

# Family Public Law Reform: National rollout of digital care and supervision applications resumes in September

## News story

The new online service to process care and supervision applications will resume its national roll out from 14 September 2020 to improve outcomes for vulnerable children.



The new online service to process care and supervision applications will resume its national roll out from 14 September 2020.

The service allows local authorities and legal representatives to create and manage care and supervision applications under Part 4 of the Children Act 1989, or an Emergency Protection Order under section 44 of the Children Act 1989 online. It was paused in March due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Since then, the project team has been improving performance of the service in time for national roll out, which will follow a phased approach with an initial 8 court sites with others to follow.

The new service will improve the progression of cases to support the best outcome for the most vulnerable children by:

- allowing local authorities to create new digital applications for care supervision and Emergency Protection Orders
- enabling cases to be progressed by the court, legal professionals, local authorities and judiciary in a timely manner
- giving legal professionals, including parents' solicitors and Cafcass the ability to access cases digitally and view tasks that need to be completed before a hearing
- allowing court users to see the status of their case and to progress it

online

- enabling court users to upload and access documents and evidence digitally
- enables documents and evidence to be added to case and court bundles which can be uploaded, annotated, presented in court and used in the hearings.

Family Public Law will transition into Court and Tribunal Service Centres as the roll out progresses. This means support for some administrative tasks relating to case management will move to a central function. Local courts will continue to carry out tasks such as listing and will also continue to support the offline process as they currently do now.

For more information about the family courts [read the latest blog by Adam Lennon – Responding to a global pandemic within the family courts](#).

[More information on Justice Reform and Family Public Law](#)

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## [Illegal waste activities targeted in Chelmsford, Essex](#)

Press release

Essex residents are being urged to get rid of their waste properly after around 8 houses-worth of rubbish was discovered illegally dumped in Chelmsford.



The mountain of waste was uncovered when enforcement officers and police swooped on a suspected illegal waste site last Wednesday (19 August 2020).

Officers from the [Environment Agency](#), [Essex Police](#), [Chelmsford City Council](#) and [Braintree District Council](#) were acting on intelligence when they visited

the site.

## **Mountain of waste**

The rubbish they discovered included plastics, metals, glass, paper and textiles.

Householders and business have a legal duty to ensure they give their waste only to those legitimately registered to handle it. If they don't, they could be held responsible for where it ends up.

To check whether a waste carrier is legal, people can ask to see the carrier's licence and check it [online](#) or by contacting the Environment Agency on 03708 506 506.

Lesley Robertson, Environment Agency enforcement team leader, said:

Waste crime undermines legitimate business, can cause harm to the environment and misery for local people.

We are continuing to work with our enforcement partners to disrupt illegal waste activities and remain committed to the closure of illegal waste sites.

We urge anyone with information about waste crime, or who suspects illegal waste activities are taking place to contact our hotline 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers, anonymously, either on 0800 555 111 or their website [crimestoppers-uk.org](https://www.crimestoppers-uk.org).

PC Nigel Wright from Essex Police's Rural Engagement Team, said:

We are happy to provide support during these operations. Fly-tipping is not only unpleasant to look at, it can also be a danger to local residents and wildlife. We would encourage anyone who has information on this to please report it as we can only help if we know about it.

## **Waste crime crackdown**

The Environment Agency is cracking down on serious and organised waste crime and taking tough action to deal with criminal behaviour. It is working with the police and other enforcement agencies to put waste criminals out of business and take back the profits of their crimes.

Waste crime is estimated to cost the UK economy £600 million every year. It can pose a serious risk to the environment and people's health, and make life a misery for local people.

## [The influence of family on prisoners during parole – CEO blog](#)

The Parole Board is all too aware of the distress felt by the families of prisoners going through a parole review. When a person is sent to prison, it is not just the prisoner who serves the sentence – their families serve it alongside them, often describing it as “the hidden sentence”.

For the families of people serving indeterminate life or IPP sentences, the challenges and stresses can be severe. Any such prisoner cannot be released unless the Parole Board deems it no longer necessary for the protection of the public that they remain confined.

Whilst our sole focus is risk. I am aware that, a parole review can be an anxious period for families as they await the decision which will determine their loved one’s freedom and future. This is compounded by a common misconceptions and lack of understanding of how parole works among many people in society.

It is therefore my responsibility as Chief Executive of the Parole Board to do everything in my power to increase the understanding of how we work and the transparency of our processes and decision making for the general public, victims, prisoners and their families.

We have just announced the publication of a new information leaflet, entitled Information for family and friends of prisoners having a parole review. I hope this booklet will provide a useful go-to document for anyone wishing to support someone in prison going through parole.

The in-depth, but easy to understand, booklet takes families and friends through the entire parole process, who is involved, what happens and how it works. It also gives guidance on how to find a solicitor, how a loved one might attend a parole oral hearing and also provides sign-posts to information and services that may offer other support and advice, for example helplines, information about licences and further reading about the parole process.

There is also a section for family members of friends who may want to write something to the Parole Board in support of the prisoner and how best to do this. The booklet explains licence conditions, what they mean, how they will affect a newly released prisoner and how to support them in abiding by the conditions.

The uncertainty of the situation can make it difficult to manage the feelings

of hopelessness that can sometimes arise. We explain in the leaflet that IPP prisoners can ask the Parole Board to consider terminating the licence completely after ten years from when they were first released from prison. Many prisoners may not be aware of this avenue and so we provide clear advice in the booklet on how to make such an application.

I am grateful to Dr Anna Kotova for bringing the creative work of Dr Pen Mendonça to the Board's attention. Pen's eye catching and creative graphics have provided visually striking artwork for the booklet and some insightful thoughts that illustrate the very real struggles families of people in prison face. I would like to thank Lucy Gampell, a Parole Board member for over ten years, whose expertise and experience was vital in the creation of the leaflet.

The research drew on two areas: the IPP sentence and the fact that over 2000 prisoners are still serving the sentence, as well as the role of families in rehabilitation and resettlement of offenders.

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## [Derailment and fire involving a tanker train at Llangennech](#)



Derailed tank wagons at Llangennech, Carmarthenshire (courtesy of Network Rail)

At about 23:15 hrs on 26 August 2020, train 6A11, the 21:52 hrs freight service from Robeston to Theale, conveying 25 tank wagons, each containing up to 75.5 tonnes of diesel or gas oil, derailed on the 'Up District' line near Llangennech, in Carmarthenshire. The derailment and the subsequent damage to the wagons resulted in a significant spillage of fuel and a major fire. The driver, who was unhurt, reported the accident to the signaller. Subsequent examination of the site revealed that a total of 10 wagons (positioned 3rd to 12th in the train) had derailed.

The fire was tackled by the fire service, who ordered the evacuation of local residents due to concerns for their safety. Local people have reported seeing

a plume of flames and smoke, and the strong smell of fuel. Our investigation will seek to identify the causes of the derailment, and how these led to the fire. It will also consider any underlying management factors.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, police or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

You can [subscribe to automated emails](#) notifying you when we publish our reports.

For media enquiries, please call 01932 440015.

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1. 28 August 2020

Corrected to read the tank wagons contained 'up to 75.5 tonnes of diesel or gas oil'

2. 28 August 2020

First published.

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## **UK statement on Belarus: OSCE Special Permanent Council 2020**

Mr. Chairperson, the UK is deeply concerned by the ongoing situation in Belarus and the events that have taken place before, during and after the Presidential election on 9 August. The UK does not accept the result and we continue to call for a thorough independent investigation through the OSCE into the fraud and abuses of human rights during this period. Belarus – like every other participating State in this organisation – has agreed to abide to a series of OSCE principles and commitments, which include full respect for democracy and human rights. It is the responsibility of every State to respect, and uphold these principles and commitments.

I will begin by offering our full support to the OSCE Chairperson Edi Rama and the incoming Swedish Chairmanship – in their efforts to establish an open and constructive dialogue to support the people of Belarus in choosing their own path ahead. Our overriding concern is that violence is stopped and further violence avoided, basic human rights are upheld and that the space

for political dialogue is created to resolve this crisis.

Like others who have spoken today, the UK remains deeply concerned about the violence used by the Belarusian authorities to suppress the peaceful demonstrations that followed the Presidential election. There are numerous credible reports by media and civil society organisations of the excessive use of violence by Belarusian authorities against peaceful protesters, journalists, the public, human rights defenders, political opponents and others since the elections. This includes the use of riot police and the deployment of tear gas, smoke bombs and rubber bullets against peaceful demonstrators. Over 7000 protestors were detained according to Belarusian government figures, and independent media have reported 65 remain imprisoned and 58 unaccounted for.

We fully share the alarm expressed by the OSCE's Organization for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights on 19 August over the arbitrary arrests and allegations of torture and other forms of ill treatment at the hands of the Belarusian authorities, with detainees held incommunicado, overcrowding, beatings and insufficient food and water and denied access to medical treatment and legal advice. We understand detainees' families were not informed about the whereabouts of their loved ones. Of particular concern are reported instances of sexual and gender based violence, including threats and allegations of rape.

ODIHR was unable to deploy a Mission to observe the 9 August election because the Belarusian authorities failed to issue a timely invitation.

Opposition candidates were detained in the run-up to the Presidential election. Prominent blogger Sergei Tikhanovsky was arrested before he was able to submit his application to run; former CEO of Belgazprombank Victor Babaryka, along with his son, were arrested while submitting signatures to support his candidacy; and former diplomat Valery Tsepkalov was removed from the electoral race after the Central Election Commission (CEC) invalidated a large number of his signatures.

We call for the Belarusian Government to cease and desist the detainment and use of violence against peaceful protesters, and to immediately release detainees and political prisoners, including Olga Kovalkova and Sergei Dylevsky, respond constructively to the Coordination Council's offer of dialogue, accept the offer of support from the OSCE Chair, and engage with Belarusian society and community groups. We are alarmed by allegations of arbitrary arrests and allegations of torture and other forms of ill-treatment.

Let me be clear – our concerns have nothing to do with geopolitics. We wholly reject any claim that the situation in Belarus has anything to do with the strategic interests of Eastern and Western countries. The topic being discussed here today has nothing to do with the EU, NATO, or Russia, and everything to do with the people of Belarus, their human rights and their right to self-government. As a member of the OSCE, the government of Belarus has freely signed up to a body of principles and commitments to protect the rights of their citizens – and as participating States, we are duty-bound to

call out human rights violations within the OSCE region when they occur.

Mr. Chairperson, all OSCE Member States commit to holding free and fair democratic elections, and to uphold the right to freedom of peaceful assembly both in law and practice. There is strong evidence that the Republic of Belarus has not done so.

We call on Belarus to respect their OSCE commitments on democracy and human rights and – once again – to engage in political dialogue. It is essential for the people of Belarus to determine their own future.

Thank you Mr. Chairperson.