

Commission on Justice in Wales - Call for Evidence

Crown Prosecution Service Response

Introduction

1. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is the principal public prosecuting authority for England and Wales.
2. The CPS sits under the Superintendence of the Attorney General and is headed by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). The CPS is independent of government.
3. There is a Chief Crown Prosecutor (CCP) for the CPS Cymru-Wales Area along with two Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutors (DCCPs) and an Area Business Manager (ABM).
4. Although the CPS works closely with the police, it is independent of them.
5. The CPS recognises that CPS Cymru-Wales Area is unique in the scale of its cultural issues and legal requirements.
6. The CCP of Wales has a close relationship with the Welsh Assembly and with Welsh Government. The CCP has in the past attended Committees of the Assembly and has explained and accounted for the Service's performance. The CPS is involved with various Welsh Government led initiatives that contribute towards the Well-being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This seeks to establish a sustainable approach to partnership working in Wales, to deliver safe communities for future generations. CPS is involved in the following groups or bodies, and chairs some of the sub-groups:
 - Wales Anti-Slavery threat, operational delivery and training groups (3);
 - HBV/FGM Leadership Group;
 - Crime Stoppers Wales;
 - Wales Hate Crime Criminal Justice Board.
7. There are three operational units across the Area, based in Cardiff, Mold and Swansea. Part of the strategic focus of the Area is that of consistency of delivery across the whole of Wales, operating in dedicated units but sharing resources, expertise and best practice as part of a strong coherent network, all underpinned by quality and efficiency. The key enabler for this has been the move towards full digital working and closer alignment of our business practices with the police and other partners.
8. The flexibility created by digital working on a national system enables remote working across Wales and across geographical boundaries. For example, there is a Unit of prosecutors based in Cardiff which undertakes casework on behalf of CPS London Area. This provides enhanced job opportunities for lawyers living in Cymru-Wales. All Welsh cases are decided on and dealt with in Wales.
9. The Area has its own dedicated Complex Casework Unit and Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Unit.

10. CPS casework divisions continue to provide specialist services for the whole of England and Wales, such as Counter-Terrorism, Organised Crime and Fraud.

Response to Questions to the CPS

11. The CPS has received the following additional questions from the Commission, which are addressed below:

- A. What is the decision making about bringing prosecutions in Wales?
- B. How should crimes under Welsh legislation be dealt with?
- C. What are the CPS's relationships with other prosecuting bodies in Wales?
- D. How does CPS liaison with the police work?
- E. What is the CPS's view of the All Wales Criminal Justice Board?

A. What is the decision making about bringing prosecutions in Wales?

12. The police have charging responsibility for some summary offences such as common assault. However the CPS will consider these cases in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors ([here](#)) and decide whether to continue or not. They can also administer a caution or conditional caution without reference to the CPS.

13. In cases where the CPS advises on charging or reviews a charged case, all cases are reviewed by CPS prosecutors in accordance with the principles set out in the Code. Prosecutors make charging decisions in line with the full Code test, other than in limited circumstances where the narrower threshold test applies. This ensures consistency and transparency of decision making

14. The full Code test has two stages. The first stage is consideration of the evidence. Prosecutors must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction. This means that a jury or a bench of magistrates or a Judge hearing the case alone, properly directed and acting in accordance with the law, is more likely than not to convict the defendant of the charge alleged. If the case does not pass the evidential stage, the case will not proceed.

15. If the case does pass the evidential test, prosecutors will proceed to the second stage and decide if a prosecution is needed in the public interest.

16. The Code sets out a number of questions that prosecutors should consider when applying the public interest stage of the full code test. One of these questions is: *What is the impact on the community?* Prosecutors are instructed that the greater the impact of the offending on the community, the more likely it is that a prosecution is required. When considering this question, prosecutors may take into account, for example, the prevalence of an offence in a community that may cause particular harm to that community, or whether a prosecution may have a positive impact on maintaining community confidence. "Community" is a flexible term under the Code, and may be applied in a local or national sense. With regards to criminal justice issues in Wales, for example, consideration may be given to the prevalence of specific rural crimes, such as theft of livestock, and its impact on the local and /or national community, including the economy.

17. The threshold test requires prosecutors to decide whether there is a reasonable suspicion that the suspect has committed an offence and, if there is, whether further evidence can be gathered within a reasonable period of time to provide a realistic prospect of conviction in accordance with the full code test. If both parts of the Threshold test are satisfied, a suspect may be charged, if it is in the public interest to do so. This test is applied only in those cases where the seriousness or the circumstances of the case justifies the making of an immediate charging decision, and the suspect presents a substantial bail risk, but the evidence to apply the full Code test is not available. The full Code test must be applied as soon as reasonably practicable after charge and a review date will be set by the prosecutor. This is the date by when the necessary information must be received and the full Code test applied.

18. Further information can be found in:

- The Director of Public Prosecution's Guidance on Charging at: <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/charging-directors-guidance-2013-fifth-edition-may-2013-revised-arrangements>

19. Supporting the casework decision-making function and the application of the Code is comprehensive Legal Guidance and the Charging Standards.

B. How should crimes under Welsh legislation be dealt with?

20. One of the matters for the CPS to consider is our approach to decision making where the law differs in England and Wales. Our current view is that the overarching principles in the Code are sufficiently flexible and robust to be applied to ~~any~~ legislation that might bring a divergence in criminal offences.

21. However, if specific guidance is required in relation to a particular offence, we can address this in our legal guidance and / or by amending or even creating a relevant Charging Standard. Charging Standards are designed to assist prosecutors and police officers in selecting the most appropriate charge, in the light of the facts of the case.

22. An example of such divergence of laws is the proposal by Welsh Government to remove the defence of reasonable chastisement in cases of assault. Our current thinking is that the

potential difference in law between the two jurisdictions would not need to be addressed in the Code and that amendments to the Offences Against the Person Charging Standard, to provide additional guidance, would suffice.

23. This approach mirrors the CPS approach to prosecuting cases for different investigators, such as HM Revenue and Customs and the Department for Work and Pensions, who may have divergent enforcement policies regarding referral of cases to the CPS for a charging decision. The divergent policies have not proved problematic for CPS decision making, as the broad Code principles can be applied flexibly and supplemented by bespoke CPS policy, guidance and Charging Standards, where necessary.

24. We are therefore confident that any crimes under Welsh legislation can be readily accommodated into our policies and practice.

C. What are the CPS's relationships with other prosecuting bodies in Wales?

25. There are a number of organisations that regularly prosecute cases before the courts of England and Wales, and may do so pursuant to statutory powers or as private individuals, using the right of any individual to bring a private prosecution. One example is the RSPCA.

26. The right to bring private prosecutions is preserved by section 6(1) of the Prosecution of Offences Act (POA) 1985. Although the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) has power under section 6(2) POA 1985 to take over private prosecutions, in practice this will only be exercised in limited circumstances.

27. The CPS has a number of national agreements or Memoranda of Understanding with other prosecutors and agencies, which cover the jurisdiction of England and Wales. These include Natural Resources Body for Wales, the Welsh Local Government Association, the Football Association of Wales and the Health and Safety Executive.

28. The Head of the Wales Cymru Complex Casework Unit meets on a regular basis with representatives from the Health and Safety Executive, to discuss casework or potential casework that the CPS might become involved in.

29. The CPS is a member of the Whitehall Prosecutors Group, which is also attended by Natural Countryside Wales. The forum meets quarterly and operates a number of sub-groups, which allows all prosecutors to liaise and share information and to discuss significant legal and policy developments.

D. How does CPS liaison with the police work?

30. The Code sets out the roles and responsibilities of the police, and the relationship of the CPS with the police:

The police and other investigators are responsible for conducting enquiries into any alleged crime and for deciding how to deploy their resources. This includes decisions to start or continue an investigation and on the scope of the investigation. Prosecutors often advise the police and other investigators about possible lines of inquiry and evidential

requirements, and assist with pre-charge procedures. In large scale investigations the prosecutor may be asked to advise on the overall investigation strategy, including decisions to refine or narrow the scope of the criminal conduct and the number of suspects under investigation. This is to assist the police and other investigators to complete the investigation within a reasonable period of time and to build the most effective prosecution case. However, prosecutors cannot direct the police or other investigators.

31. CPS Cymru Wales has strong and productive working relationship with the four Police Forces in Wales.

i. Day to day liaison:

- Individual prosecutors and paralegal officers are in daily contact with police officers to address casework issues.
- Administrative staff liaise daily with police units over process and witness support issues.
- Escalation of urgent casework issues is dealt with by CPS and police Senior Managers.

ii. High-level regular liaison:

- The CCP meets with the four Chief Constables and the DCCPs meet with the Assistant Chief Constables on a quarterly basis. The CCP and the chief Constables focus on strategic issues and matters that may require collaboration across Wales. Prosecution Team Performance Meetings are held between CPS Cymru Wales and the police, with the purpose of reviewing and improving performance and establishing joint training.

iii. Long-term partnership working:

There are many examples of effective long-term partnership working between the CPS and the four Police Forces in Wales. For example, demonstrable progress has been made in moving towards a common digital way of working between the CPS and the Police. This includes the creation of a digital interface, the presentation of digital material in court, and the steps taken at a national level to develop a standard digital case file. South Wales is one of the areas involved in the design and piloting of the digital case file.

Other long-term partnership working includes:

- Improvement in the investigation of sexual offences;
- Successful operation of Transforming Summary Justice;
- Tackling Modern Slavery.

iv. Future liaison

There is scope for further effective collaborative work between CPS and the four Police Forces in Wales, to support more efficient ways in delivering the Prosecution Team business. In particular, there may be benefit in developing strategic oversight across the four Force boundaries, strengthening the ethos of a "One Wales" approach.

32. Examples of how collaborative working may be improved include:

- Re-examining the standard ways of working;
- Reducing duplication;
- Reviewing case management arrangements, including the gatekeeping function and the service to victims and witnesses;
- Looking at the feasibility of a joint framework for managing change and prosecution team performance management.

E. What is the CPS's view of the All Wales Criminal Justice Board?

33. The CPS is represented on the All Wales Criminal Justice Board (AWCJB) by the Chief Crown Prosecutor for Wales. Other members include the four Police and Crime Commissioners, a Senior Police Officer (representing all four Forces), Senior Leaders from the MoJ agencies and a representative from the Welsh Government.

34. In our view, the AWCJB is a strong, strategic national Board. There has been a clear drive to strengthen the Board and set priorities which complement the priorities of individual agencies including Welsh Government. These priorities stretch beyond the Criminal Justice System per se and incorporate issues such as tackling the causes of crime, prevention, intervention re offending and rehabilitation.

The Board's work reflects the Welsh Government priorities:

- Early Years (including offender families)
- Housing
- Social Care
- Mental Health
- Skills and Employability

35. The Board's own priorities centre on women, youths and victims. We agree with these priorities and note in particular:

- Women as victims are disproportionately represented in the CJS. This needs to be addressed by all agencies within the CJS.
- Women defendants can be victims in another guise and it is appropriate for the policies of Criminal Justice agencies to acknowledge and seek to address this. The AWCJB supports the aims of the Women's pathfinder project, which attempts to steer women away from offending by addressing the cause of their offending. The programme is being used across Wales, supported by HMPPS, the four PCCs and Welsh Government. The CPS is a member of the Board that oversees the project.
- Youths – it is beneficial to identify why offences occur and whether suitable diversion would be more effective. Research by Public Health Wales (PHW) has enabled agencies and professionals to better understand the causes of offending behaviour, such as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This understanding informs more appropriate responses to criminal behaviour.

36. Leads for each priority have been identified and tasked with identifying actions needed to deliver the priority, with clear outcomes, if necessary setting up Task and Finish Groups to

deliver what is required. There is clear momentum behind this work and we view this as an encouraging start.

37. The Board's priorities reflect CPS' concerns around violence against women and girls (VAWG) and our commitment to support victims and witnesses in delivering justice. The CPS 20/20 Strategy contains four pillars, two of which are *Public Confidence* and *High Quality Casework*. These pillars are supported by a number of strategies, which include the VAWG Strategy and the Victims and Witnesses Strategy.

38. The CPS supports and contributes to the work of the AWCJB: the CCP for Wales is the lead for the victims work-stream; and the Deputy Chief Crown Prosecutors for CPS Wales attend the four Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJBs), which support the AWCJB. The CPS is also contributing to the Board's work to introduce a more evidenced based approach to assuring performance, including a regular performance report for the AWCJB, which would also be used by the LCJBs.

Response to Questions in the Call for Evidence

Question 1 – What is working well in the Justice System in Wales? What is not working well? Are there examples of innovation and good practice, both in and beyond Wales which should be adopted and shared?

39. We have divided our response to this question into three parts: i. CPS Cymru Wales; ii. other criminal justice agencies in Wales; and iii. potential improvements.

i. CPS Cymru Wales

40. CPS Cymru Wales has a clear and defined operational presence in Wales, supported by a robust Code for Crown Prosecutors, Legal Guidance and Charging Standards. In our view, this works well.

41. CPS has strong and productive working relationship with our operational partners in Wales:

- The CCP and DCCPs meet quarterly with the senior judiciary in Wales.
- The CCP meets with the four Chief Constables and the DCCPs meet with the Assistant Chief Constables on a quarterly basis. Additionally, there is regular communication on various issues, as the need arises.

42. CPS Cymru Wales works with multi-agency groups at various levels, to deal effectively with performance issues. These include:

- Prosecution Team Performance Meetings (CPS /Police).
- Victim and witness groups (one for each force area).
- Women's groups, including Black Association of Women Step Out (BAWSO)
- Witness Service for Wales

- Disability Wales
- Cymru-Wales Age Concern

43. On a strategic level, the CPS has had a longstanding working relationship with the Welsh Government, covering key policy issues such as youth justice, domestic violence, hate crime, anti-slavery, honour based violence/FGM, sexual offences, the Welsh Government Prosecution Code, reasonable chastisement and other offences, including violence against health officials.

44. Additionally, CPS Cymru Wales is actively involved in a number of strategic bodies that are central to the administration of criminal justice in Wales. This involvement provides an operational perspective to the work of these bodies:

- The CCP is a member of the Justice in Wales Strategy Group which brings together Senior Leaders from MoJ agencies, Welsh Government and the CPS.
- The CCP is a member of the All Wales Criminal Justice Board, and is the lead for the victims work-stream.
- The Deputy CCPs attend the four Local Criminal Justice Boards.

ii. Other criminal justice agencies in Wales

45. The Criminal Justice System in Wales in general works well, with comparatively good performance compared to Areas across England and Wales. By way of example, Wales consistently appears in the top quartile (often at the top) of the Transforming Summary Justice (TSJ) performance weighted tables.

46. One notable feature of the criminal justice system in Wales is the speed with which criminal cases are handled. This is particularly true in the Magistrates' Court, where the average time from the commencement of criminal proceedings to their conclusion is consistently the lowest in England and Wales.

47. This is widely regarded as a positive benefit derived from an inter-agency culture in which adjournments are regarded as the last rather than a first option. A further benefit of this approach to speed and efficiency is to be found in the fact that the average number of hearings per case in the Magistrates Court, for both contested and uncontested work, is consistently lower than in other CPS Areas or HMCTS regions. The timescales in which proceedings are concluded has obvious benefits to the agencies involved in the administration of criminal justice, as less work is required to achieve the desired outcomes. Moreover, there are arguably greater benefits for victims and witnesses, who will see cases involving them brought to justice in good time.

48. Many of the recommendations made by the Rt Hon Sir Brian Leveson in his report "Review of Efficiency in Criminal Proceedings", 2015, can be positively evidenced in Wales: getting it right first time; case ownership; direct engagement; and effective and consistent judicial case management. The achievements in these areas have been underpinned by improvements obtained through working from a digital platform. This will develop further with enhanced connectivity between the agencies and with the introduction of elements of

the common platform, a shared, single digital process to transform the way practitioners in the criminal justice system work.

49. The All Wales Criminal Justice Board is effective in setting and overseeing the priorities for criminal justice in Wales: see further the answer to E. above.

50. The Welsh Strategy Group brings a co-ordinated strategic approach to the justice landscape across Wales. This includes work on devolved matters and the development of diverging law. An example of a positive outcomes brought about by this Group is that there is now agreement with Welsh Government that the Government will share Justice Impact Assessments with the Group. This will enable the criminal justice agencies to identify all proposed new Welsh legislation and its potential impact on the criminal justice system in Wales. Combined with the existing Justice Impact Test, which looks at the impact of UK Parliamentary legislation on the Justice System, this will provide a greater opportunity to identify and manage the impact of newly created divergent laws across England and Wales.

iii. Potential improvements

51. The key areas which in our view should be the focus for improvement are:

- There should be a consistent and enhanced service for victims and witnesses, with clear lines of responsibility and accountability. There has in particular been a longstanding problem in relation to victim and witness attrition in domestic violence cases.
- We note that the Welsh Government report, “Working Together for Safer Communities”, 2017, identifies a need to strengthen and improve the approach to Community Safety Partnership working in Wales. We understand that the Welsh Government is to publish the actions that will be taken to address the recommendations raised in the report. Those actions include establishing a dialogue with the Home Office, to consider whether the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 needs updating, to better reflect Welsh devolution, to improve people’s access to justice and to reduce crime and promote rehabilitation. The CPS frequently engages with the Home Office on community engagement and access to justice issues, and on the development of criminal justice legislation. We would welcome participation in any discussions on potential amendments to the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Question 2 – What are the economic, social, geographical, technological, constitutional and other barriers to improvement and how could these be overcome?

52. We have no observations in relation to this question.

Question 3 – What problems face the people who work within the Justice System in Wales (including policing, prosecution, courts, prisons and probation) and the people who are affected by it?

53. We have no observations in relation to this question.

Question 4 – Does the Justice System in Wales currently provide access to all who require its services including advice? How would you improve access to Justice in Wales?

54. CPS Cymru-Wales is one of the largest CPS Areas in geographical terms. Its population and courts are spread across the length and breadth of the principality. For example, it is 180 (non-motorway/express train) miles from Cardiff to Colwyn Bay, with Caernarfon a further 30 miles beyond that. This demographic does present some access difficulties, particularly in the more remote parts of the Area.

55. However, the full deployment of CPS digital working has without doubt improved access. It has also allowed us greater flexibility in terms of staff working remotely, whether in court centres, police stations or at home. This level of flexibility has enabled the Area to rationalise its estate, whilst improving its level of service. We anticipate that CPS digital working will also support the proposed implementation of the Court Reform programme.

56. One further way in which access could be improved is through greater use of video links. Video links use across Wales is generally poor. CPS and HMCTS are working together to ascertain the reasons for the poor uptake and to resolve the issue. Sometime the obstacle to use of video links is relatively straightforward, such as sufficient support for witnesses at the live links centres. One of the ways in which the issue is being addressed is by the court taking a proactive role, such as asking whether the case is suitable for live links and seeking reasons why an application to use live links is not being made.

57. Another aspect of the Area's demographic is the contrast between concentrated urban areas (the South East) and large rural parts of the Area (mid and North Wales). Insofar as the CPS is concerned, the different patterns of crime in urban and rural Wales do not cause any difficulty, as our approach to casework is sufficiently flexible to respond to specific community concerns (see our response to Question A for more information on how Code decisions take into account the impact on the community of particular offending).

Question 5 – What impact has devolution had on the Justice System in Wales? What impact do you believe devolution will have in the future?

58. We do not feel that devolution to date has had a significant impact on criminal justice, nor on the service that CPS provides, and how we provide it. See also our answer to Question B on how the CPS will deal with divergence in laws between England and Wales.

59. We are aware of the findings of the Commission on Devolution in Wales, which reported on the wider powers of the National Assembly for Wales in March 2014, in particular in relation to the devolution of policing and justice.

60. One of the key strengths of the CPS is its independence and we are confident that, notwithstanding any future devolved justice arrangements, the CPS could continue to function as an independent prosecutor in Wales.

Question 6 – Could local authority services in relation to justice and the local provision of legal advice be better organised and coordinated with policing, prosecution, courts, prisons and probation?

61. There are 22 local authorities in Wales and working across all of these presents a number of difficulties.

62. A practical example is the ability to comply in a timely way with the requirements of the “2013 Protocol and Good Practice Model Disclosure of information in cases of alleged child sexual abuse and linked criminal and care direction hearings”.

63. Although the Welsh Government is not a signatory to the protocol and it is not binding on local authorities, both Welsh Government and the local authorities support the content of the protocol and consider it good practice. It has, however, been difficult for both investigators and prosecutors to obtain the relevant information/material held by local authorities to enable us to satisfactorily progress cases in a timely manner. Principally, this is due to different approaches adopted across the local authorities.

64. This problem may be exacerbated when Section 28 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act (pre-recording of cross-examination of victims) comes into force (probably September 2018), because the timescale for securing information will be reduced: the case must be put before the court within 6 months of the offences being reported in order to use this special measure.

65. We note the proposal set out in the Welsh Government Green Paper consultation document “Strengthening Local Government: Delivering for People”, issued in March 2018. This sets out options designed to create stronger and more powerful local authorities, including structural reform, whereby the number of local authorities is reduced, to mirror current Health Board boundaries. We anticipate that a reduction in the number of local authorities would produce greater consistency in approach. If so, we would view it as a positive step, as it is likely to assist the work of the CPS: as identified above, different approaches by local authorities presents us with difficulties in obtaining third party material in a timely manner, potentially leading to delay in progressing cases.

Question 7 – Are there changes that should be made to the capabilities and effectiveness of the ways in which the police, probation and prisons approach their task? What should be done to increase community safety, wellbeing and social cohesion and reduce crime? What can be learnt from other countries where rates of crime imprisonment are lower?

66. We have no observations in relation to this question.

Question 8 – What impact is the divergence between Welsh and English law having upon sentences? What impact do you foresee in the future? Should Wales implement a different approach to sentencing than England? If yes, what lessons can be learned from other jurisdictions?

67. We have no observations in relation to this question.

Question 9 – What are the capabilities in the Justice System in Wales for responding to Brexit?

68. CPS planning around Brexit is being carried out at a national level, and takes into account the needs all CPS Areas across England and Wales. The CPS is engaged with a range of operational partners and is liaising closely with the Home Office in relation to EU issues.

69. We have been carrying out detailed planning around Brexit, looking at the potential impact that no longer being an EU Member State could have on our day to day operations.

70. We will not know the extent of any changes that would need to be made to the way we operate until the negotiations are concluded and we know the terms of any agreement between the UK and the EU on the future arrangements for internal security and criminal justice cooperation. We welcome the proposed Implementation period agreed in principle at the March EU Council meeting.

Question 10 – What steps do you think need to be taken to facilitate positive change in the Justice System in Wales?

71. We have identified a number of steps to facilitate positive change:

- To continue to develop ways of improving service delivery and building on the integrated working between CPS and Justice System partners, including Welsh Government. This is particularly important where there is an overlap of reserved and devolved matters, for example aspects of offender management, and where Welsh legislation has an impact on the Justice System.
- To identify and implement ways to reduce the ineffective trial attrition rate, particularly where the cause relates to disengagement from the process by victims and witnesses.
- To deliver on provisions set out in the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, and the draft guidance which is currently out for consultation. These include promoting awareness of domestic abuse, protecting and supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators and improving performance.
- The recommendations in the Welsh Government report “Working Together for Safer Communities”, December 2017, are being taken forward by the Welsh Government’s programme of work. We expect this work programme to facilitate positive change: see answer to Question 7 above.

Question 11 – How could the strength and sustainability of the legal sector in Wales be promoted? How could its contribution to the prosperity of Wales be optimised?

72. By promoting the consistent good performance of criminal justice in Wales, and the ethos of working together to deliver continuous improvement.

73. By promoting the career opportunities that the legal sector provides. For example, the CPS employs 324 staff in Wales, 273 of which make up the CPS Cymru-Wales Area. Due to digital working, the other 51 employees are able to deal with a broad range of cases that arise across England and Wales: 25 work in the Special Fraud Division; 20 (based in Cardiff or working remotely in other parts of Wales) take work on behalf of CPS London; and 6 form part of a national team delivering out of hours charging advice to the police (all daytime charging is delivered by the CPS Cymru-Wales Area).

Question 12 – To what extent do current University curriculum of vocational and professional development courses reflect the law in Wales and the need to deal with the digital revolution and how should they be further developed?

74. We do not have particular knowledge of current academic and vocational law courses. However, in our experience, in terms of our recruitment, we have not detected any particular weakness in this area.

75. The CPS has a comprehensive development programme for all staff, which ensures that our staff have the appropriate skills (legal and otherwise) to deliver the standard of service required. This includes the opportunity to work digitally, as the CPS has for many years been at the forefront of the digital revolution in the provision of criminal justice services in England and Wales.

76. Furthermore, as a national service, we offer many opportunities for career progression not only within Wales but also across England. Our staff also have opportunities to work in the wider Civil Service, whether on secondment or by way of a permanent move. The CPS also operates a Legal Trainee Scheme, which is keenly supported by CPS Wales Cymru.

Question 13 – What is the current provision for the Welsh Language within the Justice System and legal education in Wales? How should Welsh Language provision within the Justice System and legal education in Wales be improved?

77. The CPS is committed to providing the highest quality of service and use of the Welsh language is integral to this commitment. We have a Welsh Language Scheme, which we report on annually to the Welsh Language Commissioner. The Scheme is currently being reviewed and updated.

78. There are good mechanisms in place in the criminal justice system in Wales to share good practice and learn from other agencies. For example, the Lord Chancellor's Standing Committee on the Welsh language includes judicial as well as other criminal justice representatives. (The CPS is represented by the CCP or one of the senior management team.) In addition, there is a cross-government Welsh language group that enables sharing across departments.

79. Improvement on the current provision for the Welsh Language within the justice system could be made in the following areas:

- The CPS has experienced difficulty in recruiting Welsh speakers and we understand that we are not the only organisation within the CJS to experience such difficulties.
- The CJS in Wales has also struggled to recruit and have available an adequate number of Welsh speaking intermediaries.

Question 14 – Is access to Welsh law properly available?

80. We are not aware of any particular difficulty with regard to Welsh law. However, there have on occasions been issues in relation to the availability of legal material in the Welsh language.