

Press Notice

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CPS Inspectorate Overall Performance Assessment of CPS Gloucestershire

HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HM CPSI) has today published their Overall Performance Assessment (OPA) of **CPS Gloucestershire**.

The OPA process provides a benchmark for each CPS Area's performance in fourteen key aspects of work. Each of the aspects is assessed as being excellent, good, fair or poor. The Area is then assessed on its overall performance in the light of these markings.

The overall performance assessment of **CPS Gloucestershire** was **fair**

The table below provides a breakdown of the assessed level of performance against the fourteen aspects:

Critical Aspects	Assessment
Pre-charge decision-making	Fair
Ensuring successful outcomes	Fair
Leadership	Fair
The service to victims and witnesses	Good
Resource management	Poor
Other Defining Aspects	
Managing magistrates' courts cases	Good
Managing Crown Court cases	Good
Handling sensitive cases and hate crimes	Fair
Custody time limits	Fair
Disclosure	Good
Presenting and progressing cases at court	Good
Delivering change	Fair
Managing performance to improve	Fair
Securing community confidence	Good

Some aspects have been categorised as critical, and these aspects are weighted differently to the other aspects in determining the overall performance of an Area. This is due to the significant impact that these aspects will have on the overall performance of a CPS Area.

CPS Gloucestershire has made significant improvements in performance in the last two years. An inspection in September 2003 found that, although the standard of casework was sound, performance was not underpinned by a sufficiently robust management structure. Relationships with other agencies lacked cohesion. A follow up inspection in December 2004 found that

performance had improved across most of the Area's work. CPS Gloucestershire was beginning to drive up performance in other criminal justice agencies. The progress observed then has continued.

At the time of this assessment, the Area was undergoing a significant programme of change, having implemented the new case management system and moving towards statutory charging. The quality of decision-making remained sound and was generally supported by more effective casework processes. A recently established joint Witness Care Unit was having an impact on improving the service to witnesses, although witness problems at court were still a significant factor in the Area's cracked and ineffective trial rates. The Area had adopted a more positive approach to its management and was working more effectively with its partners in bringing about change. A greater emphasis on performance management needed to be underpinned by better data analysis systems, however. Management of financial resources and deployment of staff are matters for concern. Nevertheless, considerable progress had been made in a short time. Staff are more involved in community activity and morale has improved. Managers have already brought about a more positive culture, but there is still more to be done.

The inspectorate has visited all 42 CPS Areas over a six month period in order to provide a benchmark from which future work can be informed. The inspectorate will use this information to determine where best to focus its resources in order to promote improvement within the CPS and the criminal justice system as a whole. It is also hoped that the CPS Areas, and CPS HQ, will use this information to address issues at local and national level where this is necessary.

Stephen Wooler, Chief Inspector of the CPS, said:

This is an encouraging report. CPS Gloucestershire has made significant improvements in a relatively short space of time. The quality of casework and casework processes has remained sound throughout the significant changes within the Area and a more positive management culture has led to improvement in staff morale. The contribution made by the CPS to the effectiveness of the criminal justice system in Gloucestershire has also increased.

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