

Press Notice

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CPS Inspectorate Overall Performance Assessment of CPS Norfolk

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

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 Norfolk** was **Good**.

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

| Critical Aspects | Assessment |
|---|-------------------|
| Pre-charge decision-making | Good |
| Ensuring successful outcomes | Good |
| Leadership | Fair |
| The service to victims and witnesses | Good |
| Resource management | Good |
| Other Defining Aspects | |
| Managing magistrates' courts cases | Good |
| Managing Crown Court cases | Good |
| Handling sensitive cases and hate crimes | Good |
| Custody time limits | Fair |
| Disclosure | Good |
| Presenting and progressing cases at court | Good |
| Delivering change | Fair |
| Managing performance to improve | Good |
| 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 Norfolk has a sound approach to planning. Since the last inspection the Area has relocated successfully to more modern offices and implemented the electronic case management system. During 2004-05 the Area introduced a full shadow charging scheme across Norfolk (in readiness for CPS assumption of responsibility for its initial decision whether to charge – at

present a matter for the police). At the time of our visit was on track to deliver statutory charging in October 2005. The Area had also established its first witness care unit in Norwich and was on target to deliver its full programme of such units by the end of 2005; the service to victims and witnesses is generally good.

There are appropriate arrangements in place for managing the Area; however, the quality and regularity of communication tends to be variable and the Area lacks an equality and diversity champion accountable to the Area management team. The Area has taken a number of steps which indicate that it treats achieving value for money principles as a priority and sound resource planning takes place. The Area manages and progresses casework efficiently, and provides a professional advocacy service at court.

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:

“It is pleasing to see that CPS Norfolk has continued to maintain a good level of performance since our last inspection and has produced good results in its casework. It offers a professional service and is working effectively with partners in the criminal justice system to implement the charging initiative under which it is assuming responsibility from the police for the initial decision whether to charge. It is also effective in taking forward changes to improve the service that is offered to victims and witnesses”

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