



**Matthew Barber**  
Police & Crime Commissioner  
for Thames Valley

## **Response to HMICFRS Report on Joint case building by the police and Crown Prosecution Service: final report**

[Joint case building by the police and Crown Prosecution Service: final report - His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

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PCC Response: August 2025

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### **Executive Summary**

This joint inspection by HMICFRS and HMCPSP provides a timely and detailed assessment of the effectiveness of case building between police forces and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The report highlights persistent challenges and areas for improvement, particularly around file quality, redaction, and inter-agency collaboration. Thames Valley Police (TVP) has acknowledged the findings and is actively progressing work aligned with the recommendations. The following response sets out the Police and Crime Commissioner's perspective on the report and outlines areas for continued scrutiny and assurance.

#### **PCC Response**

I welcome this joint inspection report as a constructive and necessary intervention in improving the quality and timeliness of case building across policing and the CPS. The findings reinforce the importance of effective collaboration, robust governance, and targeted training in securing justice outcomes that are fair, proportionate, and timely.

#### **Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) Engagement**

The report was discussed at the Thames Valley LCJB meeting on 31 July 2025. I am assured that both police and CPS representatives are aware of the findings and are considering their implications. TVP's Head of Criminal Justice confirmed that the force's Learning and Professional Development department is actively aligning its work with the recommendations, particularly in support of PIP 1 investigators. I will continue to use the LCJB as a key forum for monitoring multi-agency progress and ensuring accountability.

#### **Observations on Key Recommendations**

- **Recommendation 5 – Gatekeeping and Governance**

I note the structured approach TVP has taken through its Justice Gateway model, which provides a triage and quality assurance function prior to CPS submission. The deployment of Justice Gateway Officers, alongside innovations such as the File Buddy App and CTL bots, reflects a commitment to continuous improvement. These developments are designed to enhance file quality, reduce unnecessary submissions, and support

officer development. I will seek assurance that these systems are delivering measurable improvements and are resilient to increasing demand, particularly in relation to statutory time limits and case progression.

- **Recommendation 7 – Supervisor Training**

While case file-specific training for supervisors is not yet embedded, I welcome the existing CPD offer for Sergeants and DS EROs. Monthly training sessions and specialist inputs on supervision and decision-making are in place, and the development of Teams in Action training days is a positive step. These sessions, particularly those focused on post-scene investigation and case file handling, must be evaluated for impact. I will continue to scrutinise how these programmes are being implemented and whether they are improving supervisory oversight and file quality.

- **Recommendation 9 – Joint Training and IT Understanding**

The March 2024 training delivered to frontline officers on the case file journey is a strong foundation. It covered key elements such as charging routes, documentation, redaction practices, and common errors. I support further joint training with CPS to enhance mutual understanding of roles and IT systems. The forthcoming Teams in Action days present an opportunity to reinforce these themes and improve operational efficiency. I will monitor how these joint efforts are being embedded and whether they are contributing to improved case outcomes.

### **Strategic Considerations**

Recommendation 15, which proposes legislative reform to address the burden of redaction, is of strategic significance. I note the view expressed at the LCJB that primary legislation may be required to resolve longstanding challenges in this area. If pursued, such reform could deliver significant financial and operational benefits across policing and the criminal justice system. I support continued engagement with national partners, including the APCC, NPCC, and Home Office, to explore practical and proportionate solutions. The potential to unlock efficiencies and improve outcomes for victims must not be overlooked.

### **Conclusion**

Progress against the report's recommendations will be monitored through established governance mechanisms, including LCJB oversight and PCC-led performance meetings. Particular attention will be paid to file quality, supervisory capability, CPS engagement, and the use of technology. I remain committed to supporting improvements that enhance justice outcomes and uphold public confidence across Thames Valley.

Matthew Barber

Police and Crime Commissioner for Thames Valley

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