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Introduction

As we begin a new year of HMCS with a new area structure it is worth reflecting how extremely well the former areas of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire have delivered against key targets and standards in spite of a number of challenges experienced during the past year. We should all be proud of this achievement. Our staff have continued to perform at a high level and our continued good performance throughout this year is a direct result of staff's commitment and enthusiasm and I am extremely grateful for all their efforts.

The Business Year 2006-2007

It was clear from the start that 2006-2007 would be a challenging year however during the year we have retained a clear focus and delivered improvements on customer service issues and delivered on the vast majority of key targets against a background of limited budgets and constant change.

We have improved performance across a wide range of key performance measures in the Crown Court, the County Courts and the magistrates' courts. There remain concerns about delays in the magistrates' courts at Nottingham and Derby and there are plans in place to tackle these in advance of the Magistrates Courts Streamlining changes outlined in the plan. Performance on key enforcement targets has been particularly good.

In Nottingham early work on Community Justice has been successful in enabling plans for early commencement of sittings in 2007. In Derbyshire a successful Court Open Day at Chesterfield and national recognition of work on Diversity through the Justice Award to Nigel Hallam provides a sound base for moving forward plans for wider community engagement.

On estates, magistrates court sittings in Glossop moved to Buxton in December 2007 and the co-location of the magistrates and County courts in Buxton was agreed and implementation plans are underway.

On IT, PCOL and eDiary systems have been implemented in the County Courts but work is required on both of these and Xhibit in the Crown Court to fully realise the benefits they can bring.

A wide range of new HMCS staff policies have been implemented and performance management has been embedded in all courts in readiness for the new system operational from 1st April 2007. Communication both internally within courts and between courts has improved but further work on this and learning and development opportunities for staff is required.

Looking forward to 2007-2008

The coming year will again be extremely challenging with further reductions in the resources available to deliver our services. We face, once again, a complex set of changes alongside maintaining performance and additionally we need to develop our business to deliver a real difference in the public's experience of the courts.

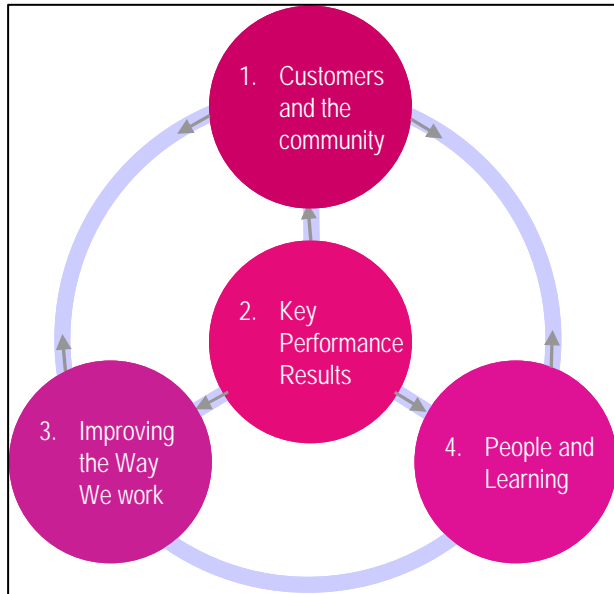
We will also be working this year in a new regional and area structure with the former Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire areas joining as one new area. This has distinct advantages in enabling us to build and share best practice and in operating as efficiently as possible.

I am sure the actions set out in this plan will be recognised by everyone as the right things to do. We will need to work together both internally and with our key partners within the judiciary and other agencies if we are to be successful in delivering this plan. We have strong foundations to build on which gives me confidence that we can succeed.



Mark Swales
Area Director
March 2007

The Year Ahead: Our Performance Framework.



1 Customers and the Community

- Delivering services well to customers
- The way our customers see us
- The way the community at large sees us
- The way we manage our customers and community relationships

2 Key Performance Results

- Delivering the key performance outcomes Governments is seeking from us and any others we have decided upon
- Managing our financial and other (non -people) resources well
- Identifying and managing key risks

3 Improving the Way We Work

- Identifying and prioritising opportunities for improvement and delivering those improvements
- Harnessing the creative and innovative talents of our people
- Effectively harnessing partnerships and our suppliers in developing improvements
- Involving stakeholders throughout the improvement process

4 People and Learning

- Planning, managing and improving our people resources to meet our business needs
- Identifying, developing and sustaining the competencies we need
- Involving, empowering and communicating with our people
- Reviewing, rewarding and recognising our people
- The way in which our people see us

The Year Ahead: Our Commitments

Given the tight resources framework within which we must continue to operate this year our focus will be on delivering results in essential areas of the business. These are set out below and represent a challenging but realisable range of outcomes.

Key performance results – Customers and the community

Key measures of success for 2007 - 2008

To embed the underlying principles behind community justice in all magistrates' courts, ensuring local courts improve their awareness and take account of local issues, particularly when dealing with low-level crime.

(NOTE – See sections below for service improvements for customers and the community in civil and family justice)

What we will do and how we will do it

- Deliver in partnership with the Local Criminal Justice Board and the Judiciary Community Justice court sittings in Nottingham from May 2007 and thereafter to identify suitable premises within either the Aspley or St Ann's areas where Community Justice court sittings can be held within the community.
- Embed the principles of community engagement in the day to day working of all magistrates courts by working with Area Courts Board and the Local Criminal Justice Boards in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire to establish closer links with current community / neighbourhood groups and initiatives and identifying key activities that will promote greater understanding of the services provided by the courts and inform the way in which those services are delivered to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged in accessing or using our services.
- Deliver agreed improvements in the service we provide to victims and witnesses, ensuring that this is wherever possible more personalised and based on the needs of individual victims and witnesses
- Ensure that clear and consistent customer service standards apply in all of our courts, staff are trained to deliver those standards fairly for all our court users and that the information available to customers and the community is accessible to all through provision in various formats and languages and there is a mechanism for feedback on the effectiveness of this information. Delivery against these standards will be monitored and reviewed and priority actions identified for further service improvements.

Key performance results –Delivery and resources

Key measures of success for 2007 – 2008

To reduce the time taken to deal with cases in the Crown Court, so that the majority of cases are commenced and concluded within 16 weeks

To simplify and speed up criminal cases in the magistrates so that the majority are concluded within 6 weeks of charge, with simple cases sentenced at the first hearing

To give greater priority and urgency to public law family cases ensuring that the matter is resolved in less than 40 weeks or such later time as the judiciary deem appropriate

(NOTE – See below under Improving the Way We Work for other delivery and resources measures in civil and family justice)

What we will do and how we will do it

- Maintain and further develop an effective partnership with the judiciary through Area Management Board dialogue with Resident Judges, Designated Civil and Family Judges and Bench Chairmen and to support local judicial leadership groups within the magistrates courts to ensure effective management of the judicial business of the magistrates courts
- Deliver, together with other criminal justice agencies in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and by working closely with other organisations and individuals, the key objectives set out in the delivery plans of the Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB's)
- Deliver on key public and private law family targets and small claims and fast / multi track targets whilst increasing the number of cases that are resolved without the need for a full hearing
- Ensure that resources are focused on key priorities and front line services and actively manage staffing numbers and cost and general administrative expenditure to deliver services within agreed budget and headcount reductions
- Identify key operational risks and ensure that appropriate and consistent countermeasures and governance procedures are in place and are regularly reviewed

Key performance results – Improving the way we work

Key measures of success for 2007 - 2008

(NOTE – See above under delivery and resources for some key delivery improvement measures)

To support and promote the work to put in place the systems and incentives to **ensure that the vast majority of civil business is initiated on line**

To provide a simpler and quicker service in the County Courts through supporting the introduction of a presumption that all but the most complex claims are dealt with by mediation

To encourage more families to resolve issues themselves through providing in court conciliation or directing parties to mediation where it is appropriate and safe to do so

What we will do and how we will do it

- Implement agreed magistrates courts streamlining changes (MCS) part of “Simpler, Speedier, Summary Justice” (CJSSS) within all courts across area by the end of December 2007
- Deliver improvements in the management of criminal legal aid by supporting delivery of reforms led by Legal Services Commission
- Deliver all IT / business change roll out programmes to agreed timetable and actively promote and deliver agreed benefits
- To promote and develop mediation services in both civil and family justice to ensure that we maximise the amount of cases that can be settled without the need for final hearings and determination by the court
- Deliver a co-located family administrative centre in Nottingham and develop plans for subsequent implementation in Derby
- Review our current court capacity, the standard of facilities and facilities management at each location to identify the future arrangements for delivery of modern standards of service and assurance on compliance with organisational standards within the area and implement actions to improve the flexibility and cost effectiveness of the service provided across the area (see also Annex D – Estates Strategy).

Key performance results – People and learning

Key measures of success for 2007 - 2008

To provide a **knowledgeable, personalised and readily accessible service**, keeping users informed about the progress of their case

What we will do and how we will do it

- Implement Pay and Grading changes, legal adviser career structures and embed the new performance management system and apply open and transparent benchmarking practices to develop confidence in the new system.
- Review management and staffing structures (administrative and legal) to ensure that there is smooth transition in relation to collection and enforcement activities, for which the new Regional Enforcement Director will have operational responsibility, and that as the opportunity arises to ensure that the maximum level of resources are focused on delivery of key targets and activities, an equitable distribution of resources between key areas of the business and there is no duplication within the new area arising from functions discharged in each of the former areas.
- To review and identify key local learning and development needs and ensure that learning and development is focused on supporting staff to deliver key business activity and changes, developing leadership and change management capability and is supported by a network of business skill coaches at each court location
- Ensure that all staff management, communication and learning and development activity actively promotes and delivers key diversity principles of the DCA and HMCS
- Maintain an honest, open and positive relationship with Trade Unions at Area level
- Ensure that all staff are supported in remaining at and / or returning to work through the appropriate use of flexible working and absence management policies.

Key performance results for Regional Collection and Enforcement Services

From April 2007 as part of the Midland's Region re-structuring programme we will be creating a Regional Enforcement Service [RES] that will bring together under one Regional Management Board Director all enforcement and cash collection services. We will develop a strategic plan for RES in consultation with our staff and partners with the objective of delivering a more effective, efficient and economic service across the Region that fully delivers our part of the Government's strategy on enforcement.

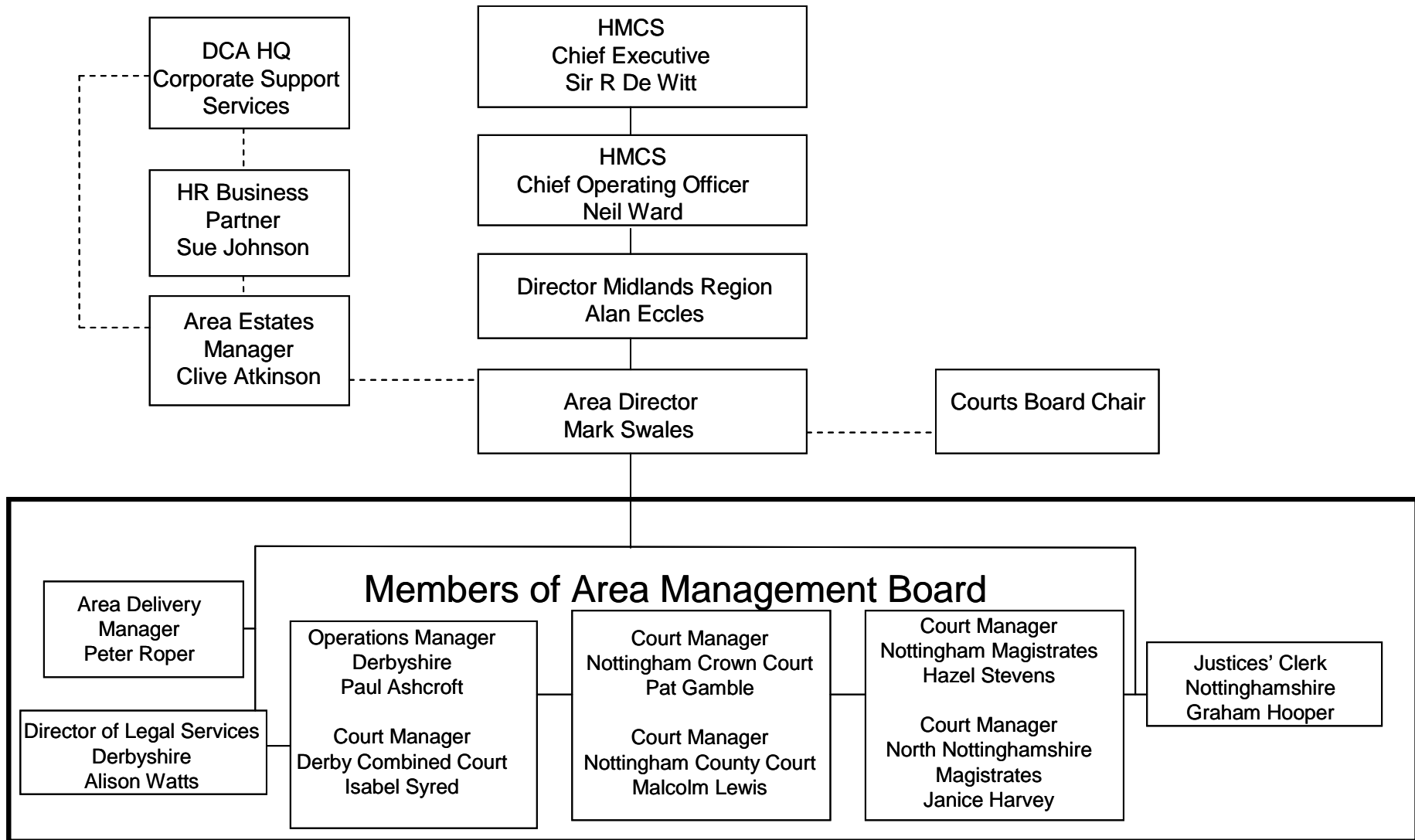
The detail of this plan will be developed over the coming months but there are already, some emerging themes upon which we intend to focus over the next year:

"Rigorous enforcement will revolutionise compliance with sentences and orders of the court" <i>(Government's Strategy for Criminal Justice System 2008)</i>	
<p>Customers and the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the advice and support we give to customers by increasing the number of Fines Clinics across the Region so that people can get the right help at the right time. • Investigate how we can increase the payment methods that people can use to pay their fines to give them greater choice/access. • Continue to conduct regular special exercises e.g. Payback, to target persistent defaulters and reassure the public that orders of the courts are rigorously enforced. • Ensure that RES plays a full part in the Community Justice Programme currently being developed. 	<p>Delivery and resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement performance targets form part of the Region's overall package of targets for 2007/08 and they include those targets agreed by the Local Criminal Justice Boards and set out in their delivery plans. • An underpinning aim is to reduce the level of variation in performance across the Region so that our customers can expect a consistent, effective service wherever they live or work in the Midlands.
<p>Improving the way we work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Regional Confiscation Order Enforcement Unit, which will enable a step-change in the level of money/assets recovered from the proceeds of crime. • Identify other enforcement functions, which may be suitable for centralisation at either Area, sub-regional or regional level that will enable us to deliver improved performance at lower cost. • Implement initiatives stemming from the National Enforcement Service e.g. new vehicles and equipment for our Enforcement Officers. 	<p>People and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and deliver specialised training to staff in our new Confiscation Order Enforcement Unit • Better equip our Enforcement Officers with new vehicles and equipment provided by the National Enforcement Service • Encourage and manage innovation in a controlled way so that best practice is implemented consistently across the Region. • Train our staff on the new HMCS performance management system being introduced in April 2007.

Annex A – Public Service Agreements Spending Review 2004

<p>Improve the delivery of justice by increasing the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25 million by 2007-08. Target contributing to the Criminal Justice System PSA.</p>	<p>Improve the delivery of justice by increasing the number of crimes for which an offender is brought to justice to 1.25m by 2007-08.</p> <p>A Criminal Justice System target jointly owned by member organisations of the Local Criminal Justice Board</p>
<p>Reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour, and building confidence in the Criminal Justice System without compromising fairness.</p> <p>Target contributing to the Criminal Justice System PSA.</p>	<p>Reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour, and building confidence in the CJS without compromising fairness.</p> <p>A Criminal Justice System target jointly owned by member organisations of the Local Criminal Justice Board</p>
<p>By 2009-10, increase the proportion of care cases being completed in the courts within 40 weeks by 10 percentage points.</p>	<p>By 2009-10 increase the proportion of public law (care) cases being completed within 40 weeks by 10 percentage points</p>
<p>Reduce the proportion of disputes which are resolved by resort to the courts</p>	<p>To achieve earlier and more proportionate resolution of legal problems and disputes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing advice and assistance to help people resolve their disputes earlier and more effectively; • Increasing the opportunities for people involved in court cases to settle their disputes out of court; and • Reducing delays in resolving those disputes that need to be decided by the courts.

Annex B - Organisation



Annex C – Estates Strategy

The Secretary of State has agreed the following key principles for the provision of the HMCS estate as part of the “hub and satellite” model set out in the national HMCS Business Strategy:

1. Provision of estates facilities should match population distribution
2. Strategic sites and services should be chosen in rural areas to ensure access
3. Resources should be focused on business critical areas
4. Dedicated courts and panels should be provided for specialist work
5. Centralised back offices will improve the efficiency with which we improve these services
6. With increased efficiency we still have to match workloads to demand

The Estates Strategy has to fit with the HMCS Business Strategy, including the use of back office facilities and bulk centres.

This means that the opportunities for property disposal or amalgamation of courts should be identified. Amalgamation of court properties is a preferred option of HMCS.

The possibility of increasing the use of hired hearing rooms or mobile courtroom kit for use in other community buildings instead of using existing freehold or leasehold buildings is something that needs to be looked at in planning the estate. Equally opportunities to share facilities with other courts, the Tribunals service, the PGO and the LSC have to be considered.

HMCS intends by the end of the CSR period (2011) to have a better but smaller “fit for purpose” estate that can support the new Business Model.

In Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire the priorities for 2007-2008 in line with this strategy are:

- To complete the co-location of Buxton County Court and Buxton Magistrates Court into the existing magistrates court building by Summer 2007
- By 31st March 2008 to co-locate Newark County Court and Newark Magistrates Court in the existing magistrates court building
- During 2007-2008 to agree (and if appropriate implement) future plans for Ilkeston courthouse, either alternative use or disposal
- By 31st March 2008 to agree (and if appropriate implement) a strategy for exit from Worksop County Court and co-location of the administration and hearings within the remaining area estate

Annex D – Court Locations and Contacts

Area Directors Office

HMCS web site

Local Criminal Justice Board web sites

0115 955 8301

www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk

www.lcjb.cjsonline.org/derbyshire; www.lcjb.cjsonline.org/nottinghamshire;

Nottingham Magistrates' Court Carrington Street Nottingham NG2 1EE 0115 9558111	Derby Magistrates' Court The Court House St Mary's Gate Derby DE1 3JR 01332 362000	Buxton Magistrates' Court Peak Buildings, Terrace Road Buxton Derbys SK17 6DY 01298 23951
Chesterfield Magistrates' Court Tapton Lane Chesterfield Derbys S41 7TW 01246 224040	Mansfield Magistrates' Court Rosemary Street Mansfield Notts NG19 6EE 01623 451500	Newark & Southwell Magistrates' Court The Court House, Magnus Street Newark Notts NG24 1LD 01636 688200
Worksop Magistrates' Court The Court House 30 Potter Street Worksop Notts S80 2AJ 01909 486111	Derby Combined Court Centre The Morledge Derby DE1 2XE 01332 622600 Derby.cmb.cm@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk	Nottingham Crown and County Court 60 Canal Street Nottingham NG1 7EJ 0115 9103500 Nottingham.crn.cm@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk
Buxton County Court 1-3 Hardwick Street Buxton Derbys SK17 6DH 01298 23734 Buxton.cty.cm@courtservice.gsi.gov.uk	Chesterfield County Court St Mary's Gate Chesterfield Derbys S41 7TD 01246 501200 Chesterfield.cty.cm@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk	Mansfield County Court Beech House 58 Commercial Gate Mansfield Notts NG18 1EU 01623 656406
Newark County Court Crown Building 41 Lombard Street Newark NG24 1XB 01636 703607 Newark.cty.cm@hmcourtservice.gsi.gov.uk	Worksop County Court 8 Slack Walk Worksop Notts S80 1LN 01909 472358 Worksop.cty.cm@courtservice.gsi.gov.uk	