would deliver the Government's aims. The paper was well received.
15. The Director provided an update on the discussions at the MSB on the negotiations for the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union (EU).
16. The Board then considered the following issues:
 - Supporting International postings post EU exit;
 - Testing of CPS staff for Covid-19 as critical workers – the executive were concerned and agreed that this would be kept under review, but currently the organisation was managing staff extraction levels well and had the ability to move work around the country if needed; and
 - Current and future priorities and how these could be affected by Covid-19.

Item 4: 2020-21 Business Plan

17. Mark Hammond as Board sponsor provided an overview of his engagement with the team, which had been extremely positive, especially in light of the current circumstances.
18. Rebecca Lawrence as senior responsible officer for the project presented the current position and the development of a future-proofed business plan.

19. Gary Smith and Franzi Hasford of PwC presented a detailed overview of the work completed so far and the plans for ongoing work. They also provided an overview of how Covid-19 was likely to affect delivery. An example given was that planned engagement with strategic partners had been reduced in light of the current situation and existing demands of time. The business plan would come to the CPS Board in April for final sign off.

Item 5: 2020-21 Financial Plan

20. Chris Sharp, Finance Director, presented the 2020-21 financial plan. The paper outlined the plans to make full and effective usage of the funding received for 2020-21 to ensure the CPS delivered the targeted outcomes and complied with all conditions attached to the 2019 spending round settlement.
21. Chris provided an overview of the likely effects of Covid-19 on the financial plan. He also provided an update on preparations for a spending review, he reminded the Board of the importance of ensuring that the outcome of the recent spending round was factored into the CPS financial baseline.
22. Members were confident in the plans outlined but asked that consideration was given to future spending once the majority of services had returned to business as usual.
23. The Board discussed the likely savings realised from Covid-19 with regards to reduced administrative costs.
24. The Board also received an update on the Finance department's work to develop a new system to pay external bar fees for work completed during the lockdown period.

Item 6: Any Other Business

25. The Director provided an update on the outcome of the judicial review of the CPS rape charging policy.

**Secretariat
March 2020**