



2025



Business Plan
2021-22

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1. Introduction

1.1 Foreword from the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Chief Executive Officer

It is only right that we introduce this plan by remarking on how exceptionally challenging this past year has been, both professionally and personally. The CPS has a unique role to play in the criminal justice system – one that is never easy – and in delivering fair and independent prosecutions during a global pandemic, the response of those working in the CPS has been truly exceptional. We are very proud of the dedication and resilience that our colleagues have shown, and we are hugely grateful for the commitment and hard work that have allowed us to continue our critical work.

As we look to make progress, we recognise that responding to Covid-19 will be a significant and ongoing challenge in the year ahead. We must continue to find ways to ease the pressures facing the CPS. This has been a key consideration as we've developed our new business plan.

This plan itself marks the second instalment of our ambitious five-year strategy, CPS 2025, helping us to become the organisation we want to be: a leading voice in transforming the criminal justice system, using our legal expertise and digital capability to make the public safer and building the confidence of our diverse communities. Reflecting CPS 2025's themes, this document sets out the key areas of work under each of the theme headings – our people, digital capability, strategic partnerships, casework quality and public confidence. Importantly, all of our work will seek to deliver across these themes, ensuring that wherever and whenever we act, we are contributing to the delivery of the overall strategy.

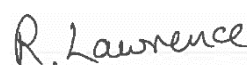
As you will see, this year's plan focuses on key changes, including where we can improve casework quality and progression, helping to reduce significant strain in the system. It also sets out where we must press ahead with advances in our use of technology and in updating our processes and our services, to help us better serve the public. The need to keep pace with crime and society have been similarly included so that we remain relevant and able to deal with emerging and increasingly complex crimes. There are also firm commitments on areas where we know we need to improve, and we are clear on what has to change. Each area of work has been carefully considered in the context of Covid-19, ensuring that nothing stands in the way of our continued response to the pandemic.

Everyone within the CPS has a role in delivering our business plan – it sets out what our priorities should be, what changes and support will help us to do our jobs, and how this improves the whole organisation's ability to deliver independent and fair prosecutions. We will also continue to be guided by our values – to treat everyone with respect, be independent and fair, be open and honest, behave professionally and strive for excellence.

We trust that this plan demonstrates the many ways in which we are seeking to improve the service we provide to the public, and our determination to do so even in the most challenging of circumstances.



Max Hill QC
Director of Public Prosecutions



Rebecca Lawrence
Chief Executive Office

1.2 Business plan overview

The purpose of this business plan is to:

- Summarise our priorities for the year ahead and map progress towards longer-term ambitions
- Demonstrate alignment between our work and the CPS 2025 aims and outcomes
- Create clear ownership and accountability for the activities that we undertake
- Share our plans with colleagues and partners, creating a clear foundation upon which to build for CPS Areas, divisions and directorates
- Position us to work effectively with partners in the transformation of criminal justice

The plan is made up of three main sections that outline the context in which it has been developed, the key areas of work that we will take forward and how our governance structures will oversee its implementation.

The background, ambition and context sections explore the wider context and key factors that inform this year's business plan, including the CPS's role and the challenges of the current operating environment.

Our delivery plan section provides a strategic view of the CPS's work in the year ahead through an overview of planned outputs, grouped by their CPS 2025 theme and mapped by the outcome they deliver against.

The final section gives a brief financial summary and an overview of the governance structures that will scrutinise the implementation of the plan over the coming year.



2. Background, ambition and context

2.1 Our purpose

The Crown Prosecution Service is at the heart of the criminal justice system in England and Wales, working with our partners to deliver justice through independent and fair prosecutions.

Our vision, as set out in the CPS 2025 strategy, is to ensure that we are a leading voice in transforming the criminal justice system, using our legal expertise and digital capability to make the public safer and build the confidence of our diverse communities.

Fundamentally, the role of the CPS is to:

- Decide which cases should be prosecuted – every charging decision is based on the same two-stage test in the Code for Crown Prosecutors
- Determine the appropriate charges in more serious or complex cases and advise the police during the early stages of investigations
- Prepare cases and presents them at court
- Provide information, assistance and support to victims and prosecution witnesses

We do not investigate crime, or choose which cases to consider; our prosecutors must review every case referred to us by the police or other investigators. We provide expert legal advice early in investigations to help build strong cases or identify where a suspect should not be charged.

We make our decisions independently of the police and of government. We must always be fair, objective and impartial to secure justice for victims, witnesses, defendants and the public. Our job is to make sure that every case which satisfies the Code test goes before the courts.

As we review every case sent to us, our work is extremely varied and can be complex in nature, whether we're prosecuting, burglary, domestic abuse, terrorism or multi-million pound fraud cases. What these cases all have in common is that they can have a devastating impact on victims.

International, organised and economic crime presents a serious threat to UK national security and economic wellbeing. The CPS works across borders to tackle terrorism and cybercrime, human trafficking and drug smuggling. We also use our powers to confiscate the proceeds of crime at home and abroad.

We have more than 6,000 highly trained staff who enable us to make sure the right person is prosecuted for the right offence, and that trials are fair so that offenders are brought to justice whenever possible.

We are proud to be recognised as a leading employer, committed to supporting a diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve.

2.2 Our operating environment and challenges

The CPS business plan sets out our priorities for the year ahead, but it must also reflect and take into account the environment in which we work. Clearly, the global pandemic – the backlog of cases it has produced and the rise in caseload per prosecutor – will continue to have a significant impact on our work and the criminal justice system.

The pandemic is inevitably the single biggest challenge we face and will continue to be so for many months to come. Our operational contingencies have evolved throughout the response phase, and we have been fully engaged in cross-criminal justice recovery work to date. We have played a central role in making sure that essential work to deliver justice can continue, whilst doing everything possible to protect our people, our partners and the public. Our focus in 21/22 will be mitigating the impact of the pandemic and supporting our operational frontline to deliver justice.

There will be a continued need to review and adapt our operations and working practices as the pandemic unfolds over the coming year. We will also need to work with our partners to tackle the backlog of cases in the system whilst maintaining quality of decision making, and we must also be alert to any shifts in crime trends during the pandemic that could affect our casework going forward, as well as making sure all necessary processes and guidance are in place.

Building honest, effective, and trusted strategic partnerships across government, the third and private sectors will also be important in all scenarios so that we can work together to build a criminal justice system fit for the future. Following EU Exit, we will adapt to new arrangements and continued efforts to maintain important international cooperation on prosecutions.

The changing nature of crime continues to be a challenge for the CPS. Our caseload is becoming more complex as both investigators and prosecutors contend with a surge in digital evidence. It is more necessary than ever that our people have the skills and tools required to effectively progress cases through the system.

As society changes around us, we will need to build a service and a workplace that anticipates and responds to the challenges and unlocks the power of data. We will also join up systems offering a seamless experience and innovate to support better justice outcomes.

It is also right that we will continue to prioritise our colleagues' wellbeing in these difficult times, building on new initiatives, with a greater focus on social, mental and physical well-being as many of continue to work across different environments. We will focus on what we all need to help us be the most effective in what we do, with a clear picture on performance and what this means for the CPS as well as individuals.

Rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) will remain some of the most challenging crimes that we prosecute, as well as one of the most devastating for victims. We share the deep public concern over the growing gap between the number of RASSO offences being reported and the number of criminals being convicted. The CPS recognises the importance of this work and is firmly committed to implementing recommendations from key reviews, working closely with our partners to jointly deliver improvements and to finding better ways to support victims throughout the process.

3. Delivery plan

3.1 Delivery plan 2021/22 overview

The overview below highlights our key projects and their outputs for 2021/22, grouped by their lead themes and outcomes, as set out in our [CPS 2025 Strategy](#). These outputs are based on planning assumptions that reflect current resources and constraints. This business plan will also contribute to the delivery of the [priority outcomes](#) agreed at the Spending Review.

The order of the themes and projects below also reflects the vision set out in CPS 2025, where we need to help **our people** thrive – supported by enhanced **digital capability** and **strong strategic partnerships** – to ensure excellent **casework quality**. Together, all of these elements secure **public confidence**.



Strategic Outcome	Project	Scope	Key Outputs
Our People: All parts of our workforce are diverse and inclusive	Strategic Resourcing	A strategic workforce plan that supports the CPS to deliver business outcomes	- Improved workforce planning proposal, resourcing groups and implementation
	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Raise the visibility, purpose and value of a diverse workforce across the CPS and the wider CJS	- Under-representation analysis - Recruitment methods review - Social Mobility Strategy
Our People: Our people have the skills and tools they need to thrive	Performance and Productivity	Define and support the productivity of our workforce and ensure that performance can be effectively measured	- Organisational and personal productivity analysis - Two-way feedback culture materials - Performance management conversation materials
	Beyond Smarter Working	Set a strategic vision and the core principles and components that will take us 'Beyond Smarter Working'	- Agile structures, practices and systems - Role of the (remote) manager refresh - People policies and practices update

	Adapting Communications to a Changing Business Model	Improved levels of employee engagement, understanding of organisational objectives and trust in leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Channel review - Tools audit - New tools/channels developed
Our People: Our supportive culture promotes wellbeing	Health and Wellbeing	Support people to positively own their personal wellbeing to help them be their best at work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mental health offer review - Social wellbeing support - Health checks - Line management wellbeing support resources
Our People: Our people lead with our values	Building Leadership Capability	Effective leadership in a remote and agile context with visible demonstration of our values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership strategy and implementation framework
Digital Capability: We have confidence in the security of our systems	Information Management	Ensure data and information is held securely by the CPS, is only accessed where absolutely necessary and is done so in accordance with the law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Law enforcement redaction responsibilities agreement - Implementation of a Data Access Policy for CPS employees - Improved governance regime for oversight of Information Management - Constructive relationship with the Information Commissioner's Office
Digital Capability: We use data to drive change	Future Management Information System (MIS)	A MIS solution that allows CPS users access to powerful, self-service analytical and enterprise tools that drive better, faster decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structured assembly area and data warehouse - Common Platform data capture
Digital Capability: We innovate, including with emerging technology	Innovation Programme	Scope and adopt automated tools, systems and process that allow quicker and more efficient casework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital platform enhancements - CPS contact improvements - HR applicant tracking system - CMS Documents Store development - Automated redaction tool
Digital Capability: We are proactive in investing in our digital capability	Central Operational Training Team	Training in digital upskilling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruit new team and deliver training to increase digital capability
	Roll-out of upgraded devices	Upgrade CPS devices and implement a robust cloud management solution for end user devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rollout new devices to all colleagues - Develop and pilot cloud management solution

	Oracle Learning Management Solution	Improved learning offer for CPS staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Migration of learning content and history - Change management and user testing
	Digital Case File	Improvement in file quality, reduction in re-keying and better tracking of outstanding material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Case File model developed, tested and implemented in Early Adopter Areas
	Common Platform and Case Management System	Design and develop the Common Platform and implement it effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Common Platform development and implementation strategy - CPS functionality (external programme deliverable)
	Digitisation of Multimedia Evidence	Supporting police forces to adopt platforms for sharing digital evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police digital evidence management gaps reporting and engagement - National agreement on photographic sharing principles - Commercial agreement
	Major contract transitions	Move to new contract arrangements for key services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New print and networks contracts
Strategic Partnerships: We lead on futures thinking to understand cross-CJS issues	Strategic Research Plan	Periodic academic research and priority baseline evidence assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engagement plan - Evidence base assessments
	Strategic Insights Projects	Quarterly deep dive projects considering strategic questions and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project scope proposal - Ways of working horizon scan - Quarterly insight projects
Strategic Partnerships: We influence cross-CJS change through trusted relationships	Strategic Partnerships	A strategic framework bringing together operational leaders and key CJS partners to respond, learn and improve the CJS together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategic framework - Effective partnership implementation - L&D training packages
Strategic Partnerships: We advise Parliamentarians and Ministers on the operational implications of law and policy	Whitehall and Westminster Strategy	CPS insights inform cross-Whitehall decisions, legislation, and parliamentary activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parliamentary engagements - Parliamentary hub on CPS website

Casework Quality: The right person is prosecuted for the right offence	Disclosure	Ensure the right person is prosecuted for the right offence, to provide a fair trial and to avoid miscarriages of justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustained compliance with the Attorney General’s guidance on disclosure and Director’s guidance on charging - Cross-agency engagement on the Disclosure Management Document (DMD) - 21/22 Joint HMCPSI Inspection on disclosure - Individual Quality Assessment (IQA) review
Casework Quality: Cases are progressed in a timely manner	Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)	Investigate attrition in CSA cases, taking a multi-agency approach to plan and respond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2021 PMIU report review and data analysis - Live case tracking and attrition analysis and proposals
	More Efficient Case Progression	Timely and efficient end-to-end improvements in case progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch Case Progression Commitment - Updated National File Quality Assessment - Defence engagement process review - Improvements to victim and witnesses support - Prosecution Team Performance Meetings (PTPMs) review and refresh
Casework Quality: Cases are dealt with effectively	Improving the charging model	Jointly agreed charging model between CPS and police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jointly agreed charging model phased implementation
	Joint CPS and Police National Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) Action Plan	Effective investigation and prosecution of RASSO cases, reduced disparity between offences reported and cases going to court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offender-centric investigation model pilots - Learning materials - Early investigative advice surgeries - Joint national RASSO conference - Review and disseminate early advice pilot best practice - Joint police training on trauma impact
	Domestic Abuse (DA) Best Practice Framework	Narrowed disparity between DA cases reported and criminal justice outcomes, build public confidence to report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Updated troubleshooting DA guidance - CPS DA policy - Revised DA guidelines for prosecutors - Best practice analysis in Crown Court cases - Review face-to-face training
	Advocacy Strategy 2025	Improving the current framework and expectations for advocacy that drives performance, diversity and progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crown Advocate framework - Breakpoint removal - Clerking framework
	At Risk Defendants Strategy	Set out the CPS strategy on defendants who have additional needs or vulnerabilities, or who may be at risk of disproportionality, are treated fairly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and publish an At Risk Defendants Strategy - Guidance and procedural improvements on taking into account personal characteristics - Proposal for an improved data set on relevant issues such as mental health

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposals on cases involving those with additional needs or young people
Casework Quality: The quality of our casework is enhanced through partnership working	Serious Organised Crime Strategy	A CPS Serious Organised Crime Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Serious Organised Crime Strategy development and implementation
	Changing Nature of Crime Review	Greater resilience for handling serious and organised crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case referral criteria - CPS Proceeds of Crime, International Justice and Organised Crime, Serious Fraud, Serious Organised Violence parameters
	International postings and casework	More effective and efficient engagement with international partners to directly benefit UK domestic casework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scoping of new posts requirements, funding, and deployment
Public Confidence: Victims and witnesses have a fair experience interacting with us, regardless of outcome	Victims and Witnesses communications	Communications with victims are effective and victims have a better understanding of prosecutorial decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victim portal, including scoping of user needs, literature review of victim communication research, and digital walkthrough for RASSO victims and witnesses - Proposal on Victims Communication and Liaison (VCL) scheme redesign - Initial VCL implementation by creating an internal victims' hub for templates, best practice examples and materials
	Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO) 2025	Effective prosecution of RASSO cases and increased public confidence in CPS response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revised RASSO legal guidance - Leadership strategy and policy statement - Pre-trial therapy guidance - RASSO 2025 update
Public Confidence: We are a leading voice in ensuring defendants are treated fairly by the CJS	Review of County Lines prosecutions	Ensure county lines cases are investigated and prosecuted effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - County lines review and report findings/recommendations
Public Confidence: We understand how best to serve our diverse communities	Inclusion and Community Engagement (ICE) 2025	Drive casework quality, fair and equitable decision making, and a truly inclusive workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National and Area level assurance framework - CPS Area delivery plans - External scrutiny panels - Community Accountability Forums (CAF) - Academic disproportionality research - Big Conversation event

Public Confidence: The public understand our value	Discover CPS	Higher levels of understanding and confidence of the CPS among key groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications Strategy - Explanatory communications resources - Online resources
	Digital Communications Capability	Improving our interactions with users, partners and the wider public, and our skills as ambassadors for the organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Communications Strategy developed and implemented

3.1 Success Measures

The following success measures, drawn from CPS 2025, will be used to monitor progress against our key deliverables across 21/22.

Success Measures	
Our People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of our staff compared to national averages (for ethnicity, sexuality, disability and gender) Keep pace with the changing nature of crime, indicated by % of staff attending training aligned to CPS priorities
Digital Capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of staff attending digital training Red, amber, green (RAG) rating for delivery of major digital projects (to time, budget and target benefit implying value for money) % and # of police partners or other investigators who share multimedia evidence with us on digital systems
Strategic Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery against strategic partnership strategy
Casework Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of cases where appropriate legal decisions are made % and # of charging decisions that are completed on time % and number of cases dropped at 3rd or subsequent hearing % and # of judge directions that are complied with on time % and # of guilty pleas at first hearing % and # of cases for which disclosure obligations are met Average (mean) number of hearings per case
Public Confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of our community panel members who agree with 'The CPS responds to our feedback' % of the public who agree with 'I am confident that the CPS is effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime' (Crime Survey of England and Wales)

4. Monitoring and evaluation

4.1 Our financial summary

The summary below sets out the key elements of the CPS expenditure as well as some high-level information on the types of spending indicated.

Our expenditure for 2021/22 is financed from centrally agreed budgets administered by HM Treasury. The budget allocation is expressed net of relevant income, and any shortfall in projected income will need to be offset by savings in expenditure.

Summary of CPS funding 2021/22	
Net resource spending (RDEL)	£645.2m
Capital (CDEL)	£6.01m
Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)	£6.45m

The table above sets out the CPS's funding for 2021/22, expressed as Resource spending (RDEL), Capital (CDEL) and Annually Managed Expenditure (AME).

Resource spending (RDEL) is money that is spent on day-to-day resources and administration costs. It includes the hire of agents; prosecution costs; costs of confiscating the proceeds of crime; capacity

building in the criminal justice system; support of voluntary sector organisations within the criminal justice system; and depreciation. The RDEL funding is shown net of income, including that arising from costs awarded to the CPS in court or received through the Recovered Assets Incentivisation Scheme. We use a detailed activity-based costing model to accurately assess required resources to meet projected demands.

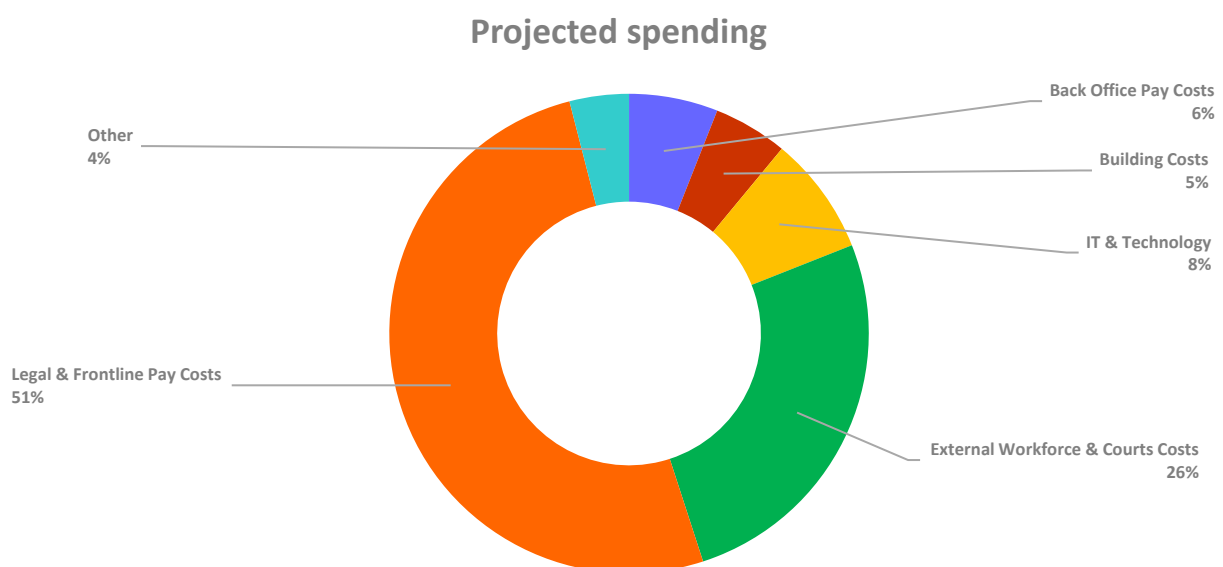
Capital spending (CDEL) is money that is spent on assets that will be utilised for more than one financial year. Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) covers movements in provisions such as write-offs and changes in allowance for irrecoverable debts; and provisions for dilapidations on buildings.

The majority of our spend goes towards our internal workforce, in particular Legal and Frontline pay. This spend has increased following the investment we received from HM Treasury, which is allowing us to deliver the most ambitious recruitment campaign in our history. We are also making decisions to determine the future workforce capability and capacity needed to effectively manage our increasingly complex casework and to keep building confidence in our services.

Our current workforce, as of March 31st 2021, includes 2927 people in a variety of professional legal roles, including prosecutors and advocates, representing a net increase of 14.5% since September 2019. A further 2779 people work in our operational delivery professions and 576 in our corporate service professions.

Each day, highly valued work is similarly undertaken on behalf of the CPS by the external Bar, which requires a fee scheme for the future that is fair and affordable. Our 2021/22 spend under External Workforce and Courts reflects the uplift in the payments agreed following the 2019 review of our fee schemes. The other part of this spending goes towards supporting victims and witnesses attending court.

The 2021/22 budget also allows for some modest continued investment in digital capability and innovation. Such investments remain important in addressing the changing nature of crime and improving the way justice is done.



4.2 Governance

As part of building trust in our work, we want not only to share our plans for 2021/22, but also to explain how we intend to measure and report on our progress.

Effective governance of the 2021/22 business plan will be crucial to monitor delivery and maintain accountability within our executive team, while keeping our Board, the public and our partners up to date on progress against our organisational strategy.

Through existing governance arrangements, we will regularly report on relevant management information as well as progress against timelines, strategic outcomes and our success measures. We will focus on outcomes – not just outputs – to maintain an accurate understanding of the wider impact of our work. Our reporting structure helps us to identify and understand risks, opportunities and shifting demands at an early stage, regularly reassessing the best way forward and reviewing how we measure success to ensure this reflects any shifting demands or changing priorities. During the coronavirus crisis, our Executive Group will also track progress against all activities related to our response.

This plan is a national vision, but it is also intended to provide a clear framework for local planning. Local leaders will develop targeted action plans – taking the aims expressed in the business plan and specifically considering how they can be achieved at a local level. We also hope that, wherever possible, individuals will align their personal and career development goals with the priorities outlined above.

Forum	Summary of accountabilities	Role in governing the business plan	Reporting frequency
Executive Group (EG)	Responsible for making decisions which underpin business-as-usual activity, with a focus on maintaining efficient and effective core processes and procedures – including performance management. Overall responsibility for compliance with CPS policies.	Tracking progress of initiatives and reporting against timelines, budget and outcomes. The EG will also monitor the business plan risks and progress on out coronavirus crisis response.	Monthly
		Success measures.	Quarterly
CPS Board	Functions at a strategic level to oversee the CPS's progress against the CPS 2025 strategy and long-term vision	Tracking against CPS 2025, success measures and our coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis response.	Quarterly
Ministerial Strategic Board (AGO/CPS)	To oversee the strategic direction for the CPS and jointly hold the CPS to account for the delivery of its strategic objectives.	Approving the business plan. Reviewing the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of the CPS in-year.	Quarterly
Regional (Areas and Divisions) Leadership	Monitor progress against local action plans as part of Area Performance Review forums.	N/A (governing their own plans).	Quarterly

You can find further information on our organisation and long-term vision in our [CPS 2025 Strategy](#).



2025