

Mr Alan Hunter  
Chief Executive  
The Law Society of Northern Ireland  
96 Victoria Street  
Belfast  
BT1 3GN

3 April 2019

Dear Alan

### **CASE PROGRESSION OFFICER PILOT**

I am writing to inform you of a Case Progression Officer (CPO) pilot that is operating across crown court cases in Laganside, Craigavon and Newry Courts from 1 April 2019 and to seek your support in achieving a new impetus to tackling delay in criminal courts. I would be grateful if you could share this with your members.

The pilot has been developed in response to a recommendation made in the NIAO Report - Avoidable Delay in the Criminal Justice System, published on 27 March 2018, which was accepted by the Criminal Justice Board in April 2018.

The recommendation was that “The Department, in consultation with the Lord Chief Justice, should ensure that adequate administrative support is provided to the judiciary to facilitate more effective management of cases and case progression in the Crown Court. Both the PSNI and the PPS should ensure that any corresponding arrangements which are required to improve case management are also implemented.”

CPOs have been appointed by both Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) and Public Prosecution Service (PPS). The Investigating Officer will take responsibility on behalf of PSNI for individual cases, however a single point of contact has also been appointed. The details of the CPOs are shown at Annex A.

The primary responsibility for CPOs, both individually and collectively, is to ensure that all procedural or administrative matters in relation to crown court cases are being progressed by the relevant agencies and that, as far as possible, any blockages or impediments to effective case progression are addressed. The NICTS CPOs will meet with the relevant judges to discuss how best to provide assistance

that ensures judicial directions in relation to listing are complied with. They will also provide the link to the defence representatives and will monitor, and follow up on, any outstanding defence matters.

It is hoped that commitment from all organisations will greatly assist the progress of cases through the crown court stages.

If you or your members have any queries about this pilot or you wish to meet to discuss further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Elaine Topping**  
**Head of Court Operations**

## Annex A

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
<b>NICTS CPO Newry &amp; Craigavon</b>	<b>Elaine Scott</b>	<b>Elaine.Scott@courtsni.gov.uk</b>	<b>028 3025 4246</b>
<b>NICTS CPO Laganside</b>	<b>Connor Smith</b>	<b>Connor.Smith@courtsni.gov.uk</b>	<b>028 9072 8296</b>
<b>PPS CPO Newry &amp; Craigavon</b>	<b>Claire Gallagher</b>	<b>Claire.gallagher@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk</b>	<b>028 3083 2551</b>
<b>PPS CPO Laganside</b>	<b>Bridie McSherrrie</b>	<b>Bridie.mcsherry@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk</b>	<b>028 9089 7583</b>
<b>PSNI Contact</b>	<b>Jill Rooney</b>	<b>Jill.ROONEY2@psni.pnn.police.uk</b>	<b>Police exchange 101 then ext 17602</b>