



College of
Policing

Brief

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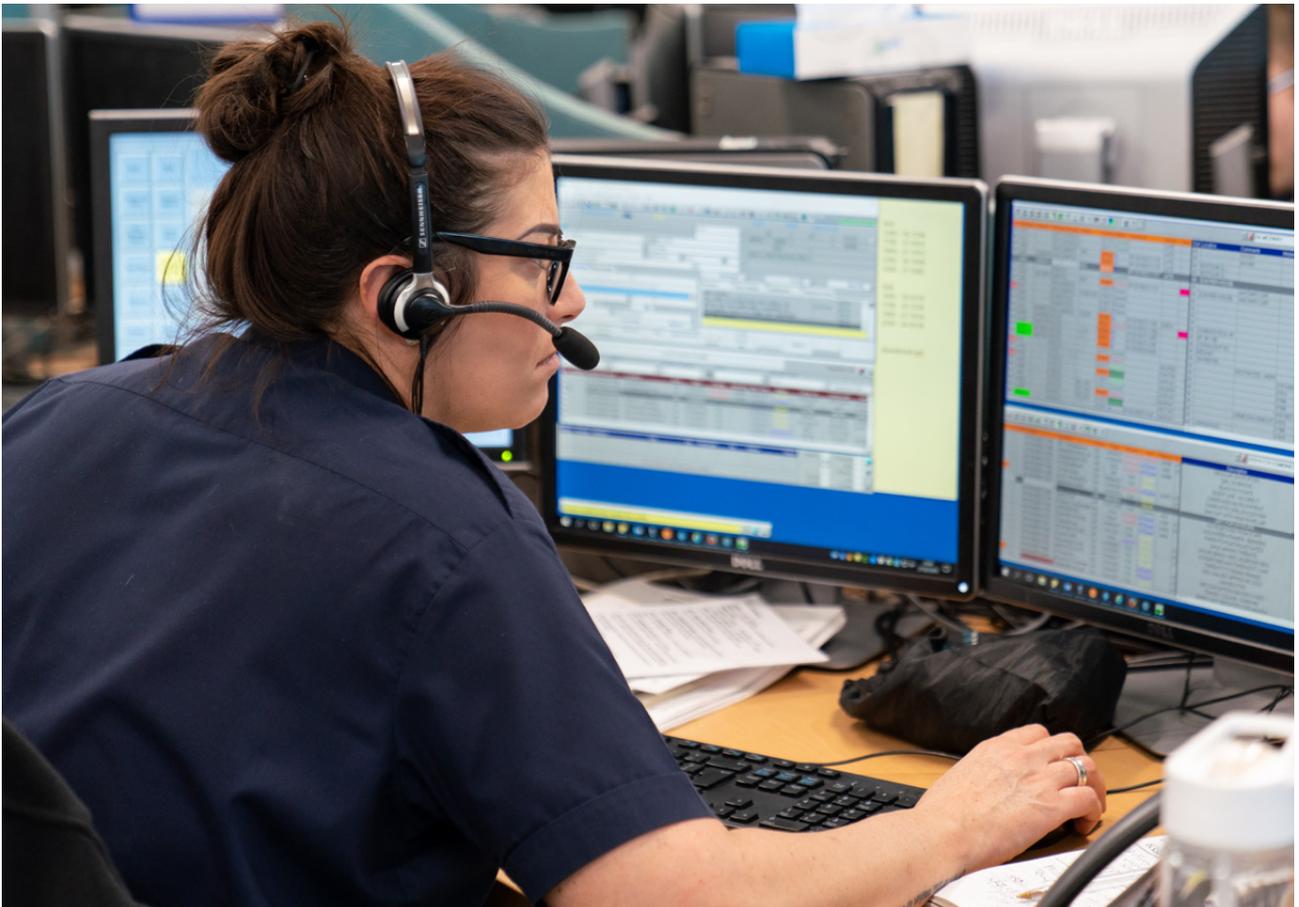
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ISSUE 5 | MAY 2022

Updates in police law, operational policing practice and criminal justice, produced by the **Legal Services Department** at the College of Policing



CPS launch
new international
directorate



**Police, Crime,
Sentencing and
Courts Bill**



MPS accepts
IPOC's
investigation



£130 million for
serious violence
and homicide



The College of Policing Brief is a scanning publication intended to capture and consolidate key criminal justice issues, both current and future, impacting on all areas of policing.

During the production of the Brief, information is included from governmental bodies, criminal justice organisations and research bodies. As such, the Brief should prove an invaluable guide to those responsible for strategic decision making, operational planning and police training.

The College of Policing is also responsible for Authorised Professional Practice (APP). APP is the official and most up-to-date source of policing practice and covers a range of policing activities such as: police use of firearms, treatment of people in custody, investigation of child abuse and management of intelligence. APP is available online at app.college.police.uk

Any enquiries regarding this publication or to request copies in accessible formats please contact us at brief@college.pnn.police.uk

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Editorial

4	The outcome of misconduct hearing for former officer	16
---	--	----

College news

Live facial recognition technology APP

5	Responses to the report on Hestia’s super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery	16
---	---	----

Inside policing, episode two: Policing the pandemic

Legal updates

Bills

Online Safety Bill progresses in the House of Commons

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act

6	Reports	17
7	MPS accepts IOPC’s recommendations following an investigation into ‘bullying and discrimination’ among officers	17

7	Harsher sentences for drugs used in spiking offences	18
---	--	----

7	New mobile phone laws for drivers come into force from 25 March 2022	18
---	--	----

8	HMICFRS: Staffordshire Police needs to urgently improve child protection	19
---	--	----

Acts

Offensive Weapons Act 2019

Glue Traps (Offences) Act

9		
---	--	--

9		
---	--	--

10	Criminal justice news	20
----	------------------------------	----

Before the courts

Abdulahi, R. v [2022] EWCA Crim 412

11	Consultation period of new sentencing guidelines	20
----	--	----

11	CPS launch the Serious Economic Organised Crime and International Directorate	20
----	---	----

Policing

News

Trauma-informed custody scheme introduced for detained children

Home Office funding to help GMP tackle county lines crime

Police officer’s actions found to amount to gross misconduct

Guidance: Request for Mutual Legal Assistance in criminal matters: guidelines for authorities outside of the UK (accessible version)

13	Bar Council’s latest figures show a 11% drop in publicly funded criminal barristers	21
----	---	----

13	Successful pilot scheme of alcohol-monitoring tags	22
----	--	----

14	The sale of knives: Retailers sign revised voluntary agreement	23
----	--	----

15	Government announces a further £130 million to bolster efforts tackling serious violence and homicide.	23
----	--	----

15	New guidance to tackle domestic abuse misconceptions	24
----	--	----

Editorial

Dear readers,

Welcome to the May edition of Brief, your monthly update of what's new in the policing and criminal justice field, produced by the Legal Services team at the College of Policing.

Within this month's edition:

- trauma-informed custody scheme introduced for detained children
- new tougher mobile phone laws for drivers come into force from 25 March 2022
- CPS launch the Serious Economic Organised Crime and International Directorate

To find out more about the College and what we do, including information on the Policing Education Qualifications Framework (PEQF) training, please visit the [College of Policing website](#).

We hope that our publication supports police officers and staff in their work. We are always looking for ways to get better at what we do, so please [get in touch](#) if you have any feedback or ideas for future content.

Thank you for reading,

The Legal Services Team

[↑ Back to contents](#)

For subscription requests, further information or to send us ideas about what you would like to see in upcoming editions, please email us at:

brief@college.pnn.police.uk

College news

Live facial recognition technology APP

The College has published new Authorised Professional Practice (APP) to ensure that police forces in England and Wales take a consistent approach when using technology to find individuals sought by the police, known as live facial recognition. The guidance also provides a clear legal and ethical framework for its use.

The new APP follows consultation with the public, police, regulatory bodies and campaign groups. It addresses the issues identified in the *Bridges v South Wales Police* Appeal Court judgment (2020). The guidance states that:

- live facial recognition technology should be used in a responsible, transparent, fair and ethical way and only when other, less intrusive methods would not achieve the same results
- all use of the technology has to be targeted, be based on intelligence and have a set time for use start and end
- images placed on the predetermined database must meet a proportionality and necessity criteria, reviewed before every deployment
- police forces should give notice about the use of live facial recognition, making use of social media and their website, unless there is a critical threat that makes this impractical
- chief officers should involve their elected police and crime commissioner to provide oversight

Read more: [**Live facial recognition technology guidance published | College of Policing**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Inside policing, episode two: Policing the pandemic

Inside policing is the monthly podcast for everyone with an interest in policing, crime reduction and criminal justice. Join the host of the podcast, former police officer Rob Flanagan, as he talks to the people behind top stories and hot topics. Each episode brings together voices from across the service to share knowledge and insight on critical issues in policing.

Episode two has been released and Rob speaks to four guests.

- Sergeant Riz Dala from Lancashire Constabulary shares his experience of what it was like policing the pandemic as a frontline officer in Blackpool.
- Superintendent Hannah Wheeler QPM, Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and National Police Coordination Centre (NPoCC) PPE Lead, describes how she built a team to manage the procurement and supply of personal protective equipment for policing.
- Assistant Chief Constable Owen Weatherill, Strategic Lead for NPoCC, shares his insight and learning from being Commander of Operation Talla, the operational response to policing the pandemic.
- Nicole Higgins, Head of Profession for Engagement and Implementation at the College of Policing, describes leading the team that produced advice and briefings for the police response to the pandemic.

You can listen to the podcast on the College of Policing website, or subscribe and listen on Google Podcasts, Apple Podcasts or Spotify.

Read more: [Inside policing episode two - policing the pandemic | College of Policing](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Legal updates

Bills

Online Safety Bill progresses in the House of Commons

This Bill was debated at second reading on Tuesday 19 April 2022 and has now been sent to a Public Bill Committee which will scrutinise the Bill line by line and is expected to report to the House by Thursday 30 June 2022.

The Bill, which aims to protect people from harmful content, will require social media platforms, search engines, apps and other specified websites to deal with illegal activity and content that is harmful to children.

The Bill also aims to protect people's freedom of speech, ensuring that social media platforms do not remove content unnecessarily.

Ofcom, the regulator, can impose fines of up to 10% of a company's annual global turnover if they do not adhere to the law. Further sanctions include blocking sites that do not comply and forcing them to improve. The government has also announced that executives of companies could be held personally responsible, including facing a custodial sentence within two months of the Bill becoming law.

Damian Hinds, Minister of State for Security and Borders said:

'Our utmost priority is to protect children and ensure public safety. The trailblazing Online Safety Bill will ensure social media companies are finally held to account and are taking ownership of the massive effect they have on all of our lives. Fraudsters will have fewer places to hide and abusers will be ardently pursued to feel the full force of the law.'

There have been a number of changes to the Bill since the first draft in May 2021, including:

- websites that host or publish pornography must check that users are 18 years old or over
- measures to tackle anonymous trolls
- criminalising cyberflashing

Read more: **[World-first online safety laws introduced in Parliament - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)**

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act

The Bill received Royal Assent and became law (an Act) on 28 April and will be implemented over the coming months.

The College's work to prepare guidance for various measures which will change future police practice is ongoing.

Read more: **[Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act - Parliamentary Bills - UK Parliament](#)**

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Acts

Offensive Weapons Act 2019

Changes in the law enacted by the Offensive Weapons Act 2019 make it harder for young people to buy dangerous weapons, both at the point of sale and delivery, from 6 April 2022.

Further legal obligations are now placed on retailers and couriers to prevent knives, corrosives and other offensive weapons from being sold or delivered to those under the age of 18. In addition, the new restrictions make it a criminal offence to possess a corrosive substance in a public place, with those found guilty facing up to four years of imprisonment. The sale of corrosive substances to anyone under 18 is also prohibited.

To assist the implementation of legislation, police and partners will be working to educate the public and business community on these legal changes. The introduction of these legal measures intends to be a further means to help deter young people from becoming involved in knife possession and knife crime.

The Act also places new responsibilities on retailers and delivery companies during online sales and delivery of knives and corrosives. Packages containing these items will require age verification to ensure that the customer is over 18.

Read more: [**Offensive Weapons Act 2019**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Glue Traps (Offences) Act

Following agreement by both Houses on the text of the Bill, it received Royal Assent on 28 April. The Bill is now an Act of Parliament (law).

The Act makes certain uses of glue traps for the purpose of catching a rodent an offence. It also provides the Secretary of State with the power to grant a 'glue trap licence' to pest controllers in specified circumstances.

Read more: [**Glue Traps \(Offences\) Act**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Before the courts

Abdulahi, R. v [2022] EWCA Crim 412

The appellant, on 17 August 2021, was convicted of sexual assault contrary to section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Count 1) and common assault, contrary to section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 (Count 2) in the Crown Court at Plymouth.

The appellant now appeals against conviction on Count 1.

The facts

On 20 March 2020, the appellant was taken into custody after allegedly attempting to punch a pedestrian. In custody, he was examined by a nurse (CS) after displaying unusual behaviour, such as not being able to stand unaided and appearing drunk. After the examination, where it was established that the appellant's blood sugar level was very low, CS returned four hours later to carry out re-tests when the appellant's levels were within the normal range. During the examination, the appellant deliberately touched CS's breast with the back of his hand. She later reported the incident to the police.

On 28 April 2020, the appellant was interviewed and denied intentionally or deliberately touching CS's breast. He accepted that he may have accidentally brushed against her but had no recollection of doing so.

The trial

The prosecution argued that the appellant sexually assaulted CS when he intentionally touched her breast. To prove this, they relied on evidence from CS and the statement of a colleague.

The defence response was that the appellant did not intentionally or deliberately reach out or touch CS on the breast. The appellant also relied on non-insane automatism on the basis of low blood sugar level.

The judge withdrew the defence of non-insane automatism on the basis that the appellant's blood sugar levels had returned to a normal range by the time of the alleged sexual assault. The judge directed the jury to the effect that if they found the appellant had intentionally touched CS's breast over her clothing, they must find him guilty.

Appeal

On behalf of the appellant, two points were argued. Firstly, that the judge had erred in withdrawing the defence of non-insane automatism and secondly, that the judge had ‘overly simplified’ the issues for the jury as to whether the assault was sexual. Only the second point was pursued.

It was argued that the judge should have directed the jury to also consider whether the touching was sexual in the circumstances, and to consider the appellant’s purpose.

On behalf of the Crown, it was submitted that touching a woman’s breast was sexual by its nature, and that the judge was correct to approach the matter in the way that he did.

Conclusion

The Court of Appeal concluded that the nature of the touching had been explored in detail in CS’s oral evidence, including the fact that it could not have been accidental. As a result, the Court held that a reasonable person would consider the nature of the act itself to be obviously and inevitably sexual. Therefore, the judge was correct to only ask the jury to consider a single question of whether the touching was intentional.

As a result, the Court considered that the conviction was safe and dismissed the appeal.

Read more: [Abdulahi, R. v \[2022\] EWCA Crim 412](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Policing

News

Trauma-informed custody scheme introduced for detained children

Northamptonshire Police is one of the first forces to introduce a new scheme to deal with the traumatic experiences of children brought into custody.

The trauma-informed custody process will aim to better support children who have been arrested, understand the effects of childhood trauma, recognise vulnerability and reduce repeat offending.

The force says it detains up to 70 children a month. A significant number of these children have experienced highly stressful and potentially traumatic events or situations during their childhood or adolescence, known as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

To avoid custody staff adding to the chronic stress that their youngest detainees are likely carrying, custody and detention officers have received special training to become trauma-informed to prevent replicating traumatic experiences.

Chief Inspector Julie Mead said:

‘We know a high proportion of children in our custody suites are likely to have experienced some kind of trauma or adverse event in their childhood. So, the approach we are now taking with every child, is that they are more likely than not to have a history of trauma.

‘What we don’t want to do is exacerbate trauma further or re-trigger it while children are in custody – as this won’t help the detainee or indeed the victim.’

The force have made changes to some of their cells after receiving advice from Dr Louise Kirby, a Northampton-based neurodiversity practitioner.

Blackboard paint has been added to the cell wall, so that detainees can use chalk to express themselves by drawing. They have also placed shapes on the walls so they can bounce a small rubber ball against them. This can have a soothing effect for people who are neurodivergent.

Chief Inspector Mead explained: ‘These small measures have made a huge difference in calming detainees, and having calm detainees makes for a much more amenable investigation – which supports a better outcome for the victim.’

Mead said that, ultimately, the force wants to prevent crime and stop children becoming perpetual offenders.

Read more: [**Police Professional | Northamptonshire Police introduces ‘trauma-informed custody’ scheme for detained children**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Home Office funding to help GMP tackle county lines crime

Greater Manchester Police have joined the MPS, West Midlands Police, Merseyside Police and British Transport Police in receiving extra funding from the Home Office. The decision to provide the funding is a result of Manchester consistently being one of the top five areas for county lines drug activity.

The additional funding, which will be provided over three years, will fund a new team that will focus on county lines.

The Policing and Crime Minister, Kit Malthouse, stated:

‘The controllers of drug networks around Manchester are ruthless criminals motivated by nothing but greed. They fuel violence and exploit children to do their dirty work, so they can stay undetected.

‘But we see them, and with this dedicated team, Greater Manchester Police will do more than ever before to stop them and spare the local community from their poison.’

Read more: [**Police Professional | GMP becomes latest specialist County Lines force**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Police officer's actions found to amount to gross misconduct

A misconduct hearing took place on 8 April 2022 in relation to a former Met police officer who resigned in March 2021. Assistant Commissioner Helen Ball decided that PC David Niven's actions amounted to gross misconduct, and he would have been dismissed had he not resigned.

In February 2021, PC David Niven, previously of the North West Command Unit, was driving off-duty when he hit a pedestrian in Finchley. He then failed to stop at the scene, attending a police station the following day. He appeared before Willesden Magistrates' Court in October 2021, where he pleaded guilty, receiving a fine and eight penalty points on his driving licence.

The man who was injured by PC David Niven was taken to hospital by London Ambulance Service, and his injuries were assessed as not life-threatening.

Read more: [**Misconduct proven against former officer | Metropolitan Police**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Guidance: Request for Mutual Legal Assistance in criminal matters: guidelines for authorities outside of the UK (accessible version)

The Home Office has published 'Request for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters: Guidelines for authorities outside the United Kingdom'. This replaces the previous guidelines on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters for foreign authorities.

The Home Office also removed Polish and Turkish translations as they are outdated, and will develop new translations.

Forms for confiscation and freezing measures are also provided in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

Read more: [**Request for mutual legal assistance in criminal matters: Guidelines for authorities outside the United Kingdom**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

The outcome of misconduct hearing for former officer

At a misconduct hearing chaired by Assistant Commissioner Helen Ball, the conduct of a former police officer constituted gross misconduct. The hearing decided that the former police officer, who retired in June 2021, would have been dismissed without notice had he still been serving.

The hearing took place for former PC Javed Sabir, previously attached to West Area Command Unit, on Thursday, 7 April 2022. Mr Sabir faced allegations that his conduct amounted to a breach of the standards of professional behaviour in respect of discreditable conduct.

It followed his appearance at Uxbridge Magistrates' Court on 3 December 2021, where he pleaded guilty to stalking. The offence occurred between April and October 2021, when Sabir would repeatedly call and text a woman, show up at her home address and follow her.

Read more: [**Misconduct hearing outcome for former police sergeant | Metropolitan Police**](#) or [**Misconduct proven against former officer following his conviction for domestic abuse offences | Metropolitan Police**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Responses to the report on Hestia's super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery

In May 2021, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) published a [**Report on Hestia's super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery**](#).

The report made recommendations to chief constables, police and crime commissioners and the Home Office. It also included actions for HMICFRS and the College of Policing regarding their work.

For the College of Policing, the action was to 'review and update its APP on major investigations and public protection on modern slavery as soon as possible and amend relevant content in other guidance as part of its regular updating processes'.

The APP on modern slavery will update as part of the College of Policing's regular maintenance programme, published later this year (2022).

Read more: [**Responses to The hidden victims: Report on Hestia’s super-complaint on the police response to victims of modern slavery**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Reports

MPS accepts IOPC’s recommendations following an investigation into ‘bullying and discrimination’ among officers

Following an investigation into the conduct of a team of officers at Charing Cross Police Station between 2016 and 2018, the MPS has accepted 15 recommendations from the IOPC. The IOPC’s Operation Hotton learning report, which was published in February 2022, highlights inappropriate behaviour by officers, including racism, misogyny, harassment and the exchange of offensive social media messages.

The IOPC said it was ‘as an important step towards recovering public trust and confidence’ and tackling ‘underlying cultural issues’, after its report uncovered bullying and discrimination within the ranks.

MPS Deputy Assistant Commissioner Bas Javid, said: ‘Like so many people I was disgusted to see officers involved in sharing deeply offensive and discriminatory messages. Their behaviour was unacceptable.

‘I know many of my colleagues across policing also felt ashamed and disappointed. We are determined to root out people who don’t share our values and don’t belong in the Met. As we do this, unfortunately, we will continue to see more cases where officers and staff fail to uphold our expectations of them.’

Read more: [**Police Professional | MPS accepts IOPC’s recommendations following report into ‘bullying and discrimination’ among officers**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Harsher sentences for drugs used in spiking offences

GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyric acid), a drug commonly used to spike drinks, has been reclassified as a Class B drug, along with two related substances, GBL (gamma-butyrolactone) and 1,4-BD (1,4-butanediol). These drugs have facilitated crimes including murder, rape, sexual assault and robbery.

Since 13 April 2022, the unlawful possession of these drugs can lead to sentences of up to five years of imprisonment. Those involved in supply and production will face up to 14 years in prison.

Read more: [Harsher sentences introduced for 'spiking' drugs](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

New mobile phone laws for drivers come into force from 25 March 2022

From 25 March 2022, it is now illegal for motorists to use a handheld mobile phone under virtually any circumstance while driving. Motorists will be breaking the law if they use a handheld mobile phone behind the wheel for any use, as the government closes a loophole previously exploited by dangerous drivers to escape conviction.

This new legislation is aimed at reducing deaths caused by careless and dangerous driving. However, the Police Foundation's recent report, 'The future of roads policing', argues that legislation only works if there are sufficient roads policing officers to enforce it.

According to official figures from 2020 (the last year for which there is data), 17 people were killed, 114 people were seriously injured, and 385 were slightly injured in road traffic accidents in Great Britain where the driver was using a mobile phone. However, the data collection method is inconsistent, so the total could be far higher.

Anyone caught using their mobile phone while behind the steering wheel could face a fine of up to £1,000, as well as six points on their licence or a full driving ban. The law still applies if a driver is stopped at traffic lights, queuing in traffic, supervising a learner driver, or using a car that has a start/stop engine when you're not moving. Drivers will still be able to use their mobile phones as a sat nav, but only if it remains in the cradle, they do not touch it and it is not obscuring their view of the road.

Read More: [**New mobile phone law will only work if there are enough roads policing officers to enforce it - The Police Foundation \(police-foundation.org.uk\)**](#)

↑ [Back to contents](#)

HMICFRS: Staffordshire Police needs to urgently improve child protection

After carrying out an inspection of Staffordshire Police, HMICFRS has stated that there are dedicated officers and staff committed to keeping children safe, as well as some areas of effective practice. Overall, however, children were not being effectively safeguarded in the region.

Urgent improvements suggested by HMICFRS included:

- recognising that missing children are particularly vulnerable
- sharing information about online child abuse promptly
- speaking to children to record their behaviour and demeanour, listen to their concerns and views, and then use that information to make decisions about their welfare

Read more: [**Staffordshire Police to improve child protection**](#)

↑ [Back to contents](#)

Criminal justice news

Consultation period of new sentencing guidelines

A consultation period is currently taking place in relation to two sentencing guidelines published by the Sentencing Council. The offences that the guidelines cover are:

- perverting the course of justice contrary to common law
- witness intimidation under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

The intention of the guidelines is to provide consistency and transparency for all involved.

The new guidelines will address the currently limited guidance in relation to witness intimidation offences.

Read more: [Consultation for sentencing guidelines for perverting the course of justice and witness intimidation offences published – Sentencing \(sentencingcouncil.org.uk\)](https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/consultation-for-sentencing-guidelines-for-perverting-the-course-of-justice-and-witness-intimidation-offences-published-sentencing-sentencingcouncil.org.uk)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

CPS launch the Serious Economic Organised Crime and International Directorate

The CPS launched the Serious Economic Organised Crime and International Directorate on 1 April 2022, merging the International Justice and Organised Crime Division with the Specialist Fraud Division, which will work alongside CPS Proceeds of Crime as one team.

The CPS hope that this new structure will:

- utilise specialist knowledge on serious organised and economic crime to deliver justice to combat crime across borders and take money away from criminals
- encourage early engagement with law enforcement to be more proactive when responding to threats
- use legal tools to deter future criminality, recover proceeds of crime and compensate victims where possible

Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, the CPS recovered assets worth £568 million from criminals through confiscation orders. The CPS Proceeds of Crime Division assisted Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service in recovering £390 million of that amount, of which nearly £126 million was returned to victims of crime by way of compensation.

Read more: [**CPS responds to changing nature of serious economic and organised crime with a new team | The Crown Prosecution Service**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Bar Council's latest figures show a 11% drop in publicly funded criminal barristers

Last year saw an 11% drop in barristers practising in publicly funded criminal law. In 2021, only 2,400 barristers reported that their practice was entirely publicly funded criminal work, down from 2,670 the previous year.

The latest figures were published on 8 April 2022 by the Bar Council, which said that they show 'the stark impact of the pandemic on the criminal bar', amid rising concern about the criminal legal aid sector.

Sir Christopher Bellamy, who chaired the government-commissioned criminal legal aid review, said that a minimum of an extra £135m a year is needed to nurse the criminal legal aid sector back to health following years of neglect, a recommendation accepted by the Ministry of Justice.

The Bar Council said there was also a 'disproportionate drop' in new practitioners doing full-time publicly funded criminal work last year, with the figure down by 38%, although it added that this is 'likely to be in great part due to a drop in the number of pupillages offered in 2019-20'.

It also said that: 'Many barristers are burnt out and need a break from the relentless amount of work they are doing. Criminal legal work is incredibly challenging. The new data published today suggests that barristers will look for alternatives to criminal work whenever they can.'

Read more: [**Publicly-funded criminal barrister numbers drop by 11% | News | Law Gazette**](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Successful pilot scheme of alcohol-monitoring tags

Following the success of a pilot scheme where 3,100 criminals were fitted with alcohol-monitoring tags, the Ministry of Justice will roll out the tags to more offenders in the summer. It is estimated that 12,000 offenders will wear the tags by 2025.

Since April 2021, the courts have had the option to order offenders to wear an alcohol-monitoring tag as part of a community sentence when their crime was driven by alcohol. Drink-related violent crime makes up 39% of all violent crime and costs around £21.5 billion per year.

The government will spend £183 million rolling out the use of the tags.

The Minister of State for Crime and Policing, Kit Malthouse, said:

‘We are ramping up our use of this innovative technology because it is working, with offenders staying sober 97 per cent of the time.

‘It is not only protecting the public from the scourge of alcohol-fuelled crime – it also gives probation officers the chance to work with offenders to help them turn their lives around.’

Read more: [Alcohol tags helping thousands of offenders stay sober](#)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

The sale of knives: Retailers sign revised voluntary agreement

To restrict the sale of knives to persons under 18, several prominent UK retailers agreed to adhere to a voluntary agreement. The agreement has been in place since 2016 and revised following the passing of the Offensive Weapons Act 2019, which received Royal Assent in May 2019.

The revised agreement addresses concerns about the display of knives. The signatories are Aldi, Amazon UK, Argos, Asda, B&Q, Boots, Co-Op, Dunelm, eBay, Homesense, John Lewis, Lidl GB, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco, TK Maxx, Waitrose and Wilko.

Retailers will ensure that knives are displayed and packaged securely to minimise risk. Retailers will also take practical and proportionate steps to restrict accessibility and avoid immediate use, reduce the possibility of injury and prevent theft.

Read more: [Sale of knives: voluntary agreement by retailers - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/sale-of-knives-voluntary-agreement-by-retailers)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

Government announces a further £130 million to bolster efforts tackling serious violence and homicide.

The government reveals that the Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) and 'hotspot policing' initiatives prevented 49,000 violent offences across England and Wales, as it sets out an ambitious funding programme to build on efforts tackling serious violence.

In 2019, the VRUs were established in 18 areas across England and Wales, bringing together local partners in policing, education, health and local government, to share information to identify vulnerable children and adults at risk, helping steer them away from a life of crime and violence.

Recent figures, which were published in an evaluation of these VRUs' first 18 months of operation, demonstrate the impact that they are having up and down the country, changing lives and reducing violent crime. Violence hotspots saw 8,000 fewer incidents of violence leading to injury and 41,000 fewer incidents without injury, compared with areas that didn't. This has resulted in an estimated £385 million avoided in associated costs for victims and society.

Home Secretary, Priti Patel, said:

‘While we will never let up our relentless pursuit to see the worst criminals thrown behind bars, it is quite clear there are many factors that can lead a vulnerable person into a life of seemingly inescapable violence.

‘If we are to succeed in our mission to level up the country, we must do more to reach those at risk of violence early on to break the cycle of crime.’

The funding package includes an additional £64 million for the existing VRUs, with two new units to be established in Cleveland and Humberside. An additional £30 million for the ‘Grip’ police enforcement programme will support the implementation of the new Serious Violence Duty and Serious Violence Reduction Orders, which will be brought into law via the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill.

Serious Violence Reduction Orders will steer more offenders away from a life of crime, while ensuring that if they persist, they are more likely to be caught and more lives will potentially be saved.

Read more: [‘Whole-system’ approach to tackling violent crime is working - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/whole-system-approach-to-tackling-violent-crime-is-working)

[↑ Back to contents](#)

New guidance to tackle domestic abuse misconceptions

Guidance produced by the CPS aims to tackle and highlight common misconceptions about domestic abuse cases and victims. There is currently an ongoing 12-week consultation period until 26 June 2022.

Some of the myths and stereotypes explored in the guidance include that:

- domestic abuse is a crime of passion
- if the situation is so bad, why don’t they just leave
- previous withdrawals of complaints or a reluctance to cooperate means that victims lack credibility

Furthermore, the CPS have highlighted that victims of domestic abuse can present in a number of ways, which should be acknowledged to provide support to the victims and build a strong case.

The guidance states that any child who witnesses domestic abuse should also be treated as a victim. This is applicable to any child who

sees, hears or experiences the effects of domestic abuse, and is related to the victim or perpetrator.

The CPS Domestic Abuse Lead, Kate Brown, has said:

‘Many people seem to have a fixed idea about what a domestic abuse victim looks like and what their circumstances are. They are wrong. This is a crime which affects both men and women from every walk of life.

‘But these damaging misconceptions can have a real impact on a case with some victims withdrawing from the process altogether. It is vital our prosecutors have all the tools to ensure every single stereotype is rightly and fairly challenged.

‘By understanding both the defendant’s behaviour and the devastating effect it can have, will help our prosecutors build stronger cases and offer better support to victims.’

Following the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, the guidance clarifies the CPS stance that ‘rough sex’ cannot be used as a defence. In line with legislation, the guidance has also included the threat of sharing private sexual images or films to the existing revenge porn offence.

Read more: **[‘There is no typical victim of domestic abuse’ CPS says, as it revises its legal guidance to challenge damaging myths and stereotypes | The Crown Prosecution Service](#)**

[↑ Back to contents](#)

About the College

We're the professional body for the police service in England and Wales.

Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

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