

SOUTH WEST SERVICE CENTRE BUSINESS PLAN



2003-2004



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The South West Service Centre is located within the same building as the Devon and Cornwall Area Secretariat and the Exeter Office, at Hawkins House, Pynes Hill, Rydon Lane, Exeter. EX2 5SS.

South West Service Centre Business Plan 2003/2004

Contents

| | Page |
|--|--------------|
| Section 1. Introduction to the South West Service Centre | 2-3 |
| Section 2. Objectives and priorities in the context PSA Targets | 4-7 |
| Section 3. Summary of key targets (Not required) | |
| Section 4. Forecast Volumes (For Areas only) | |
| Section 5. Summary of overall budget provision | 8 |
| Section 6. Forecast staffing and spending profiles | 9 |
| Section 7. Principal risks to delivery, and mitigating action | 10-14 |

Section 1: Introduction to the South West Service Centre

1.1 Service Centre Organisation.

- ◆ The South West Service Centre covers a Family Group of five CPS Areas. These are as follows: - The Avon and Somerset Area located in Bristol and Taunton, Devon and Cornwall Area located in Exeter, Plymouth and Truro, Dorset Area located in Bournemouth, Gloucestershire Area located in Gloucester, and the Wiltshire Area located in Chippenham.
- ◆ As at the 31.12.02, the South West Service Centre looks after an internal customer base of 436 (headcount figures), as well as arranging accommodation, travel and expenses for victims and witnesses, and paying fees for Solicitor Agents and Counsel.
- ◆ The Service Centre provides key administrative support to the Family Group in the areas of Finance, Personnel, Facilities Management and Procurement, in terms of informing best practice, creating opportunities, promoting quality, the provision of advice and processing.
- ◆ The Service Centre is managed by a B3 Service Centre Manager, who reports to the Devon and Cornwall Area Business Manager. Line management arrangements will change in the new year, once the National Business Support Manager has been appointed to the HR Directorate at HQ.
- ◆ The Service Centre is split into three Sections, Facilities Management, Finance and Personnel; each headed by a B2 Section manager and supported by a B1 junior manager. Overall the Service Centre employs 19 specialist administrative staff.
- ◆ In addition, a full time Equality & Diversity Officer, linked to the Equality & Diversity Unit at Headquarters, provides support to the Areas on community engagement, and issues concerned with prosecution and employment. (As recommended by the Denman Report).
- ◆ The National Project Manager for Victim and Witnesses Training, and a Regional Training and Development Manager are also based in the Service Centre, but managed by Headquarters.

1.2 Purpose.

- ◆ Under Service Level Agreements based on the national template, to provide high quality support to Area line management and staff in the five CPS Areas of the South West Region.
- ◆ To provide effective personnel management, and in line with the Regional Training and Development Manager, training of Area-based staff, to enable them to be managed and developed to their full potential.
- ◆ To provide effective management of Area Office estates, accommodation budgets, works, office services and equipment procurement.
- ◆ To provide effective financial management, including proactive advice to Areas on budgetary matters, and the timely and accurate payment of correctly submitted and certified invoices and claims.

1.3 Roles and responsibilities.

- ◆ To act as a processing centre for the Family Group, and to process agreed areas of work to the standards and timetables set out in the Service Level Agreement.
- ◆ To carry out its work in accordance with the policies and guidance laid down by National Headquarters, and as agreed with its customers.
- ◆ To provide an administrative service in respect of Personnel, Finance, Facilities, Procurement and Information Management through the provision of: -
- ◆ Expert advice and guidance by well trained and developed staff.
- ◆ Interpretation and clarification of policy contained in CPS Manuals.
- ◆ Liaison with, and the provision of feedback to Area Business Managers on Service Centre and Area performance in discharging their respective roles and responsibilities.



Tim Gainsford
Service Centre Manager

Section 2: Objectives and Priorities in the context of PSA (Public Service Agreement) Targets.

- ◆ The Public Service Agreement targets for the SR2002 and the reforms in the White Paper: Justice for All set our direction of travel for this coming year.
- ◆ The White Paper sets out a wide-ranging programme of reform for the criminal justice system. The reforms are aimed directly at supporting the criminal justice system in delivering its targets. The programme of reform is guided by a single priority, which is to rebalance the criminal justice system in favour of the victim and the community so as to reduce crime and bring more offenders to justice.
- ◆ The crucial element in the White Paper being the Government's acceptance of Lord Justice Auld's recommendation that the Service should take over responsibility for deciding the charge in all but the minor criminal cases. The aim is to ensure only the right cases enter the system, waste and delay is reduced, and that the reasonable expectations of victims and witnesses of crime are not disappointed.

The Service's Public Service Agreement Targets for 2003-2004 are:

2.1 Narrowing the Justice Gap

- ◆ Improving the delivery of justice by increasing the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice is known as narrowing the justice gap. The justice gap is the difference between the number of offences recorded and the number for which an offender receives either a caution, a conviction or has the offence taken into consideration by a court. Narrowing the justice gap will help reduce crime, demonstrate that the criminal justice system is effective and improve public confidence. The improvement target is a 1.2 million by 2005-2006, with an improvement in all CJS areas, a greater increase in the worst performing areas and a reduction in the proportion of ineffective trials.

The Service Centre will play its part through supporting the Areas to meet their targets as follows: -

- ◆ We will provide expert advice and assistance on co-location with the Police (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Facilities Management*.
- ◆ We will manage the process for the recruitment and selection of staff to carry out this work in the South West Family Group (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Personnel*.
- ◆ We will make timely payments to counsel, lawyer agents and witnesses for their fees and expenses (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Finance*.

2.2 Public Confidence

- ◆ To Improve the level of public confidence in the criminal justice system, including increasing that of ethnic minority communities, and increasing the proportion of ineffective trials. We are also party to the criminal justice system taskforce setting the framework within which this target can be delivered locally. Many crimes go unreported because of lack of confidence in the criminal justice system – we together with our partners have to reverse this trend. The reforms set out in the White Paper: Justice for All and delivery of the narrowing the justice gap target will go some way to do this. We are focused clearly on activities we believe will help to contribute to delivery of this target. Our approach is based on national standards and co-ordination of policy but providing each Chief Crown Prosecutor with the necessary flexibility required to deliver a service that meets the needs of local communities and local conditions in their Areas.

To play our part, our Objectives and Priorities are as follows: -

- ◆ The treatment of victims and witnesses of crime ~ We will improve our service to victims and witnesses by taking account of the needs of vulnerable witnesses, such as those who have been subject to domestic violence/racial, religious or homophobic crime, or who suffer from a disability, when making travel and accommodation arrangements (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Finance*.
- ◆ We will promote equality of opportunity, and value diversity in our dealings with victims and witnesses. We will help our staff achieve this by inviting a variety of speakers to team meetings to heighten awareness of policy, cultural and disability issues (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Finance and SCM*.
- ◆ We will treat all internal and external customers with respect, and administer their affairs efficiently, and in line with quality standards and Departmental policy (Ongoing) ~ *All staff*.
- ◆ We will strive for equality in employment practices across the Family Group, and will support our Area colleagues through the exercise of fair, open and effective recruitment practices for all staff (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Personnel*.
- ◆ We will keep up to date with developments in Employment Law through training updates, seminars and professional journals, as required in the HR

Directorate Plan, so that we can provide high quality advice and guidance to the Areas (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Personnel*..

- ◆ We will assist Areas in dealing with underperformance through support, advice and training on such matters as appraisals and sickness absence (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Personnel*.
- ◆ We will gather data for the provision of management information for HQ and Areas in relation to all Service centre activities (Ongoing)~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will carry out our duty to meet our obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, which outlaws race discrimination in all public functions and places a positive duty on public authorities to promote race equality (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will contribute towards diversity and equal opportunities in training and development by ensuring that all Service Centre staff are familiar with CPS policy, and trained in Diversity Awareness (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will manage and monitor use of the CPS national Equal Opportunities Complaints Procedure for the South West Family Group, and contribute to the pool of Internal Advisors (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Personnel and SCM*.
- ◆ We will assist Areas in the Family Group, as required, in implementing the CPS Diversity and Equality Action Plan and their community engagement. (Ongoing) ~ *Equality & Diversity Officer*
- ◆ We will provide developmental opportunities for Service Centre and Secretariat administrative staff in visiting Area offices and receiving Area visitors, in line with our Staff Survey Action Plan (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will strive to foster and develop a diverse workforce in the Service Centre, and the Areas, at all levels, and a climate at work which recognises and values differences, and which rejects all forms of discrimination and inappropriate behaviour (Ongoing) ~ *SCM, Management Team and EDO*.
- ◆ We will ensure that all Service Centre staff have Personal Development Plans and timely Forward Job Plans which identify individual objectives and training and development needs, and Include a competency on diversity, against which everyone will be assessed, and individualised diversity objectives (By 30.04.03) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will pursue internal and external training opportunities to meet the identified needs of staff, within budgetary limitations (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.

- ◆ We will ensure that Service Centre staff are provided with appropriate induction and training to do the job, and appropriate developmental opportunities, and contribute to Induction and management training for Area staff in conjunction with the Regional Training and Development Manager (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will provide administrative support to the Regional Training and Development Manager through an A2 Training Assistant (By 31.03.03) ~ *SCM and Head of Personnel*.
- ◆ We will promote an atmosphere where excellence is celebrated, and where staff are mutually supportive and encouraged, so that the SWSC is seen to be a good place to work in, and where morale is high by giving credit where credit is due and being quick to give praise. Managers will need to take a lead and model good practice in this area, encouraging staff to follow their example. The objective is to put Investors in People at the centre of our business and really value each other, our diversity, and the contributions we make. Forward Job Plan Objectives will reflect this responsibility. (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will form effective working relationships with other criminal justice agencies, such as the Police in promoting diversity, and establish contacts with community organisations in support of Area community engagement responsibilities (Ongoing) ~ *EDO*.
- ◆ We will engage with Area colleagues by sending representatives to Whitley Council meetings, Regional Sounding Board and Family Group Meetings, and contribute through the provision of specialist advice, information and guidance (Ongoing) ~ *SCM, Head of Personnel and EDO*.

2.3 Value for Money

- ◆ To increase value for money from the criminal justice system by 3% a year.

To play our part our Objectives and Priorities are: -

- ◆ We will monitor the performance of all signatories to the Service Level Agreements, and make changes, where appropriate, by mutual agreement (Quarterly Performance Review visits) ~ *SCM*.
- ◆ We will collect Monthly Performance Measures information, and provide regular returns to HQ, when required to do so, and once further development has taken place (Monthly) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will liaise regularly with ABM's at Family Group meetings (and quarterly performance review visits), regarding Service Centre activity and performance, and ensure that the Service Centre provides equitable levels of service across the Family Group (Monthly)~ *SCM*.

- ◆ Service Centre Staff meetings will be held for information sharing and consultation, to promote transparency, and to provide staff with the opportunity to participate in business planning and performance improvement (Monthly) ~ *SCM*.
- ◆ It is planned to consider the use of the EFQM Business Excellence Model in the Service Centre, and identify processes to which this can be applied, such as internal self-assessments and performance reviews. We also aim to explore the use of a new Diversity Model in measuring Area performance on Equality and Diversity, (By 1.9.03) ~ *SCM, Management Team and EDO*.
- ◆ We will develop quality measures and comply with the standards, targets and timescales as set out in the Service Level Agreement and Service Centre Performance Measures and contribute towards the development of meaningful national Performance Measures for Service Centres (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will assist Areas to administer CPS policy and procedures on sickness absence monitoring and control (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Personnel*.
- ◆ We will modernise our business processes through the use of improved information systems such as Connect HQ and the CPS Intranet (Ongoing) ~ *SCM and Management Team*.
- ◆ We will work in partnership with Area colleagues to administer claims from victims and witnesses, and the payment of fees to counsel, ensuring that the national target of 100% of payments being made within 30 days is met (Ongoing) ~ *Head of Finance*.

Section 3: Summary of Key Targets (No action at present)

Section 4: Forecast Volumes (Areas Only)

Section 5: Summary of Overall Budget Provision

| Description | Budget |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Prosecution costs | 0 |
| Salary Costs | £ |
| GAE costs | £ |
| Non Ring-fenced Accommodation costs | 0 |
| Street Crime Recruitment | £ |
| Miscellaneous | £ |
| Total non Ring-fenced costs | £480.000 |
| Ring-fenced Accommodation costs | 0 |
| Total Running Costs | £480,000 |
| Capital | £ |

Section 6: Forecast Staffing and Spending Profiles

Section 7: Principle Risks to Delivery, and Mitigating Action

7.1 Narrowing the Justice Gap

7.1.1 Recruitment

Objective ~ To run recruitment exercises in accordance with laid down policies to meet the increased demand for staff, meeting staff target projections for the number of Lawyers and Administrators in post, especially in relation to the new Charging responsibilities. The Service Centre often has to work in a reactive fashion due to a lack of forward planning. The introduction of more flexible working patterns for Lawyers and Caseworkers due to Charging and Street Crime Initiatives may have an impact on the Service Centre.

High Risks ~ The need for speed may override Area willingness to conform to laid down policies.

A lack of forward planning and information on requirements from Areas, and having to work to the separate and uncoordinated requirements of five CPS Areas.

A lack of Service Centre resources to meet demands.

A lack of suitable recruits, and the danger that standards will be lowered to meet the need for more staff.

Counter Measures ~ The use of provisional/casual appointments to meet needs.

Co-ordination of recruitment exercises between Service Centre and HQ.

Advice and training for managers in drawing up Person Specifications and Job descriptions.

Realistic/competent sift practices.

Wider publicity to attract more applicants.

Switch/review Service Centre resources to recruitment.

7.1.2 Co-Location

Objective ~ To provide advice and support on co-location issues in respect of the CJU/TU and Charging initiatives.

High Risks ~ High demand for assistance from the Areas in a short time scale.

Lack of clarity from the Areas on what is needed (Moving targets/changing demands).

The effect of Charging on existing co-location plans.

Counter Measures ~ Agree annual co-location plans with the Areas that identify the help and assistance they will require, and agree how these can best be provided.

Formal change procedures in co-location plans.

Service Centre Managers to set up a forum for staff engaged in Facilities Management work, so as to share knowledge and best practice.

7.1.3 Premises

Objective ~ To provide help and advice to enable Areas to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and Health and Safety regulations.

High Risks ~ Lack of expertise of recently appointed staff.
Areas not asking for help and advice.

Counter Measures ~ Provide training for staff.
Raise Area awareness.
Carry out a programme of risk assessments on premises.

7.2 Public Confidence

7.2.1 Witnesses

Objective ~ To engage with and provide services to witnesses, paying 100% of correctly completed witness expense claims within 10 working days of receipt.

High Risks ~ Late and inaccurate provision of information from Areas.

Counter Measures ~ Training and education for Area and Service Centre staff.
Put in place Service Level Agreement with targets.
Monitor compliance with SLA targets, identify poor performance, and produce management reports.
Pay on claim forms after seeking verbal assurances from the Area that the claim is valid.

7.2.2 Payments

Objective ~ To process payments (Invoices/Counsel/Agents) within agreed timescales.

High Risk ~ Unreliability/slow running of the ROSS system.
Late and inaccurate information from Areas.

Counter measures ~ Late payment reviews.
Advice to Areas.
Awareness Training for Area and Service Centre staff.

7.3 Value for Money

7.3.1 Pay

Objective ~ The provision of payroll systems to Areas so as to enable the recruitment and retention of competent staff.

High Risks ~ Late and inaccurate information from the Areas.
Delays in processing by HQ.
Staff shortages and pressure of work in the Personnel Section.

Counter Measures ~ Service level agreement with HQ.
Service level agreement with the Areas.
Regular SCM Performance Review/customer liaison visits to the Areas to Monitor adherence to targets in the Service level agreement, identifying and reporting back on poor performance.

7.3.2 Finance

Objective ~ The provision of a payment system for the Areas.

High Risks ~ Unreliability.
Slow running of ROSS finance system.

Counter Measures ~ Business continuity plans.
Partnership arrangements with the Wales Service Centre.
Identify urgent/high priority payments for processing in a manual system in case of system failure.
Use IT Liaison Officer to identify problems at an early stage.
Report problems to the IT Helpdesk.

7.3.3 The Budget

Objective ~ To ensure that expenditure keeps within the discrete budget allocated to the Service Centre for its running costs, made up of Salary Costs and General Administrative expenses.

High Risks ~ This is an ongoing challenge as our small budget allocation allows very little flexibility. Risks could include the loss of the Central Manpower Pool, the implications of the Value For Money PSA Target, the increased costs of taking on a full time A2 Training Administrator, and the high travel and subsistence costs of the Equality & Diversity Officer due to the large geographical nature of the South West.

Counter Measures ~ Monthly budget monitoring.
Liaison with National Business Support Manager and IRPB regarding access to Contingency Fund at HQ.

7.4 Other Risks

- ◆ **Service Level Agreements** ~ Meeting the targets identified in the Service Level Agreements, and those agreed separately with ABM's for ad-hoc individual requirements.

- ◆ **Performance Measures** ~, Ensuring that data is collected and collated regularly each month.
- ◆ **Information Technology** ~ Implementation of the new Farms Accounting system and implications of disruption to day to day business during set up and training, and the increased volume of work as a result of more inputting, together with the ongoing poor performance of IT systems in applications such as ROSS, PIMMS (COMPEL) and SPIRE in terms of slow running and down time which frequently hamper staff in completing their work. The introduction of COMPASS to the Areas may also have implications for the Service Centre.
- ◆ **The 2002 Staff Survey** ~ This revealed low morale and dissatisfaction amongst mainly level A staff in the Service Centre, which we are addressing through an agreed Action Plan and changes to methods of communication.
- ◆ **Training and Development** ~ Having no dedicated budget for this means that opportunities for external training are very limited.
- ◆ **Equality in employment** ~ Contributing towards the achievement of national targets for a representative number of women and minority ethnic staff in employment.
- ◆ **HCA/Legal Trainee recruitment** ~ Contributing towards the process of assessment and selection of HCA's and Legal Trainees in across the Family Group.
- ◆ **HQ & Service Centre Review** ~ There are risks and opportunities associated with modernisation and rationalisation of administrative support services, and the possible transfer of HQ operations to the Service Centres. The new National Business Support Manager having been tasked with carrying out a further review of administrative services. This will also entail line management through the Human Resources Director, and a consequential shift of Service Centre management to Headquarters.
- ◆ **External Factors** ~ The move of the Meteorological Office to Exeter in July/August 2003 may pose a threat in terms of losing staff looking for new career opportunities. Ongoing long-term sickness may also have a negative effect.

Risk Measures: 2003/2004

Strategic Theme ~ Value for Money

| Risk: | Current Counter Measures: | Are Current Counter Measures Adequate? | Proposed Action: |
|--|--|--|---|
| There is a risk of overspending on the Budget. | Monthly Budget Monitoring report from Head of Finance. | No. Taking on a full time A2 Training Admin post without | Monitor staffing costs closely and address through vacancy management, only |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | | identified funding is likely to put increased pressure on our budget. | approaching HQ for additional funding from the Contingency Fund, should this become necessary. |
| Meeting SLA Targets | SCM quarterly Area Performance Review visits | Yes | None |
| Poor performance of IT systems impedes our ability to meet targets. | Phoning Helpdesk to log problems or faults as required. (All staff) | No | Contact Customer Liaison Officer. |

Strategic Theme ~ Public Confidence

| | | | |
|--|--|------------------|--|
| Paying Witness payments on time. | Management supervision and allocation of work. | Yes | None |
| Paying Counsel fees on time. | Parity and SCM/Head of Finance liaison with ABM's/Secretariat Staff. | No | Head of Finance liaison with Fees Clerks and Area staff and to arrange staff training. |
| Responding to Complaints within timescales. | Performance Measures | Yes | None |
| Meeting staffing & recruitment targets | By following Personnel policy as set out in the PMM. | No | By encouraging Areas to draw up recruitment plans and projections. |
| Low staff morale identified by Staff Survey2002 | Staff Survey Action Plan and Team Development Day on 8.04.03. | Too early to say | |
| Meeting the training & development needs of staff. | SCM to draw up Training & Development Plan by 3i.05.03. | No | Identifying extra funding for training, possibly from Contingency Fund. |

South West Service Centre
Crown Prosecution Service
Hawkins House
Pynes Hill, Rydon Lane
Exeter. EX2 5SS