

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Corporate Asset Sub Committee	7th September 2012	
Subject: Central Criminal Court Business Plan Quarterly Update	Public	
Report of: The Secondary	For Information	
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report contains information on the progress of the Central Criminal Court in delivering its Business Plan objectives during the period 1st April – 30th August 2012. The Court has been successful in delivering its primary aim of 100% court availability throughout the period</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That this report be received. 		

Main Report

Background

1. Members will be aware that all departments are required to inform their committees on the progress of their business plan on a regular basis. This department submitted its latest business plan on 12 March 2012, the submission for the period 1st April to 30th August 2012 is now due.

Current Position

2. Court activity has remained high throughout the period and was open throughout the Olympic Games period running at a higher level than expected, some 13-15 courts open instead of the planned 8. During the period we assisted the Courts Service to replace the Secure Prison Video links in all 18 courts, which despite court access issues due to overrunning cases, was successfully achieved by the end of August. The department was not significantly affected by the Olympics, and despite the larger than expected occupation of courts, the contingency manning plans worked smoothly and all courts that were planned to sit did so. The department was represented throughout at the BOCC and reported daily without issue. A number of improvements were made during the period and other activity is shown below under the appropriate headings.

Performance Summary

Progress towards Departmental objectives 2012-2015

3. *A. Efficient Management of financial resources.*

As part of the continued Service Reviews to achieve savings, the department submitted plans to the Establishment Committee on 26th April 2012 to reduce the number of staff employed as shift security officers and to change the then current working pattern. Consultations with the Unions and staff affected have now been completed and the new structure is currently being adopted and will be complete on 1st October. This will make savings of approximately £286,000 per annum once in place, and in accordance with the Schedule of Agreement with HMCTS (her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service), this will start to offset their contribution to the Major Works Project and their requirements to make savings as part of the HMCTS National Facilities Management Project.

Security costs are split on a 95/5% ratio, HMCTS/City of London so the majority of savings will primarily benefit HMCTS.

Additionally a review is currently being undertaken to benchmark the cleaning services with MITIE to establish whether further savings could be made in a similar way to the Security Review and work is ongoing. The department is working closely with the City Surveyor's Department and in a similar cost ratio (95/5%) the majority of savings in this area will pass to HMCTS. This exercise is expected to be completed within the next 6 months.

Finally the department has worked with the Film Unit to engage in raising income by the use of the Old Bailey for filming. One production has been completed involving "Working Title" Films, that of a production of a feature film "Closed" and filming took place on weekends in May and June.

B. Improved Premises Management.

The department is fully committed in its engagement with PP2P and a surveyor from the City Surveyor's department is now co-located within the department assisting with service area reviews and is now embedded as part of the Senior Management Team. A programme of deep cleaning has been completed over the period primarily dealing with court rooms, offices and public areas. The annual boiler strip down maintenance has been completed for the second year by in house staff and this should be completed within the next two weeks. The safety inspection of the work undertaken has stated that it has been of a high standard and all boilers are back in service.

A customer service survey of security was carried out during the period with the overall rating being "90% in the category "Excellent or Very Good" and further enhancements have been made to the service as stated later in the report.

The new pass card access system is currently being tested with the door sensors being re-wired. Passes will be issued from October with the system going live later in the month once all technical testing is complete.

One point has not been included since the original Business Plan was agreed in March, that of the change of Shorthand Writers which has since been subject to the attention of the Press, nor has the securing of certain docks within the Old Bailey. The Shorthand Writers have now gone and their room is currently being used as a temporary changing room for female security officers whilst repairs are completed.

C. Improved Management of Human Resources

Sickness Absence has continued to decline cumulatively over the period with the department's position falling to below the corporate target in April – July. A recent spike was due to 2 long term sickness cases, one of which has concluded with the employee now back at work. The one outstanding case is hoped to conclude by the end of next month, but overall work has been successful in dealing with this issue, thanks to better case management, a tougher stance on the issuing of formal warnings and more targeted assistance from Occupational Health. The fortnightly sickness absence review meetings continue and has assisted in reducing the department's position and this effort will continue.

During the period all staff have been provided with email accounts and have access to ITRENT. The technical infrastructure was installed in April/May and all accounts activated in June. Training has been initially in house with courses provided for by Guildhall to develop users ability and this has proved to be a very positive development by staff, despite few of them working in offices.

D. Preparation for the Major works Project.

The former Building Manager's flat in the East Wing is now the Surveyor and his assistant's office and works plans room. It will also be the main secure meeting area for the project. Most of the work for this project has been organised by the City Surveyor's Department in analysing tender documentation which is still underway, with the expectation that the tender will be awarded later in the year for work to start in September 2013. The contractor's site office has been prepared in the underground car park and is ready for the contractor to take possession of in due course.

E. Maintain and enhance the Shrieval presence at the Central Criminal Court.

The Sheriffs have continued to support the Lord Mayor in promoting the City throughout, hosting a number of engagements not least in connection with the Olympics. In addition to their busy schedule at home, The Sheriffs have accompanied the Lord Mayor overseas to Montreal, Bangkok, Manila, as well as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Hong Kong, Hanoi, and Ho Chi Min City.

The Sheriffs also supported the Freedom of the City to two long serving members of staff, some 65 years' service between them, which took place in the Chamberlains Court on 2nd and 3rd July. The election of Sheriffs took place on 25th June and Sheriffs Elect Alderman The Hon. Jeffrey Evans and Nigel Pulman, JP, take office on 28th September.

Learning and Development

In addition to the major rollout and investment in IT the most notable development has been training suitable volunteers from the Security Section in enhanced security skills. This team was formed in response to the risk posed by the decline in numbers of the City Police section as a consequence of the Forde review. On the 23rd and 24th August, a team of 8 security staff were trained to an increased level of skill by MAYBO in order to be able to deal with outbreaks of violence by incident containment and additional holding techniques. This is particularly useful in containing aggressive members of the public causing disturbance in the confined areas of the public galleries and in being able to respond quickly to such incidents effectively until the arrival if necessary of the Police Support Group. The Rapid Reaction Team will be evenly deployed around cases of high risk and the volunteers will be awarded a small remuneration which was agreed by the Establishment Committee in 2010. This training should reduce the risk of disturbance and has enhanced our skills base and seen as a very popular move by all other security staff.

Other areas of note

A number of high profile events have taken place in the reporting period in addition to the 13 evening educational tours.

The department hosted the Saudi Ministry of Justice on 24th April, the International Women Judges Conference on 2nd May, the Qatari Ministry of Justice on 14th May and a visit from the High Court of Norway on 21st June.

The Bar Mock Trials for Schools Final which was filmed in Court 1 earlier in the year is now Live on BBC IPlayer in a 6 part series called Young Legal Eagles. This is the culmination of the national competition involving the 16 finalist schools from the 600 which started and is a first for filming inside this court.

Financial position

4. A spread sheet regarding the division's financial status is at Annex A to this report.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

The department continues to support the Corporation's Strategic aims, in particular "Valued services to London and the Nation" by its effective commitment and successful support to Justice and its administration at the Central Criminal Court.

In terms of Key Policy Priorities the department is fully committed to the engagement of key issues of concern to communities, Justice in particular, by its very purpose as the Central Criminal Court and its impact on wider communities nationally through the Court process and administrative support in making that happen.

Conclusion

The department has achieved many improvements over a demanding period in a number of different areas whilst maintaining the 100% track record of availability of court rooms. The staff have responded very positively to the challenges over the period. The court is likely to be working at full capacity until Christmas, but it is hoped that for the first time in 3 years will not be open between Christmas and New Year. We are due to be London's Duty Bail Court over Easter 2013.

Background Papers:

Central Criminal Court Business Plan submitted 12th March 2012

Appendices

Annex A Financial Report.

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