



# Criminal Justice Board Minutes

Held on 18 March 2020 chaired by Robert Buckland QC MP,  
Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice

## Members

- Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC MP)
- Secretary of State for the Home Department (Rt Hon Priti Patel MP)
- Attorney General (Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP)
- Minister of State for the Home Department and Ministry of Justice (Kit Malthouse MP)
- Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (Dame Cressida Dick)
- Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Service (Nick Ephgrave)
- President of the Queen's Bench Division (Rt Hon Dame Victoria Sharp DBE)
- Senior Presiding Judge (Rt Hon Lady Justice Thirlwall)
- Director General, National Crime Agency (Lynne Owens)
- Chair, National Police Chiefs' Council (Martin Hewitt)
- Director of Public Prosecutions, Crown Prosecution Service (Max Hill QC)
- Chief Executive, HM Prison and Probation Service (Jo Farrer)
- Chief Executive, HM Courts and Tribunal Service (Susan Acland-Hood)
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners Representative (David Lloyd)
- Director General, Policy, Communication and Analysis, Ministry of Justice (James Bowler)

- Director General, Crime, Policing and Fire Group, Home Office (Tricia Hayes)

### **Dialled In**

- Chief Executive, Victims' Commissioner (Russel A'Court)
- Director, Strategy and Planning, Youth Justice Board (Paula Williams)

### **By invitation**

- Chair of the Bar Council (Amanda Pinto QC)
- Head of Justice for the Law Society (Richard Miller)

### **Senior Officials**

- Chief Executive, Crown Prosecution Service (Rebecca Lawrence)
- Director, Attorney General's Office (Shehzad Charania)
- Deputy Director, Criminal Courts and Criminal Law Policy Unit (Matthew Gould)
- Chief Executive, Legal Aid Agency (Shaun McNally)

### **Apologies**

- Victim's Commissioner (Dame Vera Baird)

### **Introduction**

1. The LORD CHANCELLOR thanked everyone for attending and noted that the Criminal Justice Board was the only forum that brought together senior leaders from across the Criminal Justice System (CJS). He, along with the ATTORNEY GENERAL, HOME SECRETARY and MINISTER OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT AND MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, set out their commitment to tackling issues across the system, and maintaining public confidence in the CJS. The priority, right across Government, was tackling covid-19 and a sustained national effort is underway. It was only right that the CJB should focus on that today. Other important work was continuing across the system, including through the CJB sub-groups, and this would come to the CJB in due course.

### **Agenda Item 1: Covid-19 and the Criminal Justice System**

2. The Ministerial team noted the grave challenge posed by Covid-19 and stressed their determination to work together across the Criminal Justice System to deal with the immediate challenges and support recovery.
3. SEAN MCNALLY provided an update on the immediate response and recommended that the Criminal Justice Board establish the Criminal Justice System Gold Command Structure to tackle issues arising from Covid-19. The Criminal Justice Gold Command would share data in real time

across agencies, address any gaps in the system and ensure key services were delivered across the CJS. An experienced operational leader would chair the group.

4. During the discussion, participants provided verbal updates. These included operational reports on the provision of core public services as well as an update on the actions being taking within the respective agencies to respond to Covid-19. The Board agreed to establish the Criminal Justice System Gold Command structure to support further cross-system working.

#### **Closing remarks from the LC:**

5. The LORD CHANCELLOR noted that this had been a useful opportunity to discuss critical issues and enhance the joint response to the unprecedented challenge we face. Despite that challenge, ongoing sub-group activity in the areas of disclosure, sexual offences, forensics and case progression remained crucial. In the coming months, flexibility would be essential. A key strand of work would be the interaction with Local Criminal Justice Boards and we should continue to improve those links.
6. He welcomed suggestions for future agenda items from Board members, noting that the agenda should not be fixed.

**Action 1: The Criminal Justice Sector Strategic Command Protocol should be stood up.**

**Action 2: The Criminal Justice System Gold Command structure will update Ministers on a daily basis.**

**Action 3: CJB members should submit their thoughts to the Home Office consultation on Pre-charge bail/RUI.**