

Working in step?

A joint inspection of local criminal justice partnerships
by HMIC, HMCPSI and HMI Probation

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Foreword

Local multi-agency partnerships have been established in a number of complex areas of public policy, such as crime reduction and public health, in order to determine and work towards shared local priorities; oversee services which are provided jointly; and manage the risks and interdependencies between work carried out on a single agency basis.

Implicit in this is that partner agencies will be willing and able to compromise and reach consensus in the public interest. The underlying rationale is that, by working together, agencies can provide services which are more efficient and effective than they would have been if those agencies acted alone. Put simply, the whole is expected to be greater than the sum of the parts.

The advantages this offers in relation to criminal justice partnership working are various and clear. From bringing together different perspectives on complex problems, to ensuring a better shared understanding, to cost savings through more efficient ways of working, all should ultimately result in a more joined-up and effective criminal justice system, better able to focus on justice for victims and offenders.

By contrast, ineffective partnership working, which sees criminal justice agencies working in silos, focused only on their own part of the system, can and does have distressing and costly consequences. These include:

- poorly supported victims and witnesses of crime who, frustrated by delay, and/or with limited information about the progress of the case, become increasingly fearful about the outcome. They may withdraw their co-operation and, as a consequence, the case may be dropped;
- offenders evading justice and being free to commit crime again;
- victims or witnesses, together with their families and friends; and
- communities, losing confidence in the system, making it less likely that they will report crime and work with the system in future.

It is therefore vital that local criminal justice agencies are united in their ambition and focus, and work together in the most efficient and effective way possible.

This report sets out the findings from an inspection which examined the extent to which this is happening. It speaks to partners at local, regional and national levels, and invites them to consider how they might use the report to work together to serve the public in general and victims of crime in particular.

We are extremely grateful to all who made the inspection possible, particularly those in the six local criminal justice areas who gave their time, knowledge and experience.

Executive summary

The criminal justice system¹ (CJS) in England and Wales is complex, comprising multiple layers of local, regional and national structures, processes and arrangements.

Close and effective partnership working by criminal justice agencies is essential in ensuring that support for victims and witnesses, progression of cases, and the apprehension, punishment and rehabilitation of offenders can be successfully advanced through this crowded landscape.

Local criminal justice partnerships (LCJP) are non-statutory bodies² whose purpose is to contribute towards this aim at a local level, by bringing together the right partners at the right time, agreeing shared priorities and working collectively to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the CJS in their areas.

There have been many changes to the environment in which these partnerships operate in recent years. In 2011, collaboration between named criminal justice 'bodies' was enshrined in law in the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act.³ The Act placed a reciprocal statutory duty on police and crime commissioners (PCC) and other criminal justice agencies⁴ to work together to provide an efficient and effective CJS for the policing area.

¹ A collective term to describe the administration of justice in England and Wales. It is the means by which crime is investigated and detected; evidence relating to crime is gathered and presented; the guilt of alleged offenders assessed; and punishment and redress are delivered in accordance with the law and the expectations of the public.

² A statutory body is an organisation which has been set up by Parliament to fulfil a specific function.

³ Section 10, para 3 & 4, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Available from: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/13/section/10/enacted

⁴ Section 10, para 5 of the Act states: "criminal justice body", in relation to the elected local policing body for a police area, means:

- (a) the chief officer of police for that police area;
- (b) the Crown Prosecution Service;
- (c) the Lord Chancellor, in exercising functions under section 1 of the Courts Act 2003 (duty to ensure efficient and effective courts service);
- (d) a Minister of the Crown, in exercising functions in relation to prisons (within the meaning of the Prison Act 1952);
- (e) a youth offending team established under section 39 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- (f) a person with whom the Secretary of State has made contractual or other arrangements, under section 3(2) of the Offender Management Act 2007, for the making of probation provision;
- (g) the Secretary of State, in making probation provision in accordance with arrangements made by the Secretary of State under section 3(5) of the Offender Management Act 2007.'

In 2013, a national programme of reform was introduced to transform the CJS into a modern public service that provides a swift, determined response to crime, treats victims and witnesses with the care and consideration they deserve, and provides much better value for money to the taxpayer.⁵

Other significant changes in recent years include the reorganisation of partner agencies (such as probation services and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)), the introduction of potential new partner organisations, for example community rehabilitation companies (CRCs), and changes to the funding and oversight of the partnership arrangements. These included the ending of nationally-mandated targets, funding and support for local partnership activity, as well as the provision of facilities such as cross-agency datasets. This was accompanied by greater freedom for local areas 'to determine the arrangements that work best for them'.⁶

These changes took place against a backdrop of significant cuts in public spending which required public services to make radical changes to the way that services were provided.

About this inspection

Criminal Justice Joint Inspection is a product of long-standing co-operation between the four criminal justice inspectorates (of Constabulary; the Crown Prosecution Service; Prisons; and Probation) which was formalised by the Police and Justice Act 2006. The inspectorates work together to address issues that involve more than one criminal justice agency and have a direct impact on the public who use the justice system. Working together produces a more rounded examination of issues that cut across the system and enables inspectorates to achieve more than if just one inspectorate acted alone.

In 2014/15, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI), and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation) carried out an inspection to examine how well local criminal justice agencies work together⁷ to provide justice that is efficient and effective.

⁵ *Transforming the CJS: A Strategy and Action Plan for the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, June 2013. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209659/transforming-cjs-2013.pdf

⁶ *Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, July 2012. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217328/swift-and-sure-justice.pdf

⁷ For the purposes of our inspection, we refer to these arrangements throughout as local criminal justice partnerships.

This work formed part of a programme of joint inspections of criminal justice activity set out in the Criminal Justice Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16.⁸

The inspection focused on:

- how joint working is led, managed and supported at a local level through LCJPs;
- how effective LCJPs are in terms of promoting change and innovation to reduce costs and improve outcomes for the public; and
- the extent to which LCJPs work in partnership in support of three national priorities (to support vulnerable victims, to reduce reoffending, and to implement digitisation). We refer to these briefly below.

Criminal justice inspectorates do not have the power to inspect PCCs, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)⁹ or the City of London Police Authority.¹⁰ We did not engage directly with all PCCs in England and Wales during the course of our inspection. However, we did receive evidence directly from four PCCs and a representative from MOPAC, and had responses to an online survey from eight LCJPs that were chaired by PCCs.

Methodology

Inspectors conducted a survey of LCJPs across England and Wales, to provide data at the national level. This was followed by inspection fieldwork in six areas (Kent, Dyfed Powys, London, Durham and Cleveland, Wiltshire, and Northamptonshire) between June and December 2014. (Durham and Cleveland form one LCJP area).

During the fieldwork, we interviewed relevant staff at all levels, reviewed relevant documents and, where invited, observed meetings and a court hearing.

⁸ *Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16*. HMCPSI, 2014. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/02/CJJI_BusinessPlan_2014-16.pdf

⁹ The statutory body established by section 3, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, to hold the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to account, and to secure the maintenance, efficiency and effectiveness of the MPS.

¹⁰ Governance body for the City of London Police, established in accordance with the provisions of the City of London Police Act 1839 and the Police Act 1996. It sets policing priorities, holds the Commissioner of City of London Police to account, and ensures value for money in the way the force is run.

Findings

Geographical spread and membership

We found that LCJPs cover 40 of the 43 police force areas in England and Wales. However, in many cases, the area covered by the LCJP was not co-terminous with that of other criminal justice agencies; this calls into question the very nature of the term 'local' in this context.

The core membership of these partnerships was consistent across England and Wales and comprised the police, CPS, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS), and the PCC (or a member of the PCC's staff). Just over four fifths of the partnerships also included probation services (both the National Probation Service (NPS) and CRCs), youth offending services, the voluntary and community sector and Her Majesty's Prison Service.

Interviewees reported that those attending LCJP boards were generally the right people, with the right level of authority to make decisions on the part of their agency. However, there was a tension between local autonomy and national requirements, which agencies found difficult to reconcile. Nonetheless, all those interviewed during the inspection fieldwork were committed to partnership working and were keen to make it work.

Priorities

The government has been clear that reforms to the CJS will be achieved through partnership working, nationally and locally.¹¹

LCJPs should bring agencies together with a common purpose to make the CJS more efficient and effective at a local level. Inspectors therefore expected each LCJP to have a set of agreed priorities that all agencies were working towards.

However, we found little evidence of this. Few areas had considered, collectively, what mattered most in their local areas. Where they had, this was not on the basis of a robust assessment of risk, threat or harm, and there were few examples of public consultation and engagement.

In addition, LCJPs could offer little assurance that those priorities they had in place were clearly understood and owned by all partners. For instance, in three of the six areas we visited, inspectors found that agencies had agreed priorities which were very high level, with no tangible links to programmes of work to achieve the desired outcomes. In one area, partners had agreed 'crime reduction' as a priority, with no collective understanding of or agreement on how

¹¹ *Transforming the Criminal Justice System Strategy and Action Plan*, Ministry of Justice, July 2014. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/330690/cjs-strategy-action-plan.pdf

this was to be achieved. This calls into question the extent to which local areas had fulfilled the expectations for partnerships set out in the government White Paper, *Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*¹², namely to:

‘define, agree and make public the priority areas where they wish to improve their performance, identify who is responsible for achieving them and specify how they will measure whether they have been achieved’.

We were surprised to find that some of the most vulnerable victims were not a focus for the LCJPs we visited, particularly given the high media profile and public concern associated with child sexual abuse and exploitation, for example. That is not to say that individual agencies were not concerned with vulnerable victims. Nevertheless, collective understanding and oversight of how vulnerable victims and witnesses are treated throughout the CJS would enable partnerships to identify better where improvements could be made. It could also provide the basis for a shared understanding of what success looks like. From that standpoint, agencies could challenge and support one another to achieve improvements to the victim and witness experience, and in doing so potentially bring more offenders to justice.

In the absence of shared priorities, we found individual agencies separately pursuing their own aims, with little work done to identify where there were overlaps or, worse, potential contradictions between them. This type of ‘silo working’ is precisely what partnership working is intended to avoid.

Impact

Disappointingly, we found limited evidence that LCJPs were making a positive difference. Where we did see progress, it was principally in relation to national programmes. However, this tended to be achieved by individual agencies working either discretely or bilaterally, rather than within the context of the wider partnership arrangements.

Moreover, we found that the ability of LCJPs to demonstrate the benefits of collaborative working was constrained by the absence of an agreed framework for measuring success and managing performance. This makes quantifying the impact of partnerships (whether in respect of service improvement or cost reduction) difficult, if not impossible, to assess.

¹² *Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, July 2012. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217328/swift-and-sure-justice.pdf

Barriers to successful partnership working

There was broad consensus that the main barriers to establishing more effective local arrangements are fundamental differences in the drivers, structures, objectives and success criteria of the principal criminal justice agencies, which were seen as inconsistent and misaligned.

For example:

- Structures – the police service operates in a devolved structure, where performance targets have, to a large extent, been withdrawn and replaced by a single aim to reduce crime. Police forces are held to account locally by PCCs. By contrast, HMCTS, CPS, and the NPS are national organisations, accountable at national level with standard operating practices, performance measures and regional structures which are not coterminous, either with one another or with police force areas.
- Success criteria for individual agencies are not always reinforced with other agencies. The aim of making efficient use of court buildings can, in practice, undermine the aim of supporting and encouraging victims of crime to participate in the system. When courts are closed, victims may have to travel long distances to attend hearings, which may affect their willingness or ability to support the criminal justice process.
- Criminal justice agencies measure and record success differently, making it difficult to track progress. The police measure current cases, whereas both the CPS and HMCTS measure cases which have reached a conclusion. This makes meaningful comparison difficult.

Some attempts have been made to overcome these obstacles, for example by agencies working together at regional (as opposed to local) level to implement national programmes such as digitisation¹³; or by adopting individual agency performance measures to monitor progress locally.

We conclude that there is limited flexibility for local criminal justice agencies to address the issues outlined above and make decisions that reflect local circumstances. This inhibits fundamentally the constituent parts of the system from working together towards the same set of outcomes. There was no consensus among those we spoke to during the inspection about how these issues might be resolved. However, there were calls for greater clarity about the role of LCJPs, for access to better shared data, and for solutions to the challenges partners faced in allocating time and resources in making boards work.

¹³ The use of modern technology to streamline and improve criminal justice systems and processes.

Opportunity: the Criminal Justice Board

At the national level, the Criminal Justice Board (CJB) was established in 2013. Chaired by a minister, the board's membership comprised the leaders of the CPS and HMCTS, together with representatives of other criminal justice partners. Its objectives included providing leadership to the CJS, setting national priorities, and encouraging criminal justice agencies to work well together at a local level.

In August 2015, membership of the board was revised. It is now chaired by the Secretary of State for Justice, and membership includes the Attorney General, the Secretary of State for the Home Department and other ministers of state, senior members of the judiciary, the heads of the CPS and HMCTS, along with the Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council¹⁴, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and a representative from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.¹⁵

At the time of the inspection, there was some frustration on the part of those working locally regarding the absence of a clear way to escalate issues beyond their remit to resolve. Local agencies' understanding of the role and influence of the CJB in relation to this aspect, as well as the wider role of the board was also inconsistent.

There is an opportunity for the newly reconstituted CJB to clarify this approach. Moreover, the CJB might usefully consider how best to promote and stimulate innovation by LCJPs, by offering modest incentives and greater local flexibility for the most promising approaches, disseminating and promoting good practice, and creating the conditions for LCJPs to be successful.

Since its inception, the CJB has been focused on how best to tackle crimes, such as sexual violence and domestic abuse that require an enhanced and seamless response from a joined-up CJS. There is an opportunity to strengthen these arrangements to ensure that these crimes and others, such as child sexual abuse and exploitation, and emerging crimes such as cyber-crime and those associated with modern slavery and people trafficking, are the focus of collective action at both national and local level. The CJB could commission a national and expert assessment, together with information and advice, to assist local areas in assessing the prevalence and impact of these crimes locally and how best to deal with them effectively.

The CJB could also provide a mechanism for local areas, collectively, to highlight barriers and tensions in the system which inhibit local delivery and which require national action and/or local innovation to resolve. There was

¹⁴ Further information about the National Police Chiefs' Council is available from: www.npcc.police.uk/

¹⁵ Membership of the Criminal Justice Board is set out at Annex C.

consensus among the six local areas visited that this would be a valuable function particularly if it was underpinned by a national suite of core data with which all local areas could monitor progress and measure success. We agree and consider that this work should be expedited.

Conclusion and recommendations

Overall, we saw little evidence that LCJPs were visible, accountable and influential bodies leading work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS at a local level and achieving tangible results.

In making this assessment, we do not underestimate the scale of the challenge. LCJPs are but one element of a complex, multi-layered landscape of local and regional partnerships and service provision arrangements. They operate in a mixed economy of national and regional programmes, where their freedom to adapt to local need is limited.

These are fundamental challenges which we were told local partnership agencies have limited scope or influence to address. That said we consider that some processes and products which are within their remit, and which might alleviate these problems, are not in place. These include: a common purpose, shared aims, priorities and success criteria as well as the means to monitor and measure performance meaningfully and collectively.

In light of these conclusions and in the absence of the prospect of major structural reform, the lack of co-terminosity, and the tension between national and local accountabilities, will present persistent and enduring challenges for local criminal justice agencies.

Nonetheless, in an age of austerity, the public would rightly expect agencies to work together to reduce costs and improve criminal justice outcomes. To that end, we think that there is a compelling case for criminal justice agencies to come together, with a common purpose and specific aims, in an operating framework which delivers justice locally. In view of developments over the past five years, including the altered structure and governance arrangements of the main criminal justice agencies and the changing nature of crime, we consider that this is an opportune time to review and refresh the local and national criminal justice landscape and provide a new vision for partnership working.

We therefore recommend that steps are taken by the leaders of the criminal justice agencies to provide greater clarity and direction, pace and purpose to inter-agency working at local, regional and national level.

At the national level:

We recommend that, as a priority, the Criminal Justice Board establishes an operating framework that enables local criminal justice agencies to work together more effectively, with the freedom to organise in ways that reflect local circumstances and local and national priorities.

As a minimum, the framework should:

- define the scope for local areas to adapt nationally-determined plans and programmes to meet local need;
- promote innovation, through the offer of greater local freedoms and flexibility for the most promising approaches;
- establish a forum for local areas collectively to highlight barriers and tensions in the system which inhibit the provision of services;
- provide for the identification and dissemination of good practice;
- enable access to a national suite of core data against which all local areas can monitor progress and measure success. This should relate to the desired outcomes for the CJS as a whole and be readily understood and accessible to the public; and
- provide information and advice to local areas on trends, risks and emerging threats relating to particular crimes requiring an enhanced response. This might be set out in a strategic criminal justice requirement (akin to the Strategic Policing Requirement) to which all LCJPs must have regard in setting their local priorities.

At the local level:

We recommend that, within six months of the Criminal Justice Board establishing the operating framework, leaders of local criminal justice agencies acting together, and in co-operation with the PCC, should undertake a fundamental review of local partnership arrangements to assess whether they are fit for purpose to lead improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS at local level.

As a minimum, the review should include:

- an assessment of the health of the CJS locally, including its impact on victims and witnesses, especially the most vulnerable, and the extent to which perpetrators can expect swift justice;
- a local assessment of risk (informed by national threats, risks and harm) and the views and experiences of the public to inform local priority setting;
- the business and analytical support required for effective partnership planning, commissioning and co-ordination; and
- identification and clarification of links with related partnerships so that work is co-ordinated and mutually reinforcing.

The findings from this review should result in:

- a set of agreed local collaborative arrangements which have been refreshed and reinvigorated, which are visible to the public and which ensure that the right issue is tackled at the right level by the right agencies;
- an evidence-based, multi-agency action plan, with shared priorities, clear objectives and measurable outcomes which should be updated annually; and
- an agreed system for reporting progress nationally and to the public.

1. Introduction

"The sheer number of agencies [in the criminal justice system] makes the smooth passage of criminal cases hard to achieve. Delivery partners need to work well together at national and local level, focusing on how best to achieve the overall objectives of the CJS, rather than only focusing on optimising the performance of their own organisations."

*Improving the Criminal Justice System – lessons from local change projects: a joint report by HMIC, HMCPSI, HMI Probation and the National Audit Office, HMI Probation, May 2012.*¹⁶

The importance of partnership working in the criminal justice system

The CJS in England and Wales is complex. The progression of a single case from allegation to conclusion (whatever that might be) involves many different agencies, with different structures, customs, practices, cultures and aims, carrying out a large number of different (and sometimes lengthy) processes.

These discrete agencies are bound by a single focus: ensuring that justice is done, fairly and professionally and in a way that will reduce future crime. However, the differences in structure, approach and processes are, in some cases, so great that the system can appear remote and fragmented to the public whose needs it exists to serve. From the point of view of the victim, the progression of his or her case from the police to the CPS and onwards should be seamless, with no disruption, delay or (at worst) possibility of 'falling between the cracks' as it is moved from one part of the system to another.

The ability of criminal justice agencies to do their job is therefore wholly dependent on both the co-operation and the efficient and effective execution of other parts of the system. For example, the CPS's role to prosecute cases effectively and HMCTS's responsibility to run trials efficiently are dependent upon the quality of case files produced by the police at the start of the process.

Partnership working across criminal justice agencies is seen by many as offering the potential for managing this complexity and an essential pre-requisite for the efficient and effective delivery of local justice.

¹⁶ *Improving the Criminal Justice System – lessons from local change projects: a joint report by HMIC, HMCPSI, HMI Probation and the National Audit Office, HMI Probation, May 2012.*
Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/cji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/04/009860-Criminal_Justice_System.pdf

However, there is no prescribed model for the shape that it should take. LCJPs represent one way in which different criminal justice agencies come together with the aim of ensuring the system as a whole runs more smoothly at a local level.

About this inspection

In 2014/15, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPPI), and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation) conducted an inspection of how well criminal justice agencies work together to deliver justice that is efficient and effective. This work formed part of a programme of joint inspections of criminal justice activity set out in the Criminal Justice *Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16*.¹⁷

We use the term 'LCJP' throughout this report to represent formal collaborative arrangements between criminal justice agencies. However, our main interest was not in the structures and groups themselves, but in the difference they made locally. Whatever local structural arrangements prevail, agencies should understand both national imperatives and local priorities, and work together in the public interest to provide services that make a positive difference to their communities.

Our inspection focused on:

- how joint working is led, managed and supported at a local level in LCJPs, including the participation and contribution of different agencies;
- how effective joint working is in promoting change and innovation to reduce costs and improve outcomes for the public; and
- the extent to which local criminal justice agencies work in partnership to support vulnerable victims, reduce reoffending and realise the benefits of more efficient and effective ways of working through the greater use of technology. We address these themes briefly in our chapter on the impact of LCJPs.

We also explored the impact of recent changes to the local and national criminal justice landscape (summarised in the next chapter) at a local level.

¹⁷ *Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16*, Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2014. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/02/CJJI_BusinessPlan_2014-16.pdf

Methodology

Inspectors conducted a national survey of all criminal justice areas, to gather information on how LCJP working was governed and managed. Full details of the findings from our survey can be found at Annex D.

Six local areas were selected for inspection fieldwork, which took place between June and December 2014:¹⁸ Kent, Dyfed Powys, London, Durham and Cleveland, Wiltshire and Northamptonshire. These were selected to provide both a sample of rural, urban, and metropolitan areas and a mix of different models.

During the fieldwork, we interviewed:

- senior representatives from public and voluntary sector agencies involved in criminal justice;
- those involved in co-ordinating and providing business support for partnership working;
- staff involved in direct service delivery; and
- four police and crime commissioners (who volunteered to be interviewed).

We also examined documents (including business plans, minutes, performance data routinely gathered by the CPS and HMCTS and local performance reports) and, where invited, observed meetings and a court hearing.

Detailed inspection terms of reference and inspection criteria are set out at Annex A.

¹⁸ Finalisation of this report was delayed until after the 2015 general election, as the outcome could have led to changes in the way that the criminal justice agencies work together at the local level. This has also afforded the opportunity to link the timing of this report's publication to that of the review by the Ministry of Justice of the Criminal Justice Board (to which inspectors provided evidence).

2. Background: local and national and criminal justice arrangements

There have been a number of attempts to unify and reform the CJS at a national and local level over the past two decades. This section summarises the most recent of these reforms and sets out some other major changes to the criminal justice landscape, in order to give an overview of the environment in which LCJPs operate.

Local level: local criminal justice boards (LCJBs) and LCJPs

At a local level, LCJBs were introduced in 2003 to improve the provision of justice, secure better outcomes for victims and witnesses and to increase public confidence in the system. LCJBs brought together criminal justice agencies and other relevant organisations, (such as victim support services) to plan and provide high quality services. They received substantial resources from central government and operated within a performance framework of centrally-mandated targets, which were overseen by the National Criminal Justice Board.

In 2010, these arrangements for national overview and funding changed. The government introduced greater local autonomy and flexibility for local criminal justice agencies to agree what mattered most in local areas and the funding for local partnerships came to an end.

Further changes followed in 2012, when the government adopted new strategies for improvement and reform. The White Paper, *Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*¹⁹, which sets out an analysis of the barriers to an effective system and the government's ambition to change it, states:

"No one is accountable for the end-to-end outcomes. The agencies operate in silos, each with their own objectives, priorities and internal accountabilities, but without an explicit shared outcome, many areas find it hard to make the best use of those partnerships. More is needed to promote and support joint working in the criminal justice system, without returning to the clumsy targets of the past."

¹⁹ *Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, July 2012. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217328/swift-and-sure-justice.pdf

With regard to local criminal justice agencies, it said:

"But we do believe it is essential that [local criminal justice agencies] should work together at local level to deliver an improved criminal justice system, building on the strong foundations of LCJBs. We expect to see such partnership working in each of the police force areas, with Police and Crime Commissioners having the pivotal role in helping local partners to work together as well as introducing greater accountability."

Against this background of change, most criminal justice agencies have continued to work in some form of partnership arrangement, which is now locally resourced (we refer to these collaborative arrangements as LCJPs throughout this report). However, the joint inspection report, *Improving the Criminal Justice System – lessons from local change projects*, published in May 2012,²⁰ identified that changes to accountability, funding and arrangements had led to some LCJPs merging and others operating in a more limited way or shutting down altogether.²¹

National level: the Criminal Justice Board

At national level, a new CJB was established in 2013. Its objectives included the following:

- to provide leadership for the CJS;
- to set national priorities (which, in the latest version of its strategy and action plan²², are to create a system that cares for and considers the needs of victims and witnesses; is digital; and does things faster and right first time); and to encourage criminal justice agencies to work well together at a local level (with minimum expectations for local partnership working in place, as set out in Annex B).²³

²⁰ *Improving the Criminal Justice System – lessons from local change projects: a joint report by HMIC, HMCPSP, HMI Probation and the National Audit Office*, HMI Probation May 2012. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/improving-the-criminal-justice-system-lessons-from-local-change-projects/

²¹ Although HMCPSP reported in 2013 that 90 percent of areas still had some form of local partnership board. *Thematic Report on CPS Assurance and Performance*, HMCPSP, November 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/crown-prosecution-service/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2014/04/AP_thm_Nov13_rpt.pdf

²² *Swift and Sure Justice: The Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, July 2012. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217328/swift-and-sure-justice.pdf

²³ We have reflected these minimum expectations in the criteria and questions for this inspection, a summary of which can be found in Annex A.

Chaired by a minister, the board's membership consisted of the leaders of the principal national agencies (CPS and HMCTS) together with representatives of other criminal justice partners including the judiciary and the police through the Association of Chief Police Officers.

As mentioned earlier, in June 2015 membership of the board changed and it is now chaired by the Secretary of State for Justice, and membership includes the Attorney General, the Secretary of State for the Home Department and other Ministers of State, senior members of the judiciary, the heads of the CPS and HMCTS, the Chair of the National Police Chiefs' Council, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police and a representative from the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners.²⁴

Other changes to the criminal justice landscape

There have been a number of national and local developments which have shaped the way that criminal justice agencies have worked together (and continue to do so). Our inspection provided an opportunity to explore the impact of these developments in local areas and the extent to which agencies are working together in response.

Austerity

Measures to reduce public spending will continue to affect public services and those voluntary services which rely on public funding during the current parliament. This inspection took place in the context of agencies making radical shifts in the way that they provided services. The extent to which they were willing and able to participate in partnership working and the benefits they derived individually from that participation, were areas of enquiry for this inspection.

Police and crime commissioners

In 2012, the first PCCs were elected for each police force area in England and Wales. Their principal role is to hold the police to account on behalf of the public. The PCC sets the strategic direction for a local police force and holds the chief constable to account for the performance of the force. PCCs receive all the funding relating to policing and reducing crime and, after consulting their chief constables, are responsible for how the funding is spent.

²⁴ Membership of the current Criminal Justice Board is set out in Annex C.

They also have wider responsibilities, which include a reciprocal duty²⁵ to work together with named criminal justice bodies to provide an efficient and effective CJS. PCCs also have a specific role to champion victims of crime and to commission services to support them.²⁶

Reorganisation of the criminal justice agencies

The CPS and HMCTS have implemented re-organisations which have led to work being conducted in a more uniform way in larger units, by fewer staff. Reorganisation has been directed from the centre of these national agencies. Where previously there were 42 CPS Areas across England and Wales, there are now 13 including Wales and London. In cases where the CPS is required to make charging decisions, save in serious sexual offences and in the most complex other cases, which are dealt with by the local CPS Area, these decisions are provided by CPS Direct, a national telephone based service.

HMCTS is structured according to seven geographical regions and has separately amalgamated court areas on a different geographical footprint to the CPS Areas.

There are currently 43 police forces in England and Wales. Police forces have adopted a range of approaches to collaboration with other forces on a variety of policing functions, including criminal justice. The reorganisation of the probation service is considered under the 'transforming rehabilitation' section of the report on page 25.

We explored the impact of reorganisation and collaboration in this inspection.

Changes to the treatment of victims

There have been a number of recent developments in relation to the treatment within the CJS of victims of crime, which may have had an impact on local partnerships.

²⁵ Under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Available from: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/13/contents/enacted

²⁶ Responsibility for funding victim services and the funding to commission services was devolved to PCCs in 2014. The timing of re-commissioning of new services is determined at the local level.

1. Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and appointment of Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales

The launch of this statutory code of practice²⁷ in December 2013, with which all criminal justice agencies must comply, coupled with the Victims' Commissioner's²⁸ power to challenge agencies on compliance with the code, represents a strengthening of previous arrangements to ensure that victims of crime receive a high standard of service and fair treatment from the CJS.

We explored the extent to which there is a partnership approach to ensuring compliance and, if so, how effective it is.

2. Vulnerable victims

In recent years, high-profile cases of child sexual exploitation and domestic abuse have increased public concern for vulnerable victims of crime who are entitled to special care and support. This includes the way that they are interviewed by police and examined in court by prosecutors and defence lawyers. It also includes how what they say is understood. Criminal justice agencies have been concerned with improving the way that they work with vulnerable victims – such as survivors of sexual and domestic abuse²⁹ – and vulnerable adults who have suffered repeatedly from anti-social behaviour and harassment.

This inspection explored the extent to which criminal justice agencies collectively oversaw the management of such cases and monitored the outcomes for victims and witnesses.

Transforming rehabilitation

The probation service has traditionally been a core member of LCJPs. Government policy to transform rehabilitation has changed the way that probation services are managed and provided. The NPS retains responsibility for the supervision of higher risk offenders³⁰ and for work with the courts. Offenders who have been assessed as low or medium risk of reoffending or causing harm are now supported by 21 new CRCs. While some CRCs are

²⁷ Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, Ministry of Justice, October 2013. Available from: www.cps.gov.uk/publications/docs/victims_code_2013.pdf

²⁸ Appointed in March 2013, the Commissioner's role is to promote the interests of victims and witnesses; encourage good practice in the treatment of victims and witnesses; and keep under review the operation of the Code of Practice for Victims. More information about the role of Victims' Commissioner is available from: <http://victimscommissioner.org.uk/>

²⁹ For example, by establishing specialist domestic violence courts and sexual assault referral centres.

³⁰ Including those subject to multi-agency public protection arrangements and where an individual case escalates from low or medium to high risk.

coterminous with police force areas, for example, the London CRC covers the same geography as the Metropolitan Police Service, one CRC covers the four police force areas in Wales and 19 cover the remaining 38 in England. Successful contractors include a number of private and voluntary sector organisations. Transforming rehabilitation and reducing re-offending were themes explored in this inspection.

Increasing efficiency in the CJS

The focus on providing more efficient criminal justice services is principally being managed through a number of national programmes strongly linked with digitisation, though some programmes are distinct. For example, Transforming Summary Justice (TSJ), an initiative to improve how cases are dealt with in the magistrates' courts, and the Early Guilty Plea scheme³¹ aim to deliver justice more swiftly and focus resources proportionately. The impact of these programmes on local areas is explored in this report.

Digitisation

Contributing to the national programme to digitise the CJS is a major focus for local areas and was led at the outset by the CPS.³² Areas were at different starting points in terms of the investment in and progress made in relation to the introduction of technology, due to challenges faced with the existing infrastructure – such as the age and standard of buildings and where they were located.

The joint inspection of digitisation, led by HMCPSP and which will report in early 2016, will consider in greater depth the effectiveness of digitisation of information transfer and sharing between the police, CPS and courts and evaluate whether these changes are delivering improvements and provide value for money.³³ We have touched upon the steps taken collectively by agencies to embrace change and make improvements in digitisation in this inspection.

³¹ More information about the schemes is available from: *Transforming the CJS: A Strategy and Action Plan for the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, June 2013. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209659/transforming-cjs-2013.pdf

³² This report does not provide detailed analysis of the effectiveness of either the digitisation programme or of the management of cases relating to vulnerable victims. These separate but related areas are explored in two related inspections – the management of vulnerability in police prosecution case files, due to be published this autumn, and digitisation in the criminal justice system, which is due to be published in early 2016.

³³ *Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16*, Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2014. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/02/CJJI_BusinessPlan_2014-16.pdf

3. Geographical spread and membership

Geographical areas covered by partnerships

Our national survey and inspection fieldwork confirmed that formally constituted LCJPs (i.e. partnership boards underpinned by some form of working structure) cover the majority of police force areas in England and Wales.³⁴

Three of the partnerships straddled more than one police force area, one of which was included in our fieldwork. In the other areas we visited, interest was expressed in working on a cross-area basis. Reasons cited included the increasing regionalisation of agencies, such as the CPS, and pressure on resources, for example, demands on senior officer time and the ability of agencies to provide staff to co-ordinate the work.

In Wales, there was a two-tier approach, with LCJPs operating in three of the four police force areas and an All Wales Criminal Justice Board.³⁵ London and the City of London were also covered by one pan-London criminal justice board with local arrangements in place at borough level. The implications of these regional arrangements are discussed further on page 32 below.

Membership

Our national survey showed that a core membership of partnership boards was consistent across England and Wales and included:

- the police;
- CPS;
- HMCTS; and
- the PCC (in London, the mayor and deputy mayor were represented on the partnership board by a senior official from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime).³⁶

³⁴ Of the four areas that did not provide responses to the survey, we found evidence of the existence of a LCJP in two areas.

³⁵ Information about the All Wales Criminal Justice Board is available from: www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/engagement/partnerships/all-wales-criminal-justice-board/

³⁶ The City of London Police had a representative on the London Criminal Justice Board.

Beyond this core membership, over four fifths of partnerships included:

- probation services. In the areas inspected, the expectation was that both the NPS and CRCs would be represented on partnership boards as changes to the local delivery of probation services were implemented;
- youth offending services;
- the voluntary and community sector (usually Victim Support); and
- Her Majesty's Prison Service.

Less common, but represented in significant numbers were:

- community safety partnerships;
- the Legal Aid Agency;
- local authorities;
- a defence lawyer³⁷ (although defence solicitors were increasingly participating in working groups relating to digitisation); and
- health services (sometimes through the local authority public health role. In the areas inspected, interviewees expressed growing interest in issues such as the mental health of offenders).

Three LCJPs stated in the national survey that their membership also included a member of the judiciary.

In three of the areas visited, the membership of the LCJP went beyond the core set out above and reflected the aspiration to ensure that all of the agencies that might have an interest in an issue were represented. However, in one area we saw evidence of a tension between that aim and ensuring that members felt that the time they spent participating was productive.

While membership of local partnerships is essentially a matter for local determination, we consider that it should include, as a minimum, those agencies with a direct influence on, and role to play in, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS locally. Partnerships may also benefit from support and challenge from independent members with particular knowledge and expertise, for example, members of the judiciary or academics.

³⁷ Where these were present in the areas inspected, the participants were clear that they could not represent the whole defence community in their area. However they were able to provide insight from their perspective into the operation of the CJS. In one of the areas inspected where there was no defence representative on the LCJP board, there had been discussions about providing payment for attendance.

Impact of changes to probation services

At the time of the inspection, there was uncertainty about how future probation services would be provided and by whom. There had been major changes to personnel; people with local knowledge and experience had moved on and new staff had not yet become established in new roles. We found that these changes had had a significant effect on the participation of these services in each area inspected.

One of the areas that responded to our national survey indicated that the LCJP was chaired by the head of the CRC. However, in the areas we visited it was too soon to assess the extent to which links were being forged between CRCs and other agencies. We were pleased to see that LCJPs were being kept up-to-date with developments and were alert to the potential risks of these major changes. However, we did not see the partnerships leading a systematic approach to managing that risk. Rather, the approach was more reactive.

Perception of the importance of LCJPs

Most LCJP members we spoke to value their involvement with the LCJP. They welcomed the opportunity to keep up-to-date with developments in other agencies and saw the partnership board as a convenient way to meet people with whom they did business.

Level of representation

In the areas inspected, agencies were usually represented by senior officers and interviewees overwhelmingly saw this as important. If a particular agency did not participate at a senior level, this tended to be noted as an issue by other members. Some interviewees told inspectors that this had coincided with the partnership losing focus and momentum. But it was not clear whether steps were being taken to address this.

We were also told consistently that meetings were usually attended by people of sufficient seniority to make decisions and commit resources on behalf of their agency. However, we did not always see this reflected in the minutes of meetings we examined. Moreover, the ability of some senior officers to attend local meetings and commit resources locally was questioned by interviewees, both because officers' time was limited (due to the need to cover a number of local areas) and because decisions about local delivery, changes to resourcing and local organisation were often not in their remit.

Resourcing – business support

We looked at the extent to which partnerships had dedicated support³⁸ and the importance of those arrangements in enabling effective inter-agency working.

Our national survey identified that most areas had some form of business support and co-ordination, either formally established or through informal arrangements with individual agencies – usually the police.

The variety and extent of business support arrangements reflected the different approaches and value placed upon these roles across England and Wales. In the six areas inspected, we saw a wide variation. In one area, support staff were responsible for managing the programmes of work, whereas in others their role was limited to organising and recording meetings. Typically, performance information was collated by one of the agencies, usually the police.

During our fieldwork, we were consistently told by agency representatives that the ability of partner agencies to fund or contribute staff time to co-ordinate LCJP activity was constrained by the pressures on their own core business. The imperative to make savings will continue, as will the constraints on agencies' ability to support collaborative working in this way.

In some areas, the limited nature of business support was seen as a major barrier to progress. In others, it was seen to be less significant. During the course of our fieldwork, we observed that where PCCs had become the chair of the LCJP, business support to the partnership boards was increasingly provided by their staff.

We consider that, in the interests of good governance, as a minimum LCJPs require sufficient dedicated business and analytical support to ensure effective planning, commissioning and co-ordination of partnership work to deliver shared priorities.

³⁸ Business support in this context included any or all of the following functions and roles: recording meetings and other record taking; co-ordinating activity and reviewing progress on agreed actions; data collation and analysis, for the purposes of agreeing priorities and planning; monitoring of performance; drafting partnership plans and policy documents; provision of research; advice on policy and strategy; project and programme management; procurement; and negotiation.

4. Governance/partnership structures

Responses to our national survey showed that partnership structures varied considerably.

Chairing the meetings

All LCJPs who provided a response to our national survey had a formal chairperson. In just over half of partnerships (17 of the 33), this rested with the police although there were a number of other arrangements in place. For example, eight partnerships were chaired by PCCs.

Two of the six partnerships we visited were chaired by the PCC and, in another, the PCC was about to take on this role. In all six, we saw evidence of the growing influence and involvement of the PCCs in the LCJPs.

Use of sub-groups

The national survey responses showed that sub-groups were commonly used as a method for managing priority themes or performance. Some areas had established time-limited 'task and finish' groups to address particular issues.

However, in all areas inspected, we concluded that there was limited connectivity between these groups and the main partnership board. In some cases, this meant that the groups operated in a semi-autonomous manner, undertaking work which was not explicitly governed by the LCJP.

Bilateral and regional arrangements

Individual agencies had set up their own parallel (often bilateral) arrangements to those of the LCJP in all six areas. These arrangements were principally focused on operational aspects of the day to day business of participating agencies. Another approach was to develop work (either bilaterally or more broadly) on a regional basis, with little or no reference to the LCJP.

In one area, we saw examples of both of these approaches: the police and CPS discussed case file management in a bilateral meeting which was not linked to the LCJP, and digitisation was managed at a regional level. In these circumstances there was very limited influence and involvement from the local partnerships, as opposed to individual agencies.

Another concern about regional working was raised in two of the areas we visited. We were told that regionalisation programmes for different agencies were not consistent, with the result that the benefits of regionalisation were not being fully realised.

Areas cited examples of CPS, police, courts and probation services all collaborating across different local areas. This was confusing and potentially added to the demands on agencies by increasing the number of bodies with whom they needed to work.

Two of the areas, London and Dyfed-Powys, had partnership arrangements which were unique to them and reflected their own national status and geography.

In Wales, LCJPs were aligned with police force areas. There was also an All Wales Criminal Justice Board.³⁹ This board does not govern the local partnerships, nor does it duplicate their work. It aims to work with the Welsh government and national agencies to address issues and challenges where a collaborative national approach will benefit local delivery across Wales.

In London, there was one partnership with local arrangements based on London boroughs, although this was changing at the time of the inspection fieldwork as agencies rationalised the way they operate.

This multiplicity of arrangements raised questions about how partners ensured that work was co-ordinated and retained relevance at a local level. Bilateral and regional working may be the most effective approach for some issues, but without explicit consideration of the likely impact at local level and the implications for partners who are not directly engaged, there is a risk of unforeseen consequences and an adverse impact on other agencies and the local communities. There is also the risk that parallel systems begin to operate without reference to each other resulting in confusion and duplication. We consider that there is a compelling case for leaders of local criminal justice agencies collectively, and in conjunction with the PCC, most importantly to review arrangements in their area to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

³⁹ Information about the All Wales Criminal Justice Board is available from:
www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/engagement/partnerships/all-wales-criminal-justice-board/

Working with other local partnerships

The wider partnership landscape is complex and multi-faceted. Traditionally there has been a strong inter-relationship between issues addressed by LCJPs and community safety/crime and disorder reduction partnerships,⁴⁰ particularly in relation to reducing reoffending and domestic abuse. In the six areas we visited, groups had recently been established by PCCs to focus on improving services for victims and witnesses. In some areas, we were told that this had resulted in confusion about who was responsible for what, with the result that the benefits of these programmes might not be fully realised.

At a local level, multi-agency partnerships deal with specific issues such as the safeguarding of vulnerable children and adults and health and wellbeing, all of which have links and interdependencies with the CJS, for example, in relation to the treatment of victims of crime and the care and rehabilitation of offenders.⁴¹ We found some overlap in the membership of these partnerships but little evidence that the work of LCJPs informed the work of related partnerships, or vice-versa.

We consider that in an environment of diminishing resources, it is imperative that there is alignment rather than duplication and clarity rather than confusion. To this end, LCJPs should clarify and, where appropriate, strengthen their links with related partnerships so that work is co-ordinated and mutually reinforcing.

⁴⁰ Partnerships between the emergency services, local authorities, and public, private and voluntary sector agencies that work together to reduce crime, disorder and substance misuse. They were formed as a result of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

⁴¹ This includes local safeguarding children boards, local safeguarding (adult) boards and health and wellbeing boards.

5. Setting and owning priorities

We looked for evidence that criminal justice agencies had a set of shared and agreed priorities, developed in consultation with the community and jointly owned by CJS agencies.

Most common priority themes

Our analysis of the national survey and the findings from our fieldwork showed that the most common priority themes were:

- victims and witnesses;
- efficiency of the justice system;
- digitisation; and
- reducing reoffending.

These themes reflect national priorities.⁴² However, there were two further themes which we were concerned to find LCJPs had not adopted as priorities. These were: vulnerable witnesses and victims; and enforcement of court decisions.

Missing from the list: vulnerable witnesses and victims

As victims and witnesses were identified as a priority, we looked for evidence of a specific focus on vulnerability and inter-agency working to improve outcomes for vulnerable victims and witnesses. Although domestic and sexual abuse (of adults) featured in the work of most of the areas we inspected, we could find no explicit focus by LCJPs on other vulnerable victims, such as child victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. Given the national profile of such crimes,⁴³ and public concern about the treatment of victims (past and present) by the CJS, we found this surprising.

There are a number of factors which may explain this. The CPS records progress on all prosecutions which can be filtered, for example, for particular crime types. This allows closer examination (by partnerships) of the issues relating to domestic violence and hate crime. However at the time of our inspection, similar filters were not attached to child sexual exploitation cases.

⁴² *Transforming the Criminal Justice System Strategy and Action Plan*. Ministry of Justice, November 2012. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-the-criminal-justice-system-strategy-and-action-plan

⁴³ *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

Moreover, interviewees saw child sexual exploitation and abuse as being more appropriately the business of the local safeguarding children boards.⁴⁴ But these are not partnerships on which either the CPS or HMCTS typically sit. Consequently, any discussion about vulnerable victims and witnesses will not benefit from their involvement, knowledge and expertise.

We consider that, in addition to strengthening links with local safeguarding boards, and in the context of wider victim-focused work at national and local level, LCJPs should assess the 'end-to-end' impact of the CJS locally on the most vulnerable victims. The findings from this assessment should lead to a multi-agency action plan to improve the victim experience and ensure swift justice for perpetrators.

Missing from the list: enforcement of court decisions

The prompt and effective enforcement of court decisions goes to the heart of public confidence in the CJS. As such, we consider that it should be very much the business of LCJPs.

Historically, LCJPs were focused on the enforcement of court decisions, such as orders to appear in court, or compliance with community sentences⁴⁵ and the timeliness of recall of offenders on licences.⁴⁶ Surprisingly, while one area had a dedicated group looking at enforcement issues, enforcement was not a priority in any of the six areas we inspected.

⁴⁴ Established under the Children Act 2004, these boards have a statutory duty to co-ordinate how agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

⁴⁵ A community sentence combines punishment with activities carried out in the community. It can include one or more of 12 requirements on an offender and can be given for crimes such as damaging property, benefit fraud and assault. More information is available from: www.gov.uk/community-sentences/overview

⁴⁶ Licences specify the term under which some offenders, who have been released from prison are supervised in the community – such as good behaviour and participation in support programmes. If an offender breaks those conditions they may be sent back to prison. The speed with which this is done, usually by police and probation services can have an important impact on public safety.

How priorities are agreed

We looked for evidence that areas had effective ways of identifying and reconciling any competing strategic priorities of partner agencies in the interests of the efficiency and effectiveness of the system as a whole.

None of the areas inspected had a systematic, evidence-based approach to identifying and establishing shared priorities.

In no area did we find that agencies had looked together in depth at local issues in order to agree, collectively, what needed to be done. Matters such as how well agencies were performing, risks (such as to public safety), or issues for the future (such as changing patterns of crime and the implications of changes to the organisation and delivery of probation services) were not explored in any consistent way.

In two areas visited, there was specific mention of national priorities from the CJB, but in one other area interviewees told inspectors that the board was not relevant to their work. There was consensus that the role and influence of the board in relation to local areas was unclear.

In all six areas, the documents we examined demonstrated alignment between the priorities of the partnerships and those of their constituent agencies. That said, it was apparent that partnerships had adopted the priorities of the constituent agencies rather than the other way round. In other words, there was no sense that partnerships were setting the direction for criminal justice agencies locally.

In all six areas, interviewees expressed concerns about the extent to which any freedom for LCJPs to define and shape local priorities was genuine. This was because much of the business was directed at the national level or through nationally prescribed programmes. This had implications for joint working locally. It restricted their ability to respond flexibly to local circumstances, such as the diversity of local communities and/or the challenges of serving a dispersed rural community. This enhances the risk that the actions of one agency, working to its own aims, could have an adverse impact on another agency and that the public and victims of crime may receive a lesser service as a consequence.

We conclude that there is a pressing need for greater clarity about the scope for local areas to set their own priorities and shape the implementation of national programmes to reflect the local context. We consider that this might usefully be set out in an operating framework which enables local criminal justice agencies to work together more effectively, with the freedom to organise themselves in ways that reflect local circumstances and balance local and national priorities.

In the context of such a framework, we also consider that LCJPs should be encouraged to undertake a rounded local assessment of risk, informed by national threats, risks and harm. Such an assessment need not be bureaucratic or costly. It should include the views and experiences of local people in general and of victims and witnesses in particular. The latter could be drawn from partners' established consultation methods. Taken together, this would provide an evidence base to inform local priority-setting and the work programmes that flow from it.

Consulting on priorities

We looked for evidence of effective ways to consult with the community, particularly victims of crime, about priorities and how they might be provided.

We found no evidence that the LCJPs as a body directly sought the views of the public to inform priority setting. In responses to the national survey, eight areas said that they undertook some form of direct or indirect consultation with the community, usually through the PCC. One of the areas we visited had a dedicated LCJP website, but when inspectors reviewed it much of the information was out-of-date. Three areas that responded to the national survey also said that they had websites.

Individual agencies do have ways that they engage with the public on their particular area of business, for example, the community involvement panels for the CPS and independent advisory groups for police forces. The arrangements adopted by PCCs also provide an opportunity for issues and concerns relating to criminal justice more broadly to be fed into local criminal justice planning. That said, the four PCCs to whom we spoke said that, with the exception of the issues affecting victims of crime, significant areas of business covered by LCJPs had not arisen in their recent consultation processes. Nevertheless, we were told that PCCs were shaping the way that local partnerships were working, based on their outreach into the community in general and to victims of crime in particular.

Do all partners understand and 'own' the priorities?

In four of the six areas visited, we found conflicting evidence from documents and interviews about whether the local criminal justice agencies had clear, shared priorities that were understood by all partners. In one area, agencies had recognised that work was needed to address this and had begun to hold collective discussions to define their approach. In the other three areas, inspectors found that agencies had agreed priorities which were very high level with no tangible link to programmes of work to achieve the desired outcomes. For example, in one area, partners had agreed "crime reduction" as a priority, but there was no collective agreement on how this was to be achieved.

Without an agreed plan, the potential added value of agencies working together cannot be fully realised. At worst, agencies may inadvertently undermine each other if they work on their own priorities and targets in isolation from the other agencies.

In the other two areas, there was greater clarity and consistency about where the partnerships were heading, but links to tangible programmes of activity were still difficult to discern.

6. Performance monitoring and management

Performance management can take many forms but one important test is that it should lead to service improvement. We looked at the current arrangements in local areas and assessed whether these were consistent with the aim of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS.

Previously local areas had operated under a set of national performance measures, supported by a national data set held by the Ministry of Justice criminal justice management information system. These arrangements ceased in 2010 and 2012 respectively. Professional discretion and local flexibility replaced central targets which were perceived to have encouraged silo working and resulted in perverse outcomes.

Currently, information on the performance of the CJS is collected by the individual criminal justice agencies so that they can assess how well they are performing against their own internal performance standards. For example, the CPS has a system for ranking its 13 Areas on various aspects of performance. However, there is no nationally agreed suite of success criteria which transcends the activities of individual agencies to encompass the CJS as a whole. LCJPs are therefore free to agree local arrangements for measuring and managing performance best suited to local circumstances.

In 2013, HMCPSI commented in its report, *Thematic Report on CPS Assurance and Performance*⁴⁷, that:

"Overall...we found effective joint performance and improvement to be slow rather than dynamic. In recent HMCPSI inspections only two out of eight recommendations (25 percent) made around partnership issues were achieved or substantially progressed. Areas need to reinvigorate partner agency meetings and ensure the correct data is being collected, analysed and produced to provide assurance that all partner agencies are working effectively and efficiently together to improve outcomes and services for their communities."

⁴⁷ *Thematic Report on CPS Assurance and Performance*, HMCPSI, November 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/crown-prosecution-service/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2014/04/AP_thm_Nov13_rpt.pdf

Setting goals – measuring success

In the six areas we visited we saw little evidence that partners had reached a shared understanding of what success might look like. They had not agreed criteria against which they could measure it, nor was there evidence that partnerships had in place an annual business planning cycle or process for monitoring progress against priorities.

Performance measures

In the areas inspected, we were told by a number of interviewees that the removal of a national performance framework had been interpreted as a signal that performance management by LCJPs (as opposed to individual agencies) is not as important as it was. In two areas, interviewees recognised the importance of being able to challenge partner agencies to perform well. This was particularly the case where poor performance by one agency would have an adverse impact on others. However, they struggled to find the resources to establish an agreed local set of indicators and data with which to monitor and assess performance and manage the information in a way which was meaningful and relevant to all.

We were told of the practical difficulties agencies faced at a local level in obtaining performance information from one another. In some instances this was because data was no longer routinely available in some agencies (such as the CPS) at local level. Further issues arose because the individual agencies measure different things. As we noted earlier, the police measure current cases (namely cases where the defendant has been charged and the case is proceeding through the courts), whereas the CPS and HMCTS measure finalised cases. This makes meaningful comparison difficult.

Some interviewees welcomed the freedom to set their own priorities and performance targets, but we found little evidence that they had done so. Where local performance frameworks existed, areas had largely selected national performance measures used by individual agencies and which were, therefore, important to those agencies.⁴⁸ We saw little evidence of bespoke local performance measures being agreed by LCJPs or, when they were, that they were robust.

⁴⁸ Where performance frameworks existed, common measures included: file quality and timeliness - numbers/rates; effective trial rate – the percentage of trials that proceed on the date fixed for trial; cracked and ineffective trial rate due to prosecution reasons – these are trials which do not proceed on the date set for the trial; conviction rates; and number of court hearings per case.

Some local areas had attempted to develop their own performance measures to ensure that case files were fit for purpose and delivered on time to meet the deadlines set by the CPS and the courts. In two areas, we found a lack of consensus between the police and the CPS on what would constitute a good case file and when it should be completed. However, one area – Dyfed-Powys – had reached agreement on quality standards which had been incorporated into a mutually agreed checklist. Criminal justice agencies in the area told us that they used these quality standards to monitor and manage cases and that this had contributed to improved performance. At the time of the inspection, Dyfed-Powys had the lowest rate of cracked trials in England and Wales.

We note that the quality of case files is being addressed, both through national standardisation⁴⁹ and through the creation of digital file formats for a range of the most common offences. However, in advance of this, the example above illustrates that in this local area agencies were willing and able to broker local agreements to make the existing arrangements work more effectively on a bilateral basis.

A number of interviewees said that they would welcome the return of a national set of priorities and indicators provided centrally (although this would not necessarily solve the problem of different agencies valuing different things or of data not being broken down at an area level). Interviewees expressed concern that national measures were based on what success looked like from the relatively narrow perspective of one agency. This was not always compatible with the aims of partner agencies and revealed fundamental differences in approach. This may go some way to explain why areas had struggled to establish shared priorities and agree what value they could add by working collaboratively.

An example of such incompatibility, highlighted by the fieldwork, was the CPS measure for improving the conviction rate when compared to the HMCTS measure to reduce number of hearings per case. Both agencies agreed that the ultimate aim was to get it right first time. Nevertheless, in practice, with continuing downward pressure on resources, the impact of restricting the number of hearings – for example, through the introduction of stricter deadlines after which consideration would be given to cases being dismissed, might increase the number of cases that fail to reach a successful conclusion because the prosecution is not ready to present the case in court. A number of agency representatives saw these competing agency perspectives and potentially perverse outcomes, as problematic.

⁴⁹ Since the completion of the fieldwork, a revised national file standard has been introduced setting out what is expected to be received on files submitted by the police to the CPS.

While many people we spoke to welcomed the flexibility to agree priorities and performance measures at a local level, they regarded the absence of a coherent set of shared outcomes for the criminal justice system as a whole, and data which could be easily accessed to measure and monitor performance, to be a major barrier to progress. The call for such a framework to be established at a national level was becoming increasingly evident.⁵⁰ It is one that we support.

Monitoring and managing performance

We looked for evidence of effective arrangements for managing risk and performance. We also examined the extent to which LCJPs considered the impact of their activities on diversity and whether they learned from experience and good practice.

In most cases, performance was managed by and for the individual agencies. Where this occurred, issues were reported to the partnership board by individual agencies in an ad hoc fashion. Data were shown rather than shared.

In two of the areas, performance monitoring was conducted outside the main partnership board in a sub group. There was little evidence that issues of note and concerns were escalated to the board to be resolved.

Some areas had prosecution performance management groups (usually involving police and CPS) whose role it was to monitor performance on the progression of cases from the police through to the courts. Other bilateral arrangements included 'trial issues' meetings, again involving the police and CPS, which examined reasons for cracked and ineffective trials. We were told by interviewees and saw from documents we reviewed, that these arrangements, which focused principally on operational issues, largely operated independently of the LCJP. The work was not directed or given impetus by the partnership but by the individual agencies involved; performance issues were not reviewed at the wider partnership level.

Operational issues should, quite rightly, be dealt with by the agencies concerned. However, where there are enduring performance challenges, and barriers to progress that cannot be resolved at an operational level, we consider that LCJPs have the potential to play an important role in brokering solutions.

We saw another example of performance management in London, where there was a well-established approach to performance management in individual boroughs. Representatives from criminal justice agencies were invited to explain to the board the reasons for poor performance and agree improvement

⁵⁰ Under the new Transforming Summary Justice arrangements, a suite of measures has been introduced, monitoring performance in magistrates' courts which includes data from the CPS, the courts and the Home Office.

plans. Progress was monitored in subsequent meetings, although there was no consensus among those we interviewed that this approach added any value and specific performance improvements were not evident.

In other areas, performance issues persisted despite concerns expressed by partners and evidence of discussions at partnership boards. For example, there was concern in one area about delays in setting dates for trials. This was discussed by the LCJP, but at the time of our inspection there had been no demonstrable improvement.

We found little evidence that LCJPs had taken advantage of the opportunity to agree coherent local arrangements for managing and monitoring performance. We did not see a robust partnership approach to managing performance that resulted in tangible improvements in services in any of the areas we visited.

Risk

We were told in all six fieldwork areas that there were internal systems in place within criminal justice agencies to monitor and manage risk. However, we saw limited collective assessment of risk, either to inform priority setting and direct action, or in the day-to-day work of partnerships. In one area, risk registers were used for discrete projects led by the LCJP relating to the commissioning of services for independent domestic violence advisors (IDVAs) and the introduction of a restorative justice service, but in no area did we see a clear statement of risks shared by the agencies in their day-to-day partnership working and robust ways of managing them.

Code of Practice for Victims of Crime

We looked for explicit reference in performance management systems to the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.⁵¹ Individual agencies told us they were working to ensure that they fulfilled their individual responsibilities under the code and we saw some evidence of this. However, we were disappointed to find that in none of the areas visited was compliance with the code (across the entirety of the victim's journey through the CJS) overseen and managed collaboratively, with agencies reporting to the LCJP and being challenged on their performance. Without a collective understanding of victims' experiences and scrutiny of the service they receive from criminal justice agencies at every stage of their journey, we consider that valuable opportunities to improve outcomes for victims may be missed.

⁵¹ The new Code of Practice for Victims of Crime came into force on 10 December 2013 and aims to improve victims' contact with the criminal justice agency, by providing them with the support and information they need. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf

Diversity and equality considerations

All public bodies share a statutory duty⁵² to treat people with whom they come into contact fairly and with respect. In terms of offenders, agencies such as the police are concerned to determine whether, for example, in the number of arrests they make, there is disproportionate impact on particular groups of people. This information can be used to check whether there is bias, intended or not, on the part of officers and lead to changes, for example, to officer training to help address this.

In all six LCJP areas, agency representatives acknowledged that the extent to which diversity and equality were taken into account in partnership priority-setting, or featured in day-to-day challenge between agencies was limited. That is not to say that the needs of the whole community were not important to criminal justice agencies in the way that they worked or, in the way that services for victims of crime were being developed.

However, the absence of a cross-agency perspective is, at the very least, a missed opportunity and potentially a serious gap in the agencies' understanding about the extent and impact of disproportionality in the CJS locally.

Learning from experience/good practice

We looked for evidence that the partnerships (as opposed to individual agencies) had learned from experience or adopted good practice from elsewhere and taken it into account in developing their priorities and plans. We heard some, albeit limited, references by local agencies to national or local reports which had shaped and influenced their work. For example, in relation to improving the effectiveness of prosecutions and in particular the quality of evidence gathering and preparation, a joint inspection report, *Stop the Drift 2 – A Continuing Focus on 21st Century Criminal Justice*, published in 2013⁵³ was referred to in two areas as having influenced local activity.

⁵² Under the Equality Act 2010. Available from: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

⁵³ *Stop the Drift 2 – A Continuing Focus on 21st Century Criminal Justice*, a joint review by HMIC and HMCPSI. HMIC, 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/media/stop-the-drift-2-03062013.pdf

Although we also saw evidence that some LCJPs received regular updates from individual agencies (for example, about reorganisation) this tended to be for information rather than discussion or action. The extent to which there was an explicit shared approach to learning from each other was limited. That is not to say that there was not an appetite to learn. A number of interviewees (particularly chairs of LCJPs and business support staff) were keen to learn and improve. Some expressed frustration that, in their view, there was neither a body of knowledge on 'what works' to draw on nor a readily available source of expertise to help them. Inspectors note however that the Ministry of Justice routinely makes available information, particularly about progress with digitisation in local areas, through the Police On-Line Knowledge Area.⁵⁴

Where there was collaboration between local areas, such as in Durham and Cleveland, or at regional level, for example, in the East Midlands (Northamptonshire), there was potential to share information and expertise. Nevertheless, we saw little evidence of shared learning having an impact in these areas and note that in the latter case joint regional plans were not routinely shared with local partnerships.

Overall, this lack of knowledge transfer has implications for the commission and design of services and for the efficient use of resources. For example, there is an abundance of data from local areas which explains the reasons why witnesses fail to attend court. If these were routinely shared and systematically scrutinised, criminal justice agencies could make swifter progress to improve services and save money and effort by eliminating duplication and re-directing efforts.

⁵⁴ Referred to as POLKA, this is a closed, online facility for the exchange of information and knowledge for which there is a specific requirement for local criminal justice partners.

7. Impact: effective partnership working and visibility

In the six areas visited, we looked for evidence that: the LCJP and its constituent parts formed a coherent whole; that issues were escalated to the main partnership board when they could not be resolved elsewhere; and that there were systems for co-ordinating activity and holding agencies to account.

Were significant issues raised formally with senior leaders at a partnership board?

We saw limited evidence of significant issues being raised formally with senior leaders at a partnership board. Interviewees reported that if there were contentious inter-agency issues, for example, when the action of one agency was having an adverse impact on another, they would be handled outside the partnership through bilateral discussion between the agencies concerned.

There are circumstances where this will be both appropriate and expeditious, particularly where more operational matters are concerned. However, local leaders need to be mindful of the potential risk that decisions taken bilaterally, namely without exposure to the wider partnership, may result in adverse consequences for other agencies, and missed opportunities for service improvement.

Using boards to consult partners before decisions made

Another test of partnership maturity, on which we sought evidence, was the extent to which the agencies used their partnership board as a way to consult partners before taking decisions about changes to practice or the allocation of resources. As previously noted, discussions in this forum could enable solutions to be found to enhance opportunities for service improvement and minimise any potential negative impact. We saw few examples of partners using their position on the board to influence the actions of other agencies.

More commonly, we did see examples of decisions taken by individual agencies that had consequences for other agencies on which those agencies had little or no influence. These included allocation of charging decisions in certain cases to lawyers located remotely in regional units, closure of courts and allocation of cases to particular courts. For example, in two areas, interviewees spoke of their concern at HMCTS's reluctance to allocate fewer courts to deal with remand cases, which would have enabled other agencies to operate more efficiently; in another area, concern was expressed about victims and witnesses having to travel long distances when particular types of cases, such as those

involving domestic abuse, were moved from one court to another; in another, we were told of an increase in court time which had been made possible because HMCTS nationally had made an in-year additional allocation of funding. Other agencies in the area had not been informed of this decision and were unable to match the resources to support additional hearings.

This combination, of the absence of prior communication and resource imbalance between the agencies, indicates that local partnerships were marginal to decisions about how and where resources were allocated by constituent agencies. Early communication at a local level between the agencies could have mitigated these outcomes.

LCJP influence on decisions about scheduling cases

This issue was raised consistently with us by a number of those we spoke to during the inspection. Scheduling decisions fall to the judiciary and magistracy and are conducted through separate fora – often called judicial business groups. We were told that decisions about when and where cases were heard had implications for the efficiency and effectiveness of the system and for agencies such as the police and CPS who were often present at court. However, we were also given a contrasting view that in order to ensure that decisions of this nature are protected from any inappropriate influence, these need to be within the province of the independent judiciary alone. This ensures that there is no possible undue influence on where a case is heard and by whom.

The government's White Paper, *Swift and Sure Justice: the Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*, published in October 2012⁵⁵, made the distinction between judicial decisions in relation to cases and the administration of justice. Building on this distinction, we believe that there is considerable scope to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the local administration of justice while ensuring that the distinction is maintained. This might be achieved, for example, by further increasing the use of video links and examining the potential for shared use of public buildings other than magistrates' courts for hearings in remote areas.

⁵⁵ *Swift and Sure Justice: the Government's Plans for Reform of the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, July 2012. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/217328/swift-and-sure-justice.pdf

Tackling practical challenges

In Durham and Cleveland, we found an example of partners working together to deal with a backlog of cases. This involved HMCTS agreeing a moratorium on trials for six weeks to allow the CPS to catch up with the review work on cases and agree changes to processes to avoid a backlog building up again. We were told that this was possible because of the strength of the relationships between the lead officers in the respective local agencies.

There were other examples of agencies working together to tackle practical challenges associated with specific projects, such as in relation to restorative justice. In Kent, LCJP members had jointly commissioned a restorative justice service. However, we found no evidence that LCJPs in the other areas inspected had established a role in overseeing the operation of restorative justice locally, or had co-commissioned restorative justice services.

These examples illustrate that LCJPs can and do work constructively to solve problems and take forward programmes of work. However, it appeared to us that this was the exception rather than the rule.

Visibility of LCJPs to staff in local agencies

We assessed the extent to which the priorities of LCJPs were visible and understood as shared priorities by staff within the participating agencies at the operational level. We also sought to understand the extent to which the partnerships were viewed by staff as leading multi-agency working on criminal justice. Although inspectors saw examples of partnership priorities being taken forward through discrete programmes of work in the individual agencies, and staff we spoke to in most areas knew of the existence of the LCJP, they did not recognise it as a body with the authority and influence to make things happen.

Visibility of LCJPs to the public

Accountability and transparency to the public have long been considered important for establishing and maintaining public confidence in the CJS. Public confidence is important because it can shape the perceived legitimacy of the system and increase public engagement to help prevent crime. The system depends on gaining the co-operation of victims and members of the public who participate as witnesses and jurors.

Levels of public confidence in criminal justice agencies are affected by personal experience and information from a range of sources. Research indicates that the public tend to be less interested in the mechanics of partnership working and more interested in the outcomes.⁵⁶

In none of the areas visited did we see evidence that LCJPs were visible to the communities they served. We mention above that LCJPs did not appear to have a recognisable presence in the public domain. Activity and outcomes relating to criminal justice featured in some police and crime plans and almost a third of respondents to our national survey said they were included on PCC websites, and those of police or other agencies. However, the extent to which LCJPs directly reported outcomes to the public was very limited. This did not appear to us to be in keeping with the government's ambition for a transparent and responsive CJS.⁵⁷

Transparency is essential if the public is to hold criminal justice agencies to account, providing the necessary oversight to ensure that the rights of people involved in the criminal justice process are upheld and the public interest is protected. Although national data are published regularly by the Ministry of Justice,⁵⁸ we consider that LCJPs could do much more to provide the communities they serve with a rounded view of the health of the system locally.

⁵⁶ *Exploring public confidence in the police and local councils in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, Research Report 50*, Charlton M, Morton S and Ipsos MORI, Home Office, 2011. Available from:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115840/horr50-key-implications.pdf

⁵⁷ As set out in *Transforming the CJS: A Strategy and Action Plan for the Criminal Justice System*, Ministry of Justice, June 2013. Available from:
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209659/transforming-cjs-2013.pdf

8. Impact: progress against priorities

The test of any partnership arrangement is that agencies achieve better outcomes by working collaboratively. In the case of local criminal justice agencies, this should relate directly to the priorities they agree to work on together to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS. In Chapter 6, we discussed performance measures, management and improvement. In this chapter we discuss the wider impact of local partnerships.

We saw projects that had provided services or technical improvements, including through digitisation. Examples are set out below. However, these improvements were largely achieved by individual agencies working alone or bilaterally, sometimes at a regional level, often providing national programmes.

Efficiency of the CJS

Improving the efficiency of the CJS was a priority theme in all the areas we inspected. Work included performance in relation to case progression and management; system change and digitisation. (We address use of resources, system change and digitisation in more detail below.)

We sought evidence of the impact of local partnership activity on the use of resources. In particular we looked for evidence that LCJPs had undertaken cost benefit analyses of activity. By that we mean an explicit assessment of the full costs of undertaking an activity and the benefits that could be realised, such as savings and improvements to services. This exercise would inform decisions about whether to proceed or continue with an activity and enable comparison between different approaches.

We found some evidence that this approach took place for small discrete projects, such as the restorative justice project in Kent and some digitisation projects. Inspectors saw examples where savings had been made through shared support functions (in Durham and Cleveland) and the co-location of staff in some programmes such as integrated offender management (IOM) in Wales.

In several LCJPs, interviewees expressed an appetite to transform the way agencies worked together. Some PCCs we interviewed were particularly keen to innovate, but expressed frustration that the national basis of the CPS and HMCTS inhibited local flexibility.

Progress against national programmes

We mentioned earlier a number of national programmes under the aegis of the Criminal Justice Board which included system change through TSJ. Those interviewed who were involved in its implementation viewed this programme positively and were committed to making progress. However, at the time of the

inspection the programme was at a very early stage of development. Consequently, it was too soon to assess the role or impact of LCJPs on local implementation.

The Early Guilty Plea scheme,⁵⁹ led by the judiciary, had also been embraced at a local level. Analysis of performance for the areas inspected showed that this was reducing the number of hearings per case overall.⁶⁰ However, it was unclear what role, if any, LCJPs had played in its implementation.

Other changes tended to be linked to the programmes of individual agencies, for example the regionalisation of the CPS and associated changes to the way that cases were allocated for charging decisions. Although areas expressed concern that a valuable local perspective was being lost as regionalisation gained pace, at the time of the inspection there was no evidence that this had had an adverse impact on performance.

Digitisation

In all the areas visited, there was enthusiasm for the benefits that digitisation could bring, including removing the necessity and cost of maintaining parallel paper-based systems. Areas had very different starting points and partners were striving to overcome different issues and obstacles. In two areas, the PCC told us that they were considering providing funding to improve the local IT infrastructure. In London and Kent, which we were told had already benefited from significant investment in IT by local agencies, progress had been made with extending the implementation of digital files for overnight remand cases which removed duplication, removing the need subsequently to digitise these cases and led to increased efficiency. LCJPs in both areas had prioritised the work and overcome barriers to implementation which we understand other areas found challenging. This represents an important step towards a fully digital CJS. We were told that effective partnership working had been essential to successful implementation.

In other areas it was clearer that the leadership and drive for digitisation, while supported by LCJPs, did not rest with them. Local implementation teams had been set up, often at regional level, to manage the changes needed at various stages of the programme.

⁵⁹ As set out in *Transforming the CJS: Strategy and Action Plan – Implementation Update*, Ministry of Justice, June 2014. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-the-criminal-justice-system-strategy-and-action-plan

⁶⁰ Performance data on hearings per case on cases subject to early guilty plea are typically half that when compared with those which are contested. The data is available from: <http://open.justice.gov.uk/courts/criminal-cases/>

Where success has been achieved, it has occurred against a backdrop of incompatible IT systems which make collaboration more difficult, although most police forces have some form of digital interface with the CPS which enables information inputted by the police automatically to populate the CPS case management system. Nationally, the agencies are working on a joint solution, namely the common platform (which uses Cloud technology to enable the police to post, and agencies to download, relevant case data in accordance with their agreed authorisation levels). This programme is due to go live in 2016-17. However the fact that local areas have made progress in advance of this is encouraging.

Victims and witnesses (with special focus on vulnerable victims)

Victims and witnesses were a priority for all 33 LCJPs that responded to our national survey, including the six areas we visited. Interviewees were concerned to understand the needs of victims and committed to making processes and services work well for victims and witnesses.

This inspection took place as responsibility for commissioning the majority of emotional and practical support services for victims of crime, including victims of domestic abuse and restorative justice, passed to PCCs. In all the areas visited, work was under way to assess need and design local services. For example, in Northamptonshire a new victim and witness service was launched in October 2014 following extensive consultation and evidence-gathering exercises.

In advance of local commissioning of these services by the PCC, Kent LCJP had co-commissioned both IDVAs and restorative justice services. These were good examples of partners collectively identifying a need and working together to agree a solution. At the time of the inspection, the LCJP was in discussion with the PCC to establish how these arrangements would complement the PCC's work in preparation for commissioning wider victims services.

While the responsibility for local commissioning of victim services was moving to the PCC, victim (and witness) care will remain a central and enduring concern for criminal justice agencies, both individually and collectively. In four of the areas, work to improve outcomes for victims and witnesses was channelled through a working group of the LCJP, often focusing on domestic violence. Those groups analysed barriers to the participation of victims and witnesses in the CJS. Topics identified included the care of survivors of domestic abuse, their treatment in court and the way that they gave evidence throughout the prosecution process. Progress varied across areas inspected, often consisting of quite small but nevertheless significant shifts in working practices.

In Durham and Cleveland, partners were developing a new way to collect information from victims of crime which better enabled their experience and

concerns to be addressed. We were told that this had improved the capture of information about offenders who were about to be bailed, or released from prison, so that victims could be better forewarned and supported.

In two of the areas, proposals were being developed to introduce video links that would allow vulnerable victims to give evidence to the court remotely. This initiative was being driven nationally and we saw real enthusiasm to bring about these changes at a local level.

However, inspectors were concerned that in one area, partners had struggled to reach agreement on quite fundamental matters, including special measures for vulnerable witnesses in court. An example was the provision of screens to shield vulnerable victims and witnesses while giving evidence and separate entrances to the court room to help avoid contact with the defendant and his or her family and associates.

Overall, progress made by partnerships to improve services for victims demonstrated the real benefits of collaborative working.

Reducing reoffending

We were told consistently by those interviewed that uncertainties surrounding transforming rehabilitation were inhibiting progress on reducing reoffending, although at the time of the inspection we did not find examples to illustrate this. The most common partnership-led activity to reduce reoffending was oversight of IOM schemes which involve partner agencies working together to identify and manage the most persistent and problematic offenders.

We saw a good deal of confusion about where the responsibility for IOM rested locally and where it was owned and driven. Interviewees struggled to explain to inspectors what was being done by the LCJP, as distinct from other groups such as the community safety partnership.

Some restorative justice approaches have been shown to benefit offenders and reduce re-offending. In three areas inspected, restorative justice was seen potentially as an early, preventive, intervention which could reduce demand on the CJS.

Notwithstanding the issue of ownership, we did see real interest and enthusiasm from LCJP boards for testing the potential of restorative justice to deliver efficiency, savings and improved outcomes for both victims and offenders.

9. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, we saw little evidence that LCJPs were visible, accountable and influential bodies leading work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS at local level and achieving tangible results.

In making this assessment, we do not underestimate the scale of the challenge. LCJPs are but one element of a complex, multi-layered landscape of local and regional partnerships and service provision arrangements. They operate in a mixed economy of national and regional programmes, where their freedom to adapt to local need is limited.

These are fundamental challenges, which we were told local partnership agencies have limited scope or influence to address. That said, we consider that some processes and products which are within their gift and might alleviate these problems, are not in place. These include a common purpose, shared aims, priorities and success criteria, as well as the means to monitor and measure performance meaningfully and collectively.

In light of these conclusions, and in the absence of the prospect of major structural reform, lack of co-terminosity and the tension between national and local accountabilities will be persistent and enduring challenges for local criminal justice agencies.

Nonetheless, in an age of austerity, the public would rightly expect agencies to work together to reduce costs and improve criminal justice outcomes. To this end, we think that there is a compelling case for criminal justice agencies to come together, with a common purpose and specific aims, in an operating framework that is relevant and visible, which delivers justice locally. In view of developments over the past five years, including the altered structure and governance arrangements of the main criminal justice agencies and the changing nature of crime, we consider that now is an opportune time to review and refresh the local and national criminal justice landscape and provide a new vision for partnership working.

We therefore recommend that steps are taken by the leaders of the criminal justice agencies to provide greater clarity and direction, pace and purpose to inter-agency working at local, regional and national level.

At the national level:

We recommend that, as a priority, the Criminal Justice Board establishes an operating framework that enables local criminal justice agencies to work together more effectively, with the freedom to organise in ways that reflect local circumstances and local and national priorities.

As a minimum, the framework should:

- define the scope for local areas to adapt nationally-determined plans and programmes to meet local need;
- promote innovation, through the offer of greater local freedoms and flexibility for the most promising approaches;
- establish a forum for local areas collectively to highlight barriers and tensions in the system which inhibit the provision of services;
- provide for the identification and dissemination of good practice;
- enable access to a national suite of core data against which all local areas can monitor progress and measure success. This should relate to the desired outcomes for the CJS as a whole and be readily understood and accessible to the public; and
- provide information and advice to local areas on trends, risks and emerging threats relating to particular crimes requiring an enhanced response. This might be set out in a strategic criminal justice requirement (akin to the Strategic Policing Requirement) to which all LCJPs must have regard in setting their local priorities.

At the local level:

We recommend that, within six months of the Criminal Justice Board establishing the operating framework, leaders of local criminal justice agencies acting together, and in co-operation with the PCC, should undertake a fundamental review of local partnership arrangements to assess whether they are fit for purpose to lead improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of the CJS at local level.

As a minimum, the review should include:

- an assessment of the health of the CJS locally, including its impact on victims and witnesses, especially the most vulnerable and the extent to which perpetrators can expect swift justice;
- a local assessment of risk (informed by national threats, risks and harm) and the views and experiences of the public to inform local priority setting;
- the business and analytical support required for effective partnership planning, commissioning and co-ordination; and
- identification and clarification of links with related partnerships so that work is co-ordinated and mutually reinforcing.

The findings from this review should result in:

- a set of agreed local collaborative arrangements which have been refreshed and reinvigorated, which are visible to the public and which ensure that the right issue is tackled at the right level by the right agencies;
- an evidence-based, multi-agency action plan, with shared priorities, clear objectives and measurable outcomes which should be updated annually; and
- an agreed system for reporting progress nationally and to the public.

Glossary

business support	functions in an organisation such as IT, finance, procurement, human resources and training
centralisation	process by which an organisation concentrates its activities, particularly those regarding planning, decision-making and business support, within a particular location (most commonly within the head office or the centre of the organisation)
child	person under the age of 18
CJB	Criminal Justice Board
CJS	criminal justice system
Code of Practice for Victims of Crime	established under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004; places obligations on organisations providing services within the criminal justice system (including the police) to provide a minimum level of service to victims of criminal conduct
collaboration	arrangement under which two or more parties work together in the interests of their greater efficiency or effectiveness in order to achieve common or complementary objectives; collaboration arrangements extend to co-operation between police forces and with other entities in the public, private and voluntary sectors
commissioning of services	in the context of this report, a process by which services are procured and managed by which the purchaser sets outcomes to be achieved rather than prescribing in detail the way that services are delivered
common platform	in the context of this report, a set of information about the operation of the criminal justice system which is shared by all agencies and is readily accessed by them in a digital format

community rehabilitation companies	responsible, via a government-awarded contract, for the provision of all supervision and rehabilitation services for low to medium risk offenders in a geographical area (known as a contract package area)
community safety partnerships	see crime and disorder partnerships
coterminous	in the context of this report, organisations which are structured to cover the same geographical areas as other organisations so that they are congruent – coinciding exactly
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
crime and disorder partnerships	comprises local partner agencies with the statutory duty to develop and implement joint plans to: reduce crime and disorder (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment); combat the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and reduce re-offending
Criminal Justice Board	national body whose purpose is to set priorities and provide leadership for the criminal justice system; includes representatives of criminal justice agencies and is chaired by a government minister
criminal justice system	collective term to describe the administration of justice in England and Wales; the means by which crime is investigated and detected where evidence relating to crime is gathered and presented; the guilt of alleged offenders assessed; and punishment and redress are delivered in accordance with the law and the expectations of the public
Crown Prosecution Service	principal prosecuting authority in England and Wales responsible for prosecuting criminal cases investigated by the police and other investigating bodies, for advising the police on cases for possible prosecution, reviewing cases submitted by the police, determining any charges in more serious or complex cases, preparing cases for court, and presenting cases at court
digitisation	conversion of information into a digital form so that it

	can be managed and disseminated more easily; also refers to the development of technology and processes which facilitate those actions
diversity	political and social policy of promoting fair treatment of people of different backgrounds or personal characteristics; the Equality Act 2010 specifies nine protected characteristics in this regard: gender; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; and sex and sexual orientation
Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service	administers the criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in England and Wales; also administers non-devolved tribunals in Scotland
he/him/his/she/her	use of the masculine gender includes the feminine, and vice versa, unless the context otherwise requires
IDVA	independent domestic violence advocate
independent domestic violence advocate	specialist support worker employed to assist and advise victims of domestic violence personally in connection with the case in which they are a witness in court
integrated offender management	approach adopted by different public sector organisations (including local authorities, the police and probation services) who work together to manage persistent offenders who commit high levels of crime or cause damage and nuisance to communities
ineffective trial	one that does not proceed to a conclusion on the day planned; can be for a variety of reasons (such as prosecution evidence not being ready) and may lead to a new date being set
IOM	integrated offender management
local safeguarding children board	board set up in each local authority area to develop local safeguarding policy and procedure, co-ordinate how agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and ensure that safeguarding arrangements are effective; established under the Children Act 2004
magistrates bench	grouping of the leading magistrates in a geographical area – usually a county

Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime	statutory body established by section 3 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, to hold the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service to account and to secure the maintenance, efficiency and effectiveness of the Metropolitan Police Service
MOPAC	Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime
National Police Chiefs' Council	organisation which brings together 43 operationally independent and locally accountable chief constables and their chief officer teams to co-ordinate national operational policing; works closely with the College of Policing, which is responsible for developing professional standards, to develop national approaches on issues such as finance, technology and human resources; replaced the Association of Chief Police Officers on 1 April 2015
National Probation Service	public sector provider of supervision and rehabilitation services for high risk offenders; responsible for preparing pre-sentence reports, managing approved premises for offenders, assessing offenders in prison and preparing them for release, supervising offenders in the community to ensure they meet the sentencing requirements ordered by the courts and prioritising the wellbeing of victims of violent and sexual offences committed by those serving sentences of 12 months or more or detained as mental health patients
partner agencies	public sector entities, such as those concerned with health, education, social services , the criminal justice system and the management of offenders, which work together to attain their common or complementary objectives
partnership	co-operative arrangement between two or more organisations, from any sector, who share responsibility and undertake to use their respective powers and resources to try to achieve a specified common objective
PCC	police and crime commissioner

performance management	actions by managers which are intended to ensure that goals are being met consistently in an effective and efficient manner; it can focus on the performance of an organisation, a department, employee, or the processes to build a service
police and crime plan	prepared by the police and crime commissioner (or other local policing body) under section 7, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011; sets out his police and crime objectives, the policing which the police force is to provide, the financial and other resources which the police and crime commissioner will provide to the chief constable, the means by which the chief constable will report to the police and crime commissioner on the provision of policing, the means by which the chief constable's performance will be measured and the crime and disorder reduction grants which the police and crime commissioner is to make and the conditions to which such grants are to be made; the police and crime commissioner's police and crime objectives are his objectives for the policing of the area, the reduction in crime and disorder in the area and the discharge by the police force of its national or international functions; under section 8, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, police and crime commissioners and chief officers must have regard to the relevant police and crime plan when exercising their functions; the Secretary of State for the Home Department may give guidance about how that duty is to be complied with
police and crime commissioner	elected entity for a police area, established under section 1, Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, responsible for securing the maintenance of the police force for that area and securing that the police force is efficient and effective; holds the relevant chief constable to account for the policing of the area; establishes the budget and police and crime plan for the police force; appoints and may, after due process, remove the chief constable from office
Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011	legislation which among other things established police and crime commissioners and set out their duties and responsibilities

restorative justice	process by which victims and offenders communicate with each other (such as through a facilitated meeting) with the aim of reducing the impact of harm caused by the offence
risk assessment	process to assist in decision-making on appropriate levels of intervention based on expected or forecast levels of harm to individuals, the public, offenders, or property
transforming rehabilitation	a reform programme designed to change the way offenders are managed in the community; aims to bring down reoffending rates while continuing to protect the public
transforming summary justice	criminal justice system-wide initiative to reduce delays in the magistrates' courts, hold fewer hearings per case and increase the number of trials that go ahead the first time that they are listed
Victim Support	independent charity supporting victims and witnesses of crime committed in England and Wales; it was set up almost 40 years ago and has grown to become the oldest and largest victims' organisation in the world; Victim Support offers assistance to more than a million victims of crime each year and works closely with the police and other institutions and entities in the criminal justice system
victim support	services which enable and support victims of crime to participate in the criminal justice system; includes information, advice and care and can be provided by a number of organisations including the police and voluntary organisations
vulnerability	condition of a person who is in need of special care, support or protection because of age, disability or risk of abuse or neglect

Annex A – Inspection terms of reference

The Criminal Justice Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16 identifies a new area of work: 'Improving the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System'.⁶¹ This paper details the methodology for the joint thematic inspection of local criminal justice agencies in England and Wales.

The focus of this inspection is how local criminal justice inter-agency work is led, managed and supported and the effectiveness of partnerships in bringing about change and innovation to reduce costs and improve outcomes for the public.

Overall aims of the inspection

To review the effectiveness of local criminal justice agencies⁶² in driving improvement in the CJS in localities with a particular focus on:

- (a) driving out waste and reducing bureaucracy through digitisation;
- (b) meeting the needs of victims and witnesses, especially the most vulnerable; and
- (c) reducing reoffending / transforming rehabilitation.

To identify innovative, good and promising practice, enablers and barriers to effective and efficient working and make recommendations for improvement.

Expectations/criteria

Aim 1: To review the effectiveness of local criminal justice agencies in driving improvement in the CJS in localities with a particular focus on (a) driving out waste and reducing bureaucracy through digitisation; (b) meeting the needs of victims and witnesses, especially the most vulnerable; and (c) reducing reoffending / transforming rehabilitation.

⁶¹This inspection is part of the criminal justice joint inspection programme relating to the area of work– 'Driving Out Waste in the Criminal Justice System'. Available from: *Joint Inspection Business Plan 2014-16*. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2014/02/CJJI_BusinessPlan_2014-16.pdf

⁶² The police, Crown Prosecution Service, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service, Probation Services, Youth Offending Services and Prisons.

General expectation	Specific expectation
<p>1.1 Leadership and priorities</p> <p>The area has a set of shared, agreed priorities which developed in consultation with the community are jointly owned by CJS agencies.</p>	<p>1.1.1 All relevant agencies, including the CPS, HMCTS, police, probation providers, youth offending services, prison services and victim services collaborate at a strategic level.</p> <p>1.1.2. Agencies are represented by those who have the authority to make decisions and, if necessary, to commit resources.</p> <p>1.1.3. Priorities are agreed, understood and jointly owned by partner agencies at strategic and operational levels.</p> <p>1.1.4 Priorities are drawn from a comprehensive strategic assessment and evidence base.</p> <p>1.1.5 Priorities have clear measures of success and costs and benefits are evidenced and understood.</p> <p>1.1.6 The area has effective ways of identifying and reconciling competing strategic priorities of the individual agencies to ensure that the efficiency and effectiveness of the system as a whole is paramount.</p> <p>1.1.7 Priorities are constructed in collaboration with other community safety partners and reflected in Police and Crime Plans for the local area.</p> <p>1.1.8 Priorities reflect the need to drive continuous improvement including, through increased digitisation, enhancing outcomes for victims of crime and reducing reoffending including through transforming rehabilitation.</p> <p>1.1.9 There are effective mechanisms, which are mindful of equality and diversity, to consult with the community, particularly victims of crime, about priorities and how they might be delivered.</p>

<p>1.2 Governance and systems</p> <p>The area has effective governance and accountability for delivery of activities.</p>	<p>1.2.1 There is a tangible programme of activity aimed at driving change and innovation to reduce costs and improve outcomes for the public and, in particular, victims of crime.</p> <p>1.2.2 Governance and delivery plans reflect the reciprocal statutory duty on PCCs and named criminal justice bodies to make arrangements (so far as it is appropriate to do so) for the exercise of functions so as to provide an efficient and effective criminal justice system.</p> <p>1.2.3 There are effective arrangements for strategic oversight and delivery of activities including, managing risk, performance monitoring and management particularly for (a) digitisation, (b) improving services for victim and witnesses, especially the vulnerable and (c) reducing reoffending/transforming rehabilitation.</p> <p>1.2.4 The performance framework(s) adopted is/are robust and comprehensive and take(s) account of the duty of those who provide criminal justice services to comply with the Victim's Code.</p> <p>1.2.5 The impacts of operational decisions taken by individual agencies are considered, so that there are common approaches aimed at reducing cost across the CJS.⁶³</p> <p>1.2.6 Agencies have effective ways of identifying and resolving conflicting operational priorities⁶⁴ with other agencies.</p>
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⁶³ In the joint inspection reports, *Stop the Drift 2* and *Getting Cases Ready for Court*, it was found that the decisions and working practices of one agency could result in unintended consequences for other agencies, thereby increasing their time and cost to deal with those decisions. *Stop the Drift 2: A Continuing Focus on 21st Century Criminal Justice (a joint review by HMIC and HMCPSI)*. HMIC, June 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/media/stop-the-drift-2-03062013.pdf and *Getting cases ready for court: A joint review of the quality of prosecution of case files by HMIC and HMCPSI*. HMIC, July 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/media/getting-cases-ready-for-court.pdf

⁶⁴ For example, the need for local police to produce timely and high quality prosecution case files and maintain visibility in neighbourhoods.

	<p>1.2.7 Governance and delivery mechanisms are efficiently managed and there is sufficient resource for them to be effectively co-ordinated.</p> <p>1.2.8 There is dialogue with the judiciary, the defence community and other organisations involved in the delivery of justice, such as private providers of justice services, about the programme of improvements and, where appropriate, to foster co-operation/co-working on aspects of it.</p>
<p>1.3 Impact</p> <p>The area can demonstrate positive, tangible impact of inter-agency working.</p>	<p>1.3.1. The area can provide good examples of collaborative working which have led to tangible benefits to the community in general, or victims and witnesses in particular.</p> <p>1.3.2. It is clear where some of those benefits derive from digitisation.</p> <p>1.3.3 The area can show that in delivering improved outcomes, it has taken into account the costs of delivery across the agencies, thus ensuring that a full cost benefit analysis has been undertaken.</p> <p>1.3.4. The area can demonstrate that, through shared services or resources it is providing value for money to the public.</p> <p>1.3.5. The area can demonstrate that it has learned lessons from previous inspections/audits/ reviews and implemented change with positive results.</p> <p>1.3.6 There are effective mechanisms for keeping the community informed of progress towards achieving outcomes.</p> <p>1.3.7. There is effective monitoring of the impact of activities to inform future priority setting and delivery.</p>

Aim 2: To identify innovative, good and promising practice, enablers and barriers to effective and efficient working and make recommendations for improvement.

General expectation	Specific expectation
2.1. The area can demonstrate improved performance, increased efficiency and/or outcomes as a result of its partnership working.	2.1.1. Specific examples provided under paragraph 1.3. above which are transferable to other areas as good practice.
2.2. The area has identified barriers and resistance to change and ways of overcoming those barriers.	<p>2.2.1 The area has identified barriers and managed these through an effective risk management/problem solving on a multi-agency basis in a manner which is transferable to other areas.</p> <p>2.2.2 The area has identified barriers to effective working which lie outside the remit of local partners and can demonstrate the benefit that change at a regional/national level would bring.</p>
2.3 The area has highlighted areas of additional support/information/guidance which would enhance effective working.	<p>2.3.1 The area has highlighted deficiencies in support, locally, which if rectified could lead to more effective practice.</p> <p>2.3.2 The area has identified examples of support and guidance which, if provided to all local areas could enhance effective working across partnerships.</p>

Annex B – Minimum expectations

In response to requests from LCJB/Ps the Criminal Justice Board commissioned a piece of work to articulate how it expected local partnerships to operate. A number of LCJB/P business managers, chairs, members and representatives from CJS agencies were engaged in developing the minimum expectations on the next pages.

The expectations cover how LCJB/Ps should generally operate including planning, delivery and evaluation and are accompanied by illustrative examples of the type of behaviour that would demonstrate that the expectations are being met.

Effective LCJB/Ps will be comprised of CJS leaders who:	Partnerships that are meeting these expectations will have/be:
<p>Ensure that the right people are around the table to enable decision-making and action to be taken.</p>	<p>Representatives from all of the key CJS Agencies and Organisations including the police, CPS, HMCTS, probation providers, youth offending services, Her Majesty's Prison Service and victim services.</p> <p>Members with the understanding of the extent of the delivery challenges.</p> <p>Members with the authority to take decisions and if necessary the ability to commit resources to a task.</p>
<p>Work openly and collaboratively with all important stakeholders in the local CJS.</p>	<p>Open, mature and regular dialogue with the PCC and/or their office.</p> <p>Proactive engagement with the judiciary and will keep them informed and consulted about changes to the local CJS.</p> <p>Effective ways of having regular and reliable dialogue with private organisations involved in the delivery of justice services.</p> <p>A means of involving the defence community.</p> <p>Strong co-operative links to non-CJS agencies and organisations, such as local authorities, community safety partnerships and health stakeholders, whose activities affect delivery of justice services.</p>
<p>Ensure that the views of service users- victims and witnesses and the general public- are fed into prioritisation, planning and delivery discussions.</p>	<p>An expectation on members that their plans will consider a range of service users at all times.</p> <p>Ensuring that the PCCs experience of working with victims and witnesses is brought out in discussions.</p> <p>Established ways of engaging directly with victims and witnesses or their representatives.</p>

Operating

	<p>Work towards shared CJS outcomes to improve the overall CJS for the areas they serve.</p>	<p>A culture of “no surprises” for members and will work to foster a belief that members are all on the same side.</p> <p>Members that operate with a commitment to openness and building trust.</p> <p>Members that think and work collegially outside the boundaries of their own organisation for the greater good of the CJS.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Planning</p>	<p>Gather a wide range of evidence of problems and issues with their local criminal justice service.</p>	<p>Considering the strategic direction and national priorities set by the criminal justice board.</p> <p>Looking at evidence, opinion and testimony of those involved in the criminal justice system- including victims and witnesses.</p> <p>Considering the business plans and priorities of the individual CJS agencies.</p> <p>Considering the local policing and crime plan.</p> <p>Sought input from non-CJS partners and considered what impact their work could have on CJS activity.</p> <p>Gathered together necessary performance information to support the investigation of CJS issues.</p>
	<p>Decide what they want to achieve and how to align resources, and resolve tensions within agency plans.</p>	<p>Made sure that the interests of all Board members are considered in drawing up priorities.</p> <p>Made sure that any inherent tensions or conflicts with individual agency plans are exposed and explored.</p>

	<p>Create thorough delivery plans to ensure maximum co-ordination between their work and that of CJS colleagues.</p>	<p>Providing opportunities at least annually for Board members to express their priorities.</p> <p>Regularly looking to identify opportunities for CJS organisations to provide mutual benefits and assistance to each other.</p> <p>Accountability for delivery clearly defined.</p>
	<p>Ensure that priorities and plans are shared, open and transparent.</p>	<p>Plans and priorities available in an easily accessible format for the general public to view and respond to.</p> <p>Sharing their planning with other LCJB/P areas so that opportunities for collaborative working can be identified.</p> <p>Sharing their planning with the CJB so that common local priorities can inform national priorities.</p>
Delivery	<p>Maintains and improves value for money local delivery mechanisms.</p>	<p>Measures in place to ensure that changes in the system do not adversely affect the delivery of services.</p>
	<p>Work at a geographical level that is most appropriate to individual projects.</p>	<p>Actively seeking out opportunities to work across LCJB/P areas to achieve economies of scale through the pooling of resources, knowledge and experience.</p>
	<p>Work to create a forum for open and frank discussions about risks and issues between those involved in the delivery of justice services.</p>	<p>Regular meetings with an opportunity for all members to discuss issues in a confidential and safe space.</p> <p>Made allowances at the meetings for the escalation of issues that cannot be solved bi-laterally.</p> <p>Entering into a dialogue with national leaders about major delivery issues and risks.</p> <p>A forum for discussing and managing changes which impact on the CJS organisations and their services.</p>

	<p>Delivers national priorities, or adapts to reflect local circumstances.</p>	<p>Having an ongoing dialogue between local and national CJS leaders about the delivery of priorities.</p> <p>Ensuring that national priorities are given full consideration as part of the planning process and deviation from national policy can be rationally explained.</p> <p>Delivering on commitments to maximise the efficiency of the overall CJS.</p>
<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>Monitors how well they are collectively performing against their shared aims and priorities.</p>	<p>Gathering robust performance information about their priorities.</p> <p>Using this information to identify progress, risks to delivery and where action has been successful.</p>
	<p>Annually evaluates performance to check what further work needs to be done and what should feed in to the planning cycle for the upcoming year.</p>	<p>Checking whether priorities are still relevant and live issues.</p> <p>Identifying what learning and best practice can be shared with others.</p>
	<p>Informs the public and staff working within the CJS about their performance.</p>	<p>Publicly articulating in an accessible manner which performance aims have been met, which haven't, and what action has been taken to tackle priority areas.</p> <p>Members who actively promote cross CJS activity to their colleagues.</p> <p>Ensuring they operate in line with the ongoing government commitment to openness and transparency.</p>

Annex C – Membership of Criminal Justice Board

Chair:

- Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice

Members:

- Secretary of State for the Home Department
- Attorney General
- Minister of State for Government Policy
- Minister for Policing, Crime, Criminal Justice and Victims
- Director of Public Prosecutions, CPS
- President of the Queen's Bench Division
- Deputy Senior Presiding Judge
- Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council
- Commissioner, Metropolitan Police
- CEO, Crown Prosecution Service
- CEO, HM Courts & Tribunals Service
- CEO, National Offender Management Service
- Director, General Crime & Policing Group, Home Office
- Director, General Criminal Justice Group, MoJ
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners representative

External members:

- A non-executive member

Attending as required:

- CEO, Legal Aid Agency
- CEO, College of Policing
- Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales

- Head, National Crime Agency
- Chair, Youth Justice Board

Annex D – Summary of survey responses

A national online survey was sent to all 36 police force areas that had not been included in the list for detailed inspection.

This summary of responses has been augmented by similar data obtained from the survey areas in order to achieve a national picture. The data included in this summary is quantitative and no judgment is made about its value or authenticity. A number of areas as requested in the survey provided additional documents including plans and performance frameworks. This provided useful context against which the inspection took place. However without the benefit of a robust inspection of these areas, it is not possible to test out their authenticity and relevance.

This summary therefore provides essentially information about the scope of LCJPs, their priorities and how they are organised. It is a snapshot as of July 2014 and therefore subject to change.

1. Survey responses

- National survey returns - 27
- Areas for which no return was received - 4

The following information relates to the survey returns and the six inspection areas and is provided in either number or percentage terms.

2. Numbers and scope of partnerships

- Formal partnership – 30 (of which 2 were developed in that they were part of other strategic partnerships in the locality).
- Single police force partnerships - 27
- Partnerships covering more than one force area - 3
- Area with no partnership - 1

3. Membership

All partnerships

Police force(s)

Crown Prosecution Service

Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service

Police and Crime Commissioner(s) - in two areas inspected, membership rested with the Office of Police and Crime Commissioners.

Over 90 percent of returns

National Probation Service

Community rehabilitation companies

Youth offending services/youth offending teams

Her Majesty's Prison Service

Over 80 percent

Voluntary and community sector

50-60 percent

Community safety partnerships

Defence lawyers

Between 30-40 percent

Health service(s)

Legal Aid Agency

Less than 20 percent

Resident judge

Additional Independent members

Fire and rescue service(s)

Safeguarding Adults Board chair (one area)

4. Chair of partnership

- Police force(s) - 17
- Police and crime commissioner(s) - 8
- Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service -1
- Crown Prosecution Service -3
- Her Majesty's Prison Service -1
- Community rehabilitation companies -1
- Youth offending services -1

5. Frequency of partnership board meetings

Over 90 percent meet either quarterly or bi-monthly (50 and 40 percent respectively)

6. Priority themes and subgroups

Over 60 percent of partnerships prioritise the following themes:

- Victims and witnesses
- Efficiency
- Digitisation; and
- Reducing reoffending

7. Budgets

Over half of areas said that there was a formal budget, 90 percent of which was spent on business support.

Some business support was provided by resources in kind loaned from one or more organisations in the partnership.

Where budgets existed, they ranged from between £35,000 and £110,000 per annum.

Four areas, while retaining their individual partnerships, shared business support functions, contributing similar amounts each.

8. Communication and engagement with the public

- Websites – 4 areas (2 out of date)
- Consultation on priorities – 8 partnerships.