



CPS THAMES AND CHILTERN BUSINESS PLAN 2017/18

Last year, we set out our priorities, which provide us with a clear focus through to 2020:

- Supporting the success of our people
- Everyone contributing to high quality casework
- Continuously improving how we work
- Ensuring public confidence that we are fair, effective and independent.

In 2017/18, we will continue to use these priorities to focus our efforts to deliver an excellent prosecution service for Thames and Chiltern and to play a leading part in the local criminal justice system.

We will ensure that we continue to invest in the future of our staff by providing Individual Learning Accounts, which give staff control of the funds to develop themselves, and Team Accounts, which give them the equipment they need to do their job. We will also continue to provide development opportunities for future leaders and aspiring managers and support overall talent management.

We will set out, and deliver, an advocacy strategy, which has the right advocate handling each case, and ensure that we have a talent pipeline stretching from Legal Trainees through to Senior Crown Advocates.

We will refine our recruitment strategy to attract talent to CPS Thames and Chiltern, ensuring that we have waiting lists for key posts, and being innovative about the way that we attract applicants.

We will have a clear focus on high quality charging advice, review, case progression and presentation. This will be underpinned by Individual Quality Assessments (IQA), providing management support to enable individuals, the teams and the Area to learn and improve the quality of our decision making.

CPS Thames and Chiltern will continue to deliver efficiencies within our own teams and by working with our partners. We will look to identify benefits to make the system, as a whole, work more effectively by focusing on taking more guilty pleas at the first hearing in both the Magistrates' and Crown Courts.

We will continue to improve the way we work digitally on all of our casework, liaising with our criminal justice partners to ensure that we are provided with a good quality digital product and the means to use digital evidence in every courtroom.

Everyone in CPS Thames and Chiltern is committed to prosecuting cases to the highest possible standards and giving the very best service to victims and witnesses, so we will be focusing particularly on the service and communication we provide to them at court both before and after they give their evidence.

To secure public confidence in the service we provide to victims of our RASSO cases, we will pilot writing to each one to introduce the allocated reviewing lawyer as a point of contact for questions about the prosecution process.

We will also introduce video cross examination of vulnerable witnesses across the Area to support victims in our most sensitive cases to give their best evidence.



Adrian Foster
Chief Crown Prosecutor



Rachel Mort
Area Business Manager

WE SUPPORT THE SUCCESS OF OUR PEOPLE

2020

2017/18 PLAN

WE WILL:

- Create a recruitment strategy that includes waiting lists for all levels and improves social mobility via apprenticeship schemes, legal traineeships and the prosecutor pathway.
- Build expertise across the Area through development programmes and the use of Individual Learning Accounts.
- Support and equip our managers with the skills to provide visible and engaging leadership.
- Create a strategy for Health and Wellbeing for all staff.
- Develop a culture which supports succession planning.

MEASURED BY:



of staff using their Individual Learning Account.



employee engagement index from the People Survey



vacancies against the resource plan



Support the 2.3% national CPS target for apprenticeships

EVERYONE IN THE CPS CONTRIBUTES TO HIGH QUALITY CASEWORK

2020

2017/18 PLAN

WE WILL:

- Build effective partnerships to ensure excellence across the Criminal Justice System (CJS) and in particular work collaboratively with our police forces to improve file quality.
- Continue to improve the quality and timeliness of all legal decisions. Deliver swifter justice through timely case preparation that builds and progresses strong cases and encourages appropriate early guilty pleas.
- Utilise trends from Individual Quality Assessments to help better identify themes and inform how we can improve.
- Continue to improve our compliance with Judges' Orders.
- Roll out pre-recorded cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses as required.
- Take action to drive up Hate Crime Sentence Uplifts.

MEASURED BY:



timely compliance with court directions



of sentence uplifts obtained in finalised hate crime convictions



guilty pleas at the first hearing attended in the Magistrates' Courts



Individual Quality Assessments completed during the year



quality of files through working with the police

WE WILL CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE THE WAY WE WORK

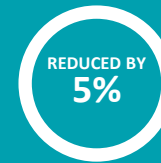
2020

2017/18 PLAN

WE WILL:

- Work with CJS partners to support the introduction of new and improved digital technology including Court Reform.
- Continue to embed Smarter Working to enable staff to work more flexibly.
- Implement our advocacy strategy across all courts; building in-house capacity and ensuring the right advocate is used in every case.
- Continue to embed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); encouraging innovation and good practice to support improved efficiency.
- Increase digital capability to include serious and sensitive casework.

MEASURED BY:



cost of paper purchased and couriers used



staff enabled to work flexibly



of our most serious casework managed digitally



timeliness of charging decisions. [MEASURE NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL Q2]

THE PUBLIC HAS CONFIDENCE THAT THE CPS IS FAIR, EFFECTIVE AND INDEPENDENT

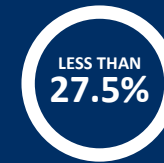
2020

2017/18 PLAN

WE WILL:

- Support social media campaigns that explain our work, and build public understanding of our role in tackling hate crime, domestic abuse and fraud.
- Improve the service we provide to victims and witnesses.
- Continue to build strong partnerships between the CPS and the wider community, informing and promoting understanding of our work.
- Ensure that all correspondence with victims and witnesses is of a high quality, clear and timely.
- Ensure every domestic violence case is handled according to national guidance and best practice.

MEASURED BY:



unsuccessful outcomes owing to witness issues



Visits to our CPS Thames and Chiltern website



of Victim Contact and Liaison letters sent within given timescales



RASSO* cases waiting more than 28 days for pre-charge advice or decision

*Rape and serious sexual offences