

News story: Grappling with digital disclosures

The Head of the National Police Chiefs' Council has been meeting with senior stakeholders from across Government including the Police, Crown Prosecution Service and Home Office to understand the current and future challenges posed by digital disclosures within the criminal justice system in order to understand how technology might help to solve them.

The workshop chaired by Chief Constable Sara Thornton was a partnership event between the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) and the Ditchley Foundation, which brings together influential and expert people to help redefine and renew our society, democracy and alliances.

Law enforcement agencies throughout the world have been wrestling with the problem of how to manage the vast quantities and types of digital data now associated with most criminal investigations, in accordance with proper application of disclosure principles.

While more data brings new opportunities to leverage information for successful prosecutions, there is the challenge of collecting, processing and using this data in a proportionate and targeted way. In addition, the use of connected and internet enabled digital devices is likely to increase meaning that the already overwhelming quantity of data involved is likely to continue reaching new orders of magnitude.

DASA will use the outcomes of the workshop to identify and accelerate innovative technologies to help address the priority challenges, utilising its wide access to the supply base.

Press release: Parole Board Chief Executive's Blog – 4th Edition – November 2018

In his 4th monthly blog, Martin Jones, CEO of the Parole Board, talks about the work the Parole Board is doing to improve victims' experience of parole, including a project to inform members about restorative justice.

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Working to improve victims' experience of parole

The Parole Board makes thousands of decisions each year. The majority of those decisions have the potential to cause anxiety and sometimes upset to victims. Even though the Parole Board's job is focused not on punishment, but on the potential risk if the prisoner is released, we always take careful account of any victim personal statements and should ensure that we treat victims with humanity and sensitivity.

While we can sometimes make unpopular decisions, we should always be prepared to listen and learn. Therefore, I regularly meet with the Victim's Commissioner and with individual victims who have experienced the parole process to consider how we might improve.

Restorative Justice Guides

I am delighted that we have now published some really helpful guides about Restorative Justice (RJ), produced in collaboration with [Why me? Victims for Restorative Justice](#). My thanks go to Lucy Jaffé and her team at Why me? for leading this work.

The initiative for this work came from two very brave women, who were the victims of serious offences. Through RJ, they had both met the men who had been convicted of the offences, and had found the process helpful. They wanted to meet me because they were keen to discuss whether Parole Board members understood RJ and how it works, so that members could make well-informed decisions about the potential relevance RJ may have on parole decisions.

I listened very carefully to these two very courageous ladies and made a commitment to them and the Victims' Commissioner that we would carry out this work. The publication of these leaflets is a great step forward in this work and I am glad that we have delivered on this promise. This was a great piece of work that will undoubtedly help Parole Board members understand more about RJ, and will also help people working in RJ learn about the Parole Board.

For more detailed information about restorative justice and parole, please take a look at the leaflets or go to the [Why me? website](#).

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#RJ Week 18-25 November

The publication of these leaflets ties in nicely with [Restorative Justice Week](#), which is taking place all over Europe, and beyond, this week.

Presumption that a victim can attend an oral hearing

We have already delivered on a recommendation made in [the Government's recent victim strategy](#) that we move to a presumption that a victim can attend an oral hearing to read out their personal statement. This removes the anxious period victims had whilst waiting for a decision from the Parole Board. It is only in very rare occasions that it will be considered inappropriate for a victim to attend, and this will be based on safety or security matters. Even in such cases, victims can still deliver their statement via video-link or other means.

Continuing to reimburse victims for expenses

We continue to reimburse victims for expenses incurred when attending a prison and I hope that this removes some of the barriers and allows victims to contribute as much as possible.

Victim Liaison Events

During October and November, members and staff of the Board have been participating in Victim Liaison Officer briefing events around the country, listening to their concerns and providing advice and guidance. I will be

attending the last one of these events in London next week and look forward to meeting VLOs, who are crucial links when victims are engaged in the parole process.

Next steps

I am carefully reviewing the progress made with providing summary decision letters to victims and am grateful for all those who have provided feedback. We are continually developing our thinking in this area and looking to improve the process as much as possible.

I am also keen to see how the plans for a mechanism to reconsider Parole Board decisions develops, and am working with officials within the Ministry of Justice to see how this could be best implemented.

We welcome the plans to improve the [Victim Contact Scheme](#) to ensure that victims are kept fully informed of their roles and are able to effectively participate in these evolving processes, which the Victim Commissioner has rightly highlighted as a key part of improving victim experience of the parole process overall.

And finally, we look forward to working with colleagues across the Ministry of Justice to review [the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) to make it more accessible to victims whilst providing a clear mandate to those agencies delivering services to victims of crime.

Speech: DFID Ghana Social Sector Team Leader's speech at Adolescent and Youth Pre-Summit to African Union Second Girl Summit

Honourable Minister of Gender, Children & Social Protection,

H.E. The Second Lady of the Republic of Ghana,

UN Resident Coordinator,

Representative from the Canadian High Commission,

Regional Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

Thank you to the African Union and the Government of Ghana for hosting this important conference.

Yesterday marked the anniversary of the Declaration and the Convention of Children's Rights, the most widely-ratified human rights treaty in history which Ghana was the first country to ratify. So it is a time for celebrating children's rights, to continue to press for action that will improve the lives of children and youth around the world, and to recognise that the future belongs to them— not us.

So I am delighted to be here. The UK government is committed to empowering young people and giving them the chance to have their voices heard, especially on issues that affect them specifically.

This includes the crucially important issue of child marriage, which we know is incredibly widespread. Over 650 million women alive today were married during their adolescent years. And every day, 20,000 adolescent girls become pregnant. I look forward to this Summit's discussions and decisions on how to tackle this.

We know that young people have enormous potential to shape the future of their countries when given the right opportunities and support. Without the active participation of young people, we will not be successful in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This is why DFID provides support to youth programming and policy development that enables productive employment; develops future leaders and active citizens; protects young people from harm; and raises awareness of development issues.

And if I may speak specifically on Ghana for a moment.

The UK Government's International Citizen Service programme brings together young people from the UK and young Ghanaians. Working in Eastern region and Upper West, these young volunteers build their own skills, confidence and job prospects as well as working to promote gender equality, adult literacy and help to support education for children with disabilities. To date, this UK Aid programme has supported 35,000 young people across the globe.

I also want to note His Excellency the President's vision for a self-reliant Ghana. This vision is truly inspiring and is applauded by the UK and all development partners. In the long term, economic development and investment in human capital, which means an investment in young people's health, education and tackling barriers that block their potential, is the sustainable pathway to self-reliance.

The summit...

It is fantastic to be part of the adolescent and youth pre-summit, and to see so many impressive young people represented here today. To the young people – I would urge you all to raise your voice and use this forum to share your expertise and knowledge of the issues that are affecting your generation. And to the not-so-young... I would encourage you to listen openly to what young people are telling us.

This final point is summed up by the [#ourlivesourleadership](#), [#enoughwiththesilence](#) and [#endchildmarriagenow](#) hashtag that will be

circulating Twitter to tie in with the summit. These issues affect young people, and we should be empowering young people to speak out and end the silence.

Press release: PM call with First Minister Jones: 21 November 2018



A Downing Street spokesperson said:

This afternoon Prime Minister Theresa May met with the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones to discuss the progress in negotiations for the UK's departure from the European Union.

They agreed that the priority remained to finalise a deal that will provide certainty and stability for people and businesses across the whole of the UK, including Wales.

The Prime Minister set out how the deal we are negotiating with the EU would see the creation of a free trade area for goods and secure the rights of EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU. It would mean close cooperation across issues such as travel, transport and energy, protecting tourism, jobs and livelihoods for people in Wales and the whole of the UK.

The Prime Minister was clear that the negotiated deal will deliver on the result of the referendum, and protect the integrity of our United Kingdom.

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