

Case progression team

A case progression team (CPT) to build, redact, and quality assure investigation submissions, and comply with director general's guidance sixth edition (DG6) and national file standard (NFS), prior to submission to Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).

First published

26 May 2026

Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Organisational
Topic	Digital, data and analytics Investigation Productivity
Organisation	North Yorkshire Police
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Region	North East
Partners	Police Criminal justice (includes prisons, probation services)
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.
Start date	August 2025

Key details

Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Offenders Victims Workforce

Aim

The aim of the case progression team (CPT) is to:

- ensure investigation files are director general's guidance sixth edition (DG6) and national file standard (NFS) compliant
- standardise case progression by developing a digital blueprint handover and a clear complex case pathway
- embed a feedback and learning loop to monitor the team's performance and identify areas for continuous improvement
- release officers' time by centralising scheduling and redaction
- provide a replicable, scalable model aligned with national guidance and Crown Prosecution (CPS) expectations

Intended outcome

The intended outcomes of the CPT are to:

- improve the quality of investigation files
- increase the number of charged files submitted within the required 24–48 hour timescales
- increase the number of guilty pleas entered at the first hearing
- reduce the number of CPS triage rejection reasons and files returned to the officer in charge (OIC) for rework
- reduce the time taken to complete CPS action plan tasks
- reduce the number of post-charge discontinuances

Description

Background

Revisions to DG6, the Attorney General's Guidelines, and the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA) Code of Practice have shifted a greater emphasis on disclosure and file build effort to the pre-charge stage. North Yorkshire Police (NYP) faced an increase in the volume of digital evidence, redaction obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and a reduction in the number of officers. This combination of factors contributed to a high number of investigation files submitted to the CPS that were not DG6 and NFS compliant and were subsequently returned to the officer in charge (OIC) for rework.

Planning process

NYP proposed a business case outlining the implementation of a CPT to centralise investigation case file building and to quality assure all charged files before being submitted to the CPS. The CPT would utilise the blueprint digital tool, developed by NYP to complete the following documents:

- MG5 (a report of the summary of the criminal case)
- MG6 (case file schedule to declare unused material and sensitive information)
- investigation management document (IMD)
- NFS check list forms
- initial disclosure schedules

The business case included the following stages:

- team option agreement
- recruitment
- onboarding and training
- launch of the CPT
- transition to business as usual and performance monitoring

Roles and teams

The CPT launched in September 2025 within the criminal justice department of NYP. The following roles have been recruited:

- 12 case review officers (CROs) – to prepare file schedules and complete redactions in compliance with DG6, NFS and DPA
- eight evidential review officers (EROs) – to quality assure charge files and return files for targeted rework
- one criminal justice coordinator (CJC) – to oversee standardisation, performance reporting and escalation

The following teams and organisations are supporting the CPT:

- case quality review team and prosecution team – provide quality assurance standards, supervisory resilience, and support during peak demand
- operation commands and custody team – reinforce the charged files timescales and ensure OIC compliance
- CPS – engage with the force to align expectations on DG6, NFS and digital media transfer

Implementation

- Process mapping and standards – the CPT mapped the end-to-end charge route by assessing and querying the force's pre-charge processes. The purpose of the review was to aid end-user comprehension. Once completed, a standard operating procedure document for scheduling, redaction and digital evidence, along with quality assurance checklists and a fast file template, was created.
- Digital blueprint handover - the CPT configured the digital form and workflow to mandate key fields, enforce ownership and identify missing information at the earliest opportunity. This reduced a back and forth process and supported the success of submissions. The blueprint had to be intuitive to use and could not be based on any assumption that the OIC inputting data would know what was required of them in building a case file. The question sets have been designed to extract the required information; it is not a direct duplication of the text in the MG forms.
- People and training – the CPT have been provided with in-person role specific training on DG6, NFS and DPA compliance.
- Governance and feedback loops – a weekly in-person CPT huddle was established to discuss workloads, feedback and outstanding queries. Monthly performance reviews are held with individuals and the team to identify learning opportunities for rework themes.
- Complex case pathway – for cases that require OIC scheduling, an inspector has approved capacity into the digital blueprint to ensure a single “front door,” while preserving investigative

nuance.

- Benefits tracking – a benefit realisation plan has been developed with targets for action plans, discontinuances, triage rejections, DG6 compliance and officer time released reported to crime managers.

Funding and senior management approval

For the first year of implementation, £893,000 has been allocated by NYP for staffing, IT, estates and training. The business case document was submitted for approval through the NYP change? governance process, with a post?implementation review scheduled for one year after delivery.

Overall impact

The CPT has improved charged file quality, reduced failure demand and returned time to the frontline. As of February 2026, NYP has processed 1788 cases (with 390 in progress) through the digital blueprint route.

Findings and observations

During the period from September 2025 to February 2026:

- the number of triage rejection responses decreased from 358 to 193 when comparing with the period from August 2024 to January 2025
- post charge discontinuances reduced from 22 to 18 per month
- CPS action plans tasks decreased to 34 per working day against a target of less than?40, signifying a drop in rework demand on OICs and supervisors
- approximately 5400 officers hours have been returned to operational policing
- CPT activity outputs include 3171 documents redacted, 4164 unused items scheduled, 3222 media actions, and 153 upgrade schedules
- files returned to the OIC for rework reduced from 53% to 27% for NFS and 43% to 27% with the digital blueprint
- DG6 compliance shows an upward trend; although the most recent single?month figure remains below the national average, NYP has exceeded the national average across the most recent six? month period

Learning

What went well

- By using a single “front door”, this standardised the route for submissions and drove adoption across all commands areas.
- The digital blueprint provides NYP with the flexibility to introduce changes to the NFS without having to go through a wider training programme. The digital blueprint will remain a user-friendly, predictable and logical investigator-facing system where the CPT can build investigation case files.

Challenges and barriers

- Timeliness and compliance culture – all charged files submitted within the required 24–48-hour timescales have required sustained operation commands and custody team reinforcement, along with monthly data sharing to maintain momentum.
- Complex case pathway – a tailored route with inspector approval was required to enable OICs to retain scheduling on complex cases without bypassing digital blueprint.
- People and technology risks – early planning identified recruitment, digital handover build, demand spikes, and potential role friction as live risks requiring mitigations and escalation routes.
- No pre-start time baseline – officers’ time for file build tasks could not be baselined before going live, limiting precision in calculating the net time saved.
- Limited historic management information – the force did not routinely record how much time officers spent on file build. This made comparisons more difficult during the first couple of months of implementation.

Recommendations

- Co-design with the CPS – early agreement on DG6 and NFS expectations will shorten feedback loops and reduce CPS action plans.
- Plan for national changes - build in configuration capacity for items such as the digital case file to ensure the force’s digital route keeps pace without losing compliance.
- Anticipate people and technology risks – utilise a business plan to set the expectation for recruitment, IT build, demand peaks, and role friction. It is important to agree mitigations, escalation thresholds and surge support early on between the case quality review team and prosecution team.

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