

# National case progression commitment promises to reduce delays

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Joint statement issued to support timely delivery of justice for victims, witnesses and defendants

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The Crown Prosecution Service, National Police Chiefs' Council and the College of Policing have published the [national case progression commitment](#), which outlines the work ongoing to address the barriers to effective case progression.

*It is important to recognise that court proceedings and involvement in the criminal justice system can be a very stressful and difficult time for victims, witnesses and defendants.*

*We want to make the process as efficient as possible for everyone involved, including police officers who investigate and present evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service.*

*We will continue to do all we can to support the wider criminal justice system.*

## **Chief Constable Jo Farrell, the National Police Chiefs' Council's lead for case progression**

These include driving improvements in file quality, timely provision of charging advice, holding fewer hearings per case and increasing the number of trials that go ahead the first time that they are listed. The three bodies will sit on a newly focused board to ensure improvements continue to be made.

*We support today's commitment to ensure cases progress through the criminal justice system as swiftly as possible, which is vital to continue building public confidence.*

*The College of Policing is working closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council and the Crown Prosecution Service to support further improvements across the criminal justice service to help bring offenders to justice.*

**Iain Raphael, Director of Operational Standards, College of Policing**

The commitment supports the five priority criminal justice themes: capacity, capability, leadership, partnership and governance. The actions are:

- **capacity** – ensuring a collaborative approach to address and improve victims and witness communication by reviewing the roles and responsibilities of each agency and providing a better journey to trial
- **capability** – investing in technology to improve the processes and systems between the CPS and police to better share and present material in an efficient way
- **leadership** – encourage early engagement with the defence to resolve and effectively manage issues at an early stage and in advance of the trial
- **partnership** – support the joint file quality improvement plan to improve partnership working between police and prosecutors in preparing cases for court hearings and for trials
- **governance** – review and refresh the use of local joint performance meetings to ensure local accountability for local outcomes relating to case progression and to drive improvement

Effective case progression has become even more imperative in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in some positive changes and innovative solutions within the wider criminal justice system, which will be vital to help decrease the backlog of cases.

*The pandemic has only made it more important than ever to ensure the timely delivery of justice and minimising of delay. We will work closely with our partners to ensure early engagement as well as effective and timely decision making, which will ultimately benefit victims, witnesses and defendants.*

**Max Hill QC, Director of Public Prosecutions**

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