

PRESS RELEASE

CLEVELAND CRIMINAL JUSTICE AREA: **REPORT OF THE JOINT INSPECTION**

The five criminal justice inspectorates are publishing a joint report today on the Cleveland Criminal Justice Area which gives the people of Cleveland a clear view of the effectiveness of their local criminal justice system.

The report includes detailed findings on key performance measures, identifies areas where improvements are required and makes recommendations to the Cleveland Criminal Justice Board (CCJB) for the future. It focuses on four main objectives for the area:

- Increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system;
- Increasing the number of offences brought to justice;
- Reducing ineffective trials; and
- Enforcement of community penalties.

Key findings include:

Confidence in the effectiveness of the criminal justice agencies in bringing offenders to justice in Cleveland has increased by a fifth since 2003 and is above the local target.

Extra support to improve detection rates since the inception of the CCJB in 2003 has meant that the Offences Brought to Justice (OBtJ) numbers have increased by 28% since then and are now on track to meet the 2006-07 target. In addition, the sanction detection performance is above target for the current year.

Cleveland has four very effective Prolific and Persistent Offender (PPO) schemes, two of which – Middlesbrough and Stockton – have attracted national commendation. Persistent Young Offender performance in the area is also good; in 2005-06 it averaged 64 days from arrest to sentence, despite a sharp rise in the number of elapsed days taken in late 2005/early 2006.

The ineffective trial rate in the magistrates' court continues to fall and now stands at 17.4% – exceeding the target and almost half the level in 2002 – and is expected to fall further.

The area has seen significant progress in recovering the proceeds of crime with 2005/6 seeing 62 confiscation orders granted against criminals to a total value of £822,467. Cleveland Police plan to set up a new economic crime unit which will assist in maintaining this good performance.

Overall the report shows that the CCJB has made many significant improvements to the delivery and management of the Cleveland Criminal

Justice Area. The issues and recommendations detailed within the report will enable them to build on this progress.

Notes for editors:

1. Local Criminal Justice Boards operate on a non-statutory basis and formally came into existence on 1 April 2003. They are responsible for delivering targets at local level to support the achievement of national objectives to improve the criminal justice system.
2. The report covers inspections from HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPPI), HM Inspectorate of Court Administration (HMICA), HM Inspectorate of Probation, and HM Inspectorate of Prisons. The Quality and Standards Department of Victim Support also assisted the joint inspectorate team.
3. The Cleveland Criminal Justice Area is divided into four policing Basic Command Units (BCUs), known locally as districts (Hartlepool, Langbaugh, Stockton and Middlesbrough). There are four unitary local authorities (Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton and Middlesbrough) within the area and their boundaries are coterminous with the boundaries of the Police BCUs. There are three Youth Offending Teams (YOTs). Teesside Crown Court sits at Middlesbrough and there are three magistrates' courts: Teesside, Langbaugh East and Hartlepool. Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). Probation offices are located near to the courts. There are two prisons within the area, HMP Kirkclevington and HMP Holme House.
4. Local Criminal Justice Boards are charged with establishing and delivering, at local level, targets to support the achievement of national objectives that are designed to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system. The national targets, which are drawn from the Ministerial Public Service Agreements (PSAs), include:
 - Increasing the level of public confidence in the criminal justice system by bringing offenders to justice to 40% by March 2007.
 - Improving the delivery of justice by increasing the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25 million by March 2008 (rolling target).
 - A 27% reduction in the proportion of ineffective trials by March 2007, with the proportion of ineffective trials to be no more than 18% in magistrates' courts and 17% in the Crown Court.
 - All community breach penalties should take an average of 35 working days from breach to resolution, and that 50% of all breach proceedings be resolved within 25 days of the relevant failure to comply.

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