

SUCCESS STORY

CLEVELAND POLICE

First outsourced criminal justice service in UK policing



A transformational model for delivering Criminal Justice services that has freed up officers for operational policing and has cut the cost of service delivery.

The challenge

Time consuming and resource heavy, the preparation of prosecution case files has typically been carried out internally by UK police forces. As part of its 10-year transformational partnership, Cleveland Police has outsourced its Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) to Sopra Steria.

The vision for a transformed CJU at Cleveland mirrors that of the November 2010 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary report "Stop the Drift". The Force was looking for a way to improve the speed and accuracy of the court process, to support cases getting to court more quickly and to avoid extended proceedings.

Traditionally a paper-based case file had been used across the Force, which by its very nature is difficult to share between the CJU, officers, CPS and court. For officers this meant time consuming journeys to the CJU to review information, or the need to wait for files to be sent to them.

Outsourcing the CJU was seen as an opportunity to deliver on cost and efficiency objectives, while freeing up officers for frontline services.

Key points

- Business process redesign to deliver a continuous flow of information and eliminate tedious repetition in data entry and provide better use of intelligence
- Integrated technology providing a seamless chain from reporting of a crime, through arrest, charging and custody and on to case file preparation

- 25% reduction in Criminal Justice Unit costs
- Introduction of highly trained expert role as Evidential Review Officer

Our solution

To transform the operation in the CJU Sopra Steria has implemented new technology and undertaken process redesign. Stringent service level agreements are in place to shape behaviours in line with the Force's operational and business objectives.

Integrated technology is central to the new CJU and is linking all the remodelled Criminal Justice processes in a seamless chain from the reporting of a crime, through arrest, charging and custody services and on to case file preparation. The new technologies include:

- Niche Record Management System (RMS) Custody and Case Preparation functionality
- Reveal Media's M3 enterprise Digital Evidence Management (DEM) solution for securely storing and sharing multimedia information such as video, audio, images and documents
- PACE compliant digital audio and video interview recording equipment to directly stream interview recordings to the Reveal M3 DEM solution

How we worked together

Together with Sopra Steria's consulting expertise we have built on the transferred team's knowledge to ensure the new end-to-end criminal justice processes are more streamlined and easier for officers and staff to use. The team has worked closely with the Force at every stage of the programme and officers and staff have been fully trained in the new systems, workflows, forms and templates.

Sopra Steria has also worked closely with Cleveland's Custody partner Tascor to ensure that by reusing existing data they can continue to achieve minimal waiting times for booking in of detainees.

A new team structure has combined some roles and. Sopra Steria has introduced the post of Evidential Review Officers. These experts are highly trained, with legal qualifications such as the ILEX Certificate in Criminal Justice Administration.

Suzy Vaughan, Head of the outsourced Criminal Justice Unit, is enthused that immediate operational improvements have been delivered. "With the electronic case file we are providing a much better service to the Force, partner agencies and the community. It has also provided our staff with development opportunities, giving them greater responsibility and has made their job more rewarding."

Results and benefits

In addition to achieving 25% reduction in costs, the changes in the CJU are reducing bureaucracy and enhancing operational efficiency.

Reducing bureaucracy - Administrative effort for officers has been reduced, information is reused and duplication has been cut at every stage of the process, e.g. offender information submitted via a mobile device no longer needs to be re-entered in the custody suite, again in the CJU and other areas across the Force.

Enhancing operational efficiency - Digital Evidence Management has minimised the need for proximity to physical objects. This has reduced the need for officers to travel to other locations and allows staff across the Force to have simultaneous access to evidential items e.g. interviews and scene of crime images. In turn this enables early intervention and decision making. Additionally officers can return to frontline duties more quickly as Pre-Charging Advice can now take place by phone and supervisor sign off can be completed remotely.

Improving citizen focus - 31 officers have been released to the frontline. In addition, case file quality has improved and officers have been able to cut the amount of time spent in case preparation and unnecessary court attendance.

“Cleveland Police is proud to be one of the first UK forces to completely move away from paper based Criminal Justice processes. Sopra Steria has enabled us to achieve a lot in a short space of time and they have helped us transform the way we work. We now are able to work on cases more quickly and effectively which allows officers to spend more time in local communities.”

Darren Best
Detective Chief
Superintendent



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