



Disclosure &  
Barring Service

## Business Plan 2018-19

Transforming our service



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## Chair and Chief Executive's Foreword

At the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) our mission is to put safeguarding at the heart of everything we do and our vision is to make our services simpler, faster and more accessible for those who use them.

This year's Business Plan sets out our priorities and the focus for year two of our strategy. It has been informed by the progress already made and the challenges we faced in 2017-18.

Our customers tell us that they want a fast and reliable service and to be able to interact digitally with us across our range of services. Accordingly, we are now implementing modernised IT solutions enabling us to provide customers with online channels to access our services.

During 2017-18, we took significant steps towards providing our services digitally when we launched basic certificates. This is the first online service offered by us to our customers, enabling them to apply directly to us. We delivered a modernised IT solution for barring services, providing digital access for those making referrals to the DBS.

The next phase is to extend the solution to standard and enhanced certificates. Although we have experienced some delays, we remain committed to implementing this service. However we will only do so when fully satisfied that it will deliver the high level of service expected by our customers.

Last year, we faced challenges when striving to achieve our barring performance targets. This year, we will introduce new measures for timeliness and accuracy in barring which will better demonstrate the way in which we deliver our safeguarding responsibilities. We are committed to a Barring Transformation Programme which will provide faster, modernised services in order to help government achieve its safeguarding objectives. We will ensure that we have the right structures, processes, working environment and people in place to deliver our product and IT strategies, and will underpin this with a Quality Assurance Framework that enhances the quality culture across the broader organisation.

By continuing to develop our relationships with customers and stakeholders, we will achieve a deeper understanding of their needs and

expectations and how they wish our products to be delivered. By using our data, knowledge and insight we will make sure that we are recognised as an essential contributor to the multi-agency safeguarding arena. Working closely with Home Office as DBS Sponsor, our new Safeguarding directorate will continue to support policy development and identify how we can use the information we have to inform the wider safeguarding agenda.

The appointment of a Chief Operating Officer, Chief People Officer and Director for Safeguarding has strengthened the management team. The Board has undergone some changes over the last year seeing three new non-executive members join and the terms of two longstanding non-executive members come to an end. We look forward to the continued and valued support of our non-executives to enable the achievement of our plan and priorities for 2018-19.



*Bill Griffiths*

Bill Griffiths, Chair



*Adele Downey*

Adele Downey, Chief Executive

# Introduction

The DBS was established in December 2012 under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, by merging the Independent Safeguarding Authority and Criminal Records Bureau. Our focus during the three years of our current Strategic Plan is to build on the foundations created in our first four years, transform our services using digital capabilities and enhance our safeguarding work.

In the period of our last business plan we implemented the first phase of our new IT system and modernised ways of working in our barring operations and launched a Basic Disclosure check. The Basic check is our first new service since 2013 and we have used our in-house capability to design and develop an online application route. This provides a complementary channel for customers, alongside a web service which can be used by larger organisations to access this product. We have already seen good turnaround times for large numbers of users of this service and we will continue to identify areas for improvement in the future.

In the next year, we will continue to embed the changes from our first phase of modernisation, and implement a second phase that will transition the rest of our disclosure products onto the new system.

We operate in the complex world of safeguarding alongside our multi agency partners. Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect. We play a key role in providing individuals, employers and other stakeholders with vital information and making decisions in a timely manner and we continue to reflect this in our plans.

The focus of the plan continues to be one of transforming our service provision and demonstrating improvements for the customer in doing so. Alongside our continued focus on successful implementation of the new IT system, we plan to:

- Engage with our customers to gain insight on how they wish our products to be delivered, and develop in conjunction with the Home Office, a product delivery strategy to support how we might do this.
- Finalise a future IT strategy and put in place associated supplier arrangements that will enable us to deliver the products and performance levels customers and Ministers expect, beyond the current contract with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), which expires in 2019.
- Define a future target operating model that supports the product delivery and IT strategies and ensures we have the right people in place.
- Review our fees and consider how and when we can pass on the benefit of efficiencies from the new IT system and a broader efficiency programme to our customers, while ensuring sustainable funding for our future strategy.
- Progress with implementing our Barring Transformation Programme driving improvements in performance and efficiency, while implementing a Quality Assurance Framework that embeds a quality culture within barring and the broader organisation.
- Engage with our key stakeholders to achieve a deeper understanding of their needs and expectations to ensure DBS is recognised as an essential contributor to the multi-agency safeguarding arena.
- Implement a new organisation wide Quality Assurance Framework with quality initiatives ranging from Board to floor throughout the organisation.

### Who we are

We are responsible for the delivery of Disclosure and Barring functions on behalf of government. We are a Non Departmental Public Body accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for the Home Office. We are led by a Board, which is responsible for the strategic leadership of the organisation. The Board has collective responsibility for the proper conduct of DBS affairs. This role can be summarised as: direction, monitoring and control, assurance and propriety. The Board comprises Chair, executive and non-executive members.

The DBS was established under the Protection of Freedoms Act (PoFA) 2012 on 1 December 2012, operating from two locations in Liverpool and Darlington. We operate Barring functions for England, Wales, Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, and Disclosure functions for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The functions of DBS are those contained within the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (SVGA), Part V of the Police Act 1997, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 (SVG) and PoFA. These functions are broadly described as 'Disclosure' and 'Barring' functions and are set out below.

### Disclosure

We keep and maintain a register of organisations approved by DBS which can submit applications for criminal records certificates. There are three levels of certificates of criminal records:

**Basic certificate:** This contains details of unspent convictions and conditional cautions. An applicant can apply for a Basic Certificate directly and use it for a wide variety of employment or other purposes, including insurance or certain licensing, such as street trading.

**Standard certificate:** This is available to those working in activities specified in the Exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974. A standard criminal record certificate contains information about all spent and unspent convictions, cautions, final warnings and reprimands recorded against an individual in

central records, subject to the filtering rules. For this purpose, central records are those records held on the Police National Computer.

**Enhanced certificate:** This is the highest level of check available to those involved in work with vulnerable groups, and other positions involving a high degree of trust, which are listed in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002. Enhanced certificates contain the same information as the Standard certificate with the addition of relevant police information held by a police force. Additionally, where the activity is prescribed in legislation as regulated activity, it will include details of whether the individual is included in the lists of those barred from working with children and vulnerable groups.

**Update Service:** We also provide a subscription Update Service. Individuals subscribe on a voluntary basis which allows employers or voluntary organisations to check whether any new criminality information, such as a new conviction or information recorded that is deemed relevant to their employment sector.

### Barring

In Barring we reach considered decisions about whether an individual should be barred from engaging in regulated activity. We also manage, maintain and own the Children's and Adult's barred lists, which are used to prevent unsuitable individuals from working in regulated activity with children and vulnerable groups. Information is received from numerous sources including direct referrals. This information is used to make decisions on whether a referred person should be barred from engaging in regulated activity in one or both sectors and included on the Barred list(s).

We bar any individual who has accepted a caution for or been convicted of an Automatic Barring Offence. We also consider for Barring any individual who has accepted a caution for or been convicted of an Automatic Inclusion Offence (i.e. an offence that does allow representations) or has been referred to DBS from, for example, an employer or regulatory body, subject to any representations submitted by the individual – provided DBS also has reason to believe that the person is or has been,

or might in the future be, engaged in regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults. We also consider for barring individuals who have applied for an Enhanced Disclosure certificate where that certificate contains relevant criminality information or intelligence.

We make decisions as to whether it is appropriate to remove an individual from a Barred List.

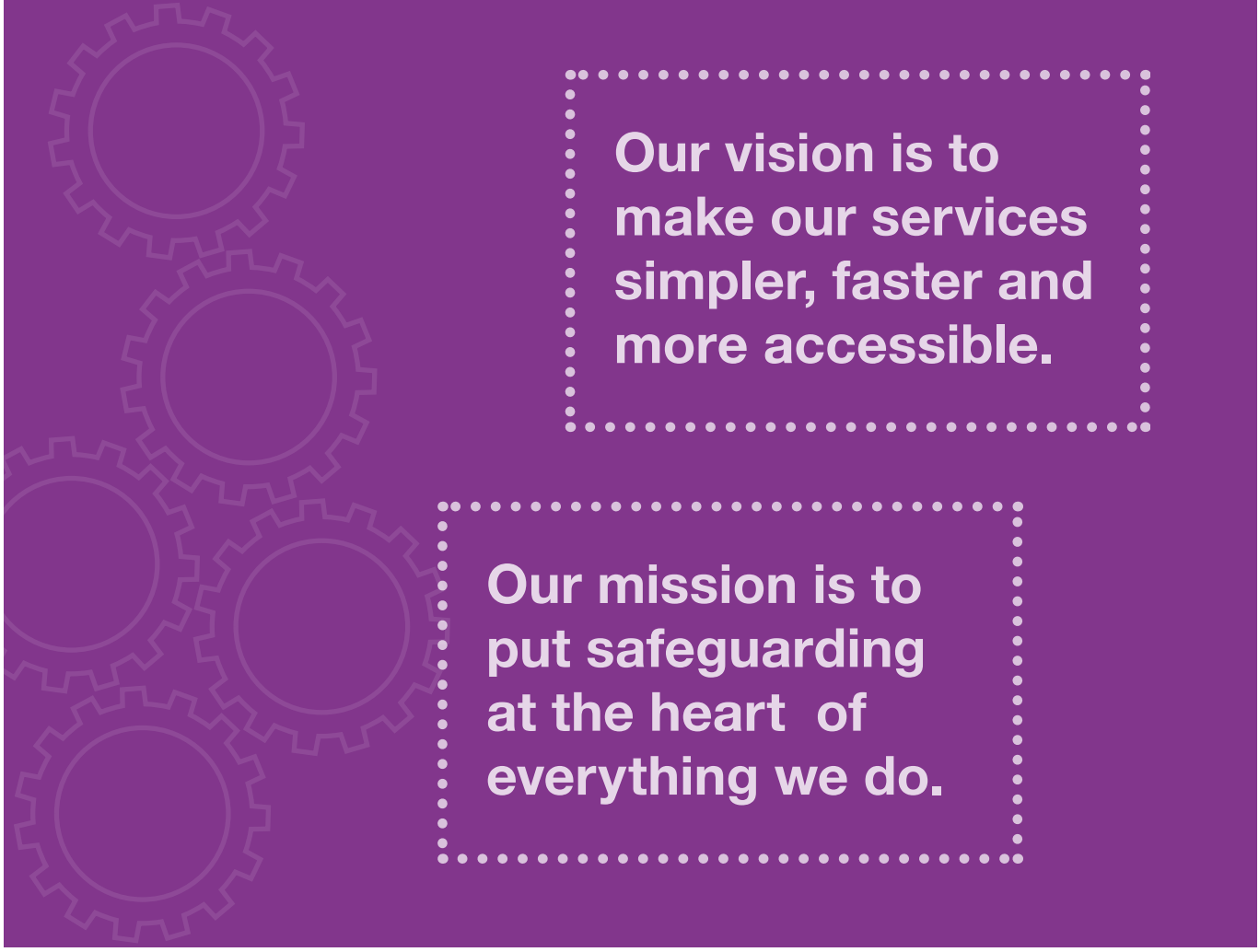
The DBS is committed to ensuring it makes fair, consistent and thorough Barring decisions which provide a proportionate response to the behaviour that has occurred and the future risk of harm which is posed. There is keen awareness of the impact a Barring decision can have both on the person referred, and those with whom they may have already, or may in future come into contact. It is often necessary to make very difficult and finely balanced decisions.

### Our strategic plan

Our Strategic Plan 2017-20 sets out our vision and mission:

To take forward our strategic plan we have identified five objectives that unite our activities and provide focus for our work over the three years of the plan. For each of these we have agreed priorities, specific actions and outcomes for the year ahead; 'transforming' as set out in our Strategic Plan:

- Improve safeguarding through delivery of excellent services and sharing of knowledge;
- Drives good value for money;
- Meets customer needs and exceeds expectations;
- Develops a talented workforce to inspire continuous improvement;
- Is a highly valued public organisation.



Our vision is to  
make our services  
simpler, faster and  
more accessible.

Our mission is to  
put safeguarding  
at the heart of  
everything we do.



# Strategic Objectives 2018-19



Vision

Simpler, Faster, More accessible

Mission

Safeguarding at the heart of everything we do





Strategic objectives

<p><b>Improve safeguarding</b></p> <p>Our role in safeguarding the most vulnerable in our society continues to be at the heart of our organisation. We will develop the quality of our services through continued data scrutiny, external review and support and through our function as a strong, learning organisation.</p>	<p><b>Drive good value for money</b></p> <p>We will continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our products and services over the course of our strategy with the goal of reducing the cost of these.</p>	<p><b>Meet customer needs</b></p> <p>Our customers tell us their number one priority is a speedy service that they can rely upon. They also want to be able to interact digitally with us across our range of services.</p>	<p><b>Develop a talented workforce</b></p> <p>Our people are vital to our organisation, without their talent and commitment we will not achieve our objectives. We will equip our staff with the right skills and knowledge to deliver excellent results.</p>	<p><b>Be a highly valued public organisation</b></p> <p>We are a public organisation whose work affects a significant number of people and organisations. We will work with stakeholders to understand their needs and how we can adapt and improve our service to them.</p>
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18-19 Priorities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barring transformation</li> <li>• Quality Assurance Framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RI efficiency improvements</li> <li>• Improved productivity</li> <li>• Fee review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R1 implementation</li> <li>• Police model business case</li> <li>• Product and service development</li> <li>• Product delivery strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target operating model proposal</li> <li>• Smarter working Phase 1</li> <li>• Staff engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Review Project Management Office function</li> </ul>
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Service Performance

 <p><b>Standard &amp; Enhanced</b></p>	<p><b>Enhanced Disclosures (£44)</b> 87% in 21 days 3.9m applications</p> <p><b>Standard Disclosures (£26)</b> 96% in 42 days 300,000 applications</p>	 <p><b>Update Service (£13)</b> 1.5m subscribers</p>	 <p><b>Barring cases</b> 18,600 cases considered 72% closed in 3 months 99.50% Quality rate 95% Autobar closed in 1 month</p>
	 <p><b>Basic Disclosures (£25)</b> 90% in 14 days 1.7m applications</p> <p>99.98% Quality rate</p>		

## Improve safeguarding through delivery of excellent services and sharing of knowledge

Our role in safeguarding the most vulnerable in our society continues to be at the heart of our organisation. We will develop the quality of our services through continued data scrutiny, external review and support and through our function as a progressive, learning organisation. In Year two of our strategy, our focus will be on:

- **Quality:** Delivery of an organisational Quality Assurance Framework implementation plan that establishes ways of analysing and interrogating data on activity that increases the DBS' holistic understanding of its safeguarding function, effectiveness and user experience.
- **Quality Culture:** Underpinning the Barring Transformation Plan with the quality initiatives contained within the organisational Quality Assurance Framework.
- **External Review and Support:** Introduction of a system of external scrutiny and organisational peer review to provide assurance that DBS core business is contributing to the protection of children and vulnerable people.
- **Incident management and lessons learned framework:** Development of a safeguarding incident management system and lessons learned framework to enhance quality and confidence in decision making.
- **Sharing Knowledge:** Implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Quality Assurance Framework will result in developing DBS research activity and sharing of knowledge between DBS and our key safeguarding partners.
- **Monitoring Compliance:** Reviewing and enhancing Registered Body compliance process.



Indicators of success from Strategic Plan 2017-20	Link to Balanced Scorecard Measure 2018-19	Impact 2018-19
Evidence resulting from implementation of Quality Assurance Framework	Quality Assurance Framework and Barring Transformation Plan	Qualitative improvements will be demonstrated (e.g. increased awareness of lessons learned from root cause analysis findings; awareness of the wider safeguarding environment and where DBS fits within it; percentage uptake of staff undertaking safeguarding training)
Evidence of change resulting from implementation of Stakeholder Engagement Strategy	Included in Stakeholder Engagement Implementation Plan	Qualitative improvements will be demonstrated (e.g. improved awareness of duty to refer among stakeholders; improved quality of information shared by stakeholders; increased insight into user experience)
Improve performance of published quality and timeliness measures <sup>1</sup>	Disclosure information accuracy	Achieve ≥ 99.98% accuracy across all 3 information streams
	Quality rate of closures	Achieve ≥ 99.50% accuracy
	Barring Autobar case timeliness	Close ≥ 95% within 1 month
	All Barring case timeliness	Close ≥ 72% within 3 months
	Standard and Enhanced information timeliness	Issue ≥ 87% in 21 calendar days Issue ≥ 96% in 42 calendar days
	Basic information timeliness	Issue ≥ 90% in 14 calendar days
Increased Registered Body compliance	Registered Body compliance assessments	90% of Assessed Registered Bodies to be fully compliant within 4 months of assessment

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service)

## Driving Good Value for Money

We recognise that delivering good value for money services is important for our customers, many of which are in the public sector. We plan to lower the overall cost of the disclosure regime on the public and private sectors, by progressively reducing the cost of criminal record certificates. We will continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our products and services over the course of our strategy with the goal of reducing the cost of these.

To enable this, in year two of our strategy, our focus will be on:

- **Economy:** Realising efficiencies arising from implementing the new IT system, driving reductions in cost from year two of our broader value for money programme, and determining our future fee profile to reflect these savings.
- **Efficiency:** Improving productivity through introducing a revised sickness absence management approach and further improvements in operational productivity from the Barring Transformation Programme.
- **Technology strategy:** Once the new IT system is fully in place we will develop a new technology strategy and progressing the supplier and commercial implications that deliver this.
- **Core enablers:** Implementing our new Enterprise Resource Planning system.

Indicators of success from Strategic Plan 2017-20	Link to Balanced Scorecard Measure 2018-19	Impact 2018-19
Reduce staff sickness absence	Staff Sickness Absence	From 9.66 days (December 2017) to <8.75 days by 31 March 2019
Efficiencies will be delivered	Efficiencies delivered as a percentage of our spend	5% (excluding ticket price and police costs)
Productivity of our operational staff will improve	Barring Productivity	> 10 Cases closed per barring caseworker per month
	Disclosure Productivity	Between 100 and 120 Disclosures completed and new update service subscriptions per production agent per working day
Unit costs will fall	Unit costs of our core products as reported in our Annual Report and Accounts	These will reduce on 2017-18 levels for each product

## Meets customer needs and exceeds expectations

Our customers tell us their number one priority is a speedy service that they can rely upon. They also want to be able to interact digitally with us across our range of services. In year two of our strategy, our focus will be on:

- **Efficiency:** Progressing work with National Police Chief's Council to develop a new operating model for the provision of police information. This will enhance the speed and value of performance alongside developing the future change programme.
- **Reducing:** Continue the progress in barring to reduce the number of cases aged over 12 months to less than or equal to 2% of work in progress.
- **Modernisation:** Realising the business benefits from the deployment of the new IT system introduction, across both Barring and Disclosure and progressing a programme of Continuous Improvement. This includes evaluating automation opportunities (Robotics Assisted and Unassisted) across Barring and Disclosure to drive quality, speed and efficiency gains on repetitive tasks, freeing up capacity for colleagues to undertake additional cognitive quality assurance checking. We will conduct an assessment of areas for automation and pilot a small number of opportunities.
- **Product delivery strategy:** Including continued development of digital services and products, aligned to portal development and ensuring our channel shift strategy is aligned to customer service requirements.
- **Customer insight:** Continuing to develop our understanding of the needs of customers. Involve them in the design of our services, gaining continued insight and real-time feedback to inform product channel shift strategies and the Update Service.

Indicators of success from Strategic Plan 2017-20	Link to Balanced Scorecard Measure 2018-19	Impact 2018-19
Increase completion rates for digital user journeys	Baseline established for each digital product	Increase Basics revenue and increased customer satisfaction
Improved processing times	Average police force workload	Meet the service level agreement of ≤ 12 calendar days
	Published service standards and unit costs of our products	Explore impact of increased automation to reduce manual intervention, improve processing times, and lower costs
User satisfaction with information being clear and easy to find	Supports customer service measure	Maintain at 85% during year 2 of the new IT system
Customer service Published Service Standards	Time taken to process initial stage complaints	All completed within 9 days



## Develops a talented workforce to inspire continuous improvement

In Year two of our strategy, our focus will be on:

- **Attracting:** The right skills and capabilities with Digital, Data and IT roles and see a reduction in contract labour for critical roles by the end of 2018-19. Reduce the time to hire and create more flexibility within the recruitment process to support all business critical roles filled right first time by 2020.
- **Developing:** Focusing the Learning and Development budget on priority skills and areas of continuous improvement, in doing so supporting transformation in barring as part of the transformation targets. This will set out a clear plan for the rest of DBS. Ensure our Apprentice Levy targets are delivered and launch professional career frameworks in IT, People and Finance Directorates. Underpinning these activities will be our on-going commitment to annual appraisals and development conversations for all.
- **Retaining:** Embedding succession planning and talent management principles and use to identify opportunities to grow our talent. Establish DBS wide engagement process, building on areas of current good practice to support the continuous improvement in our engagement score.
- **Leadership and Management Excellence:** Delivering core management skills training, especially in areas of performance/attendance and change management. Continue to strengthen leadership at DBS by focussed development of Senior Leadership Team incorporating decision making, impact, change leadership, resilience, organisational performance and efficiency.
- **A modern DBS:** Delivering a new sickness absence policy and wider wellbeing plan to improve attendance, support our staff health and wellbeing with targeted campaigns and focus on areas of impact. The target over the next three years is to see average working days lost reduce to less than seven days by 2020. Alongside this, the next three year Equality and Diversity strategy outlines the areas we will be focussing on. We will be embedding the key principles of smarter working. Finally, we will develop a new Target Operating Model which will outline our organisation design for the future, this will also include a full implementation of the new IT system and considering how we can optimise the work we do.

Indicators of success from Strategic Plan 2017-20	Link to Balanced Scorecard Measure 2018-19	Impact 2018-19
Increase employee engagement index	Staff Engagement Index	66% by 31 March 2019
Improve organisation capacity	Apprenticeship starts	2.3% of apprenticeship starts across the year
	Efficiencies delivered	Reduction in contract labour for critical roles by 50%
		Reduction in the time to hire from 65 days to 52 days

## Is a highly valued public organisation

We will continue to work with stakeholders to understand their needs and how we can improve our service to them by being connected to the multi-agency safeguarding decision making organisations so as to enhance the protection of children and vulnerable people. In Year two of our strategy, our focus will be on:

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Delivering an organisational Stakeholder Engagement Strategy implementation plan. This will aim to achieve a depth of understanding of external stakeholders' needs and expectations and articulate how they are met. This will ensure the DBS is recognised as an essential contributor to the multi-agency safeguarding arena.
- **Audit:** Undertaking a programme of in-house audits to provide added assurance through the production of a robust evidence base.
- **Visibility:** Piloting regional outreach teams to raise awareness of DBS' developments and products, promote high quality referrals and deliver co-ordinated key messages.
- **Recognition/accreditation:** Achieving Customer Service Excellence accreditation and International Standards for Organisation certification.

Indicators of success from Strategic Plan 2017-20	Link to Balanced Scorecard Measure 2018-19	Impact 2018-19
Maintain customer satisfaction	Are you satisfied with the service you receive from the DBS?  Does the DBS make a difference to public safety by helping make effective employment decisions?	Series of audits/surveys to demonstrate customer satisfaction and maintenance of Customer Service Excellence accreditation
Increase satisfaction with key stakeholder groups	Baseline to be established as part of Stakeholder Engagement Strategy implementation plan	Outcome measures as included in Stakeholder Engagement Strategy implementation plan

# Budget

## Delivery of this plan

### Budget Information 2018-19

Revenue	2018/19 £000's
Income	191,318
<b>3rd party</b>	
Supplier costs	44,391
Police costs	36,801
<b>Other direct costs</b>	
Pay costs	43,649
Accommodation	3,376
IT	34,239
Depreciation	11,450
Other costs*	16,684
Cost of capital	729

\* Other costs include Travel & Subsistence, contingent Labour, training, audit, commercial & legal costs, telecoms, publications, Home Office sponsorship costs

The budget sets out our estimated costs to deliver our services and priorities this year, reflecting estimates of service demand, efficiency, modernisation timeframes and risk.

In line with good financial practice and HM Treasury "Managing Public Money", we have again reviewed our product fees and this year we plan to freeze fees at the same levels as 2017-18, absorbing inflationary increases in some of our underlying costs. This means that the fees charged for Enhanced and Standard Disclosures have remained the same for over 5 years since the DBS was established.

The continued deployment of modernised IT solutions will provide us with opportunities to achieve efficiencies from modernising our services. We plan to target the delivery of over £4m efficiency savings across all services and support functions throughout 2018-19, creating opportunities to drive out further service improvements through reinvestment in services.

These efficiencies will allow us to continue to deliver services and products that represent value for money to meet Home Office and customer expectations over the remainder of our strategy.

# Risks



## Delivery of this plan

### Risks to delivery

In delivering our business plan for 2018-19, the risks that affect our success have been identified, and mitigations and actions considered. The actions we plan to take to manage our key strategic risks include:

- Delivery of a modernised IT solution and outsourced services to our time and quality standards.
- Responding effectively to change in government policy and legislation including the current filtering scheme.
- Regularly monitoring and responding to the demand for our current and new services to avoid increases in work in progress.
- Proactively managing our finances to ensure fees are sustainable and appropriately reflect our expenditure and risk profile.
- Keeping our data secure.
- Ensuring we have the right people with the right skills in place to support our organisation.
- Ensuring we have the support from our key stakeholders and the legislative mandate to implement the changes proposed in our strategy.
- Improving the effectiveness of the leadership of Barring function.





# Disclosure & Barring Service

**Find out more about DBS**

**Visit our website at:** [www.gov.uk/dbs](http://www.gov.uk/dbs)

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