

Criminal Justice Inspection  
Northern Ireland  
*a better justice system for all*



# CORPORATE PLAN 2023-26 & BUSINESS PLAN 2023-24

A BETTER JUSTICE SYSTEM FOR ALL



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Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJI) is Northern Ireland's statutory Inspectorate with responsibility for inspecting all aspects of the criminal justice system apart from the judiciary.

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# FOREWORD

BY THE CHIEF INSPECTOR

This Corporate Plan for 2023-26 and Business Plan for 2023-24 presents Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland's (CJI's) priorities and objectives to support the delivery of an ambitious annual Inspection Programme.

We have taken the opportunity to review our corporate values to better reflect our organisation, who we are and how we carry out our work.

The last Corporate Plan period saw challenges no one could have predicted, a pandemic came and thankfully went, and the Northern Ireland Executive was restored and dissolved again. During this time, we retained a focus on inspection delivery and publishing reports on topics that reflected coverage of CJI's statutory remit, areas of risk and stakeholder interests. That will continue for the next three years

as we build on the advantages of technology and remote working while acknowledging the benefits of face-to-face communication and evidence gathering in inspected organisations as well as CJI teamwork and collaboration.

Of course, like every organisation, we were impacted by the pandemic and how it has affected the organisations we inspect. While we were agile and responsive to a changing working environment, I am grateful that the CJI team remained focussed on what we could do and progressed inspections and report publication.

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The CJI team has changed, with relatively new Inspectors and Business Support staff who have strengthened the team and will help deliver the Corporate and Business Plan objectives for this year and beyond. We have introduced a new operating model with Inspectors working in pairs to enable better resource planning and utilisation. We will review this model after a year to ensure it delivers the benefits we anticipated.

The 2023-24 Inspection Programme was informed by consultation with the leaders of organisations both in our statutory remit and in a wide range of voluntary and community sector organisations with links to the criminal justice system. I have also met the previous Minister of Justice, the Permanent Secretary and senior Department of Justice officials, the Lady Chief Justice, Attorney General, political party justice spokespersons and various oversight bodies we work in partnership with.

These meetings provided valuable feedback on CJI's work and potential inspection topics. I listened carefully to consultee views, however, the final programme has been decided by me. It reflects a careful balance of risk-based coverage, including our role as a United Kingdom (UK) National Preventive Mechanism member organisation, and the strong Inspectorate and oversight partnerships CJI has fostered and will maintain in the next three years. That will require adequate resources to deliver and as I have often said, preserving independence is supported by an Inspection Programme that is not unduly fettered by what is affordable rather than what is really needed for sufficient assurance and public confidence.

I look forward to the restoration of a Northern Ireland Executive, Committee for Justice and a Minister of Justice with a new Programme for Government that reflects the ambition, governance and accountability envisaged for Northern Ireland's criminal justice system.

It is needed now more than ever as we face budget constraints and competing priorities across justice and other services that impact so much on criminal justice outcomes for victims, witnesses, and defendants.

CJI celebrates 20 years from its creation in this Corporate Plan period, while the criminal

justice system has changed in the last two decades many of the challenges persist. What remains a constant is the need for quality independent and impartial inspections aimed at improving the criminal justice system for all - it is what our founding legislation requires, and we remain committed to delivering.



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**JACQUI DURKIN**

Chief Inspector of Criminal  
Justice in Northern Ireland

**July 2023**

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# VISION

CJI's vision is for  
*'a better justice  
system for all.'*

We are focussed on ensuring the vulnerable are protected, strategy, governance and delivery can meet challenges within the criminal justice system and where outcomes lead to effective services and increased public confidence to the benefit of everyone.

## OUR ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

INDEPENDENCE

IMPARTIALITY

COLLABORATION

COMPASSION

EXCELLENCE

INTEGRITY

FAIRNESS

### **We will actively apply our values in all aspects of our work.**

We will carry out inspection work in an independent and impartial way. We will seek evidence of fairness and equality of treatment for everyone who engages with the criminal justice system. We will be fair and even-handed in our approach and how we present our findings. We will be compassionate in our approach by listening to and reflecting the voice of those who have experience of engaging with and working in the criminal justice system. We will identify and pursue opportunities for collaboration with partner Inspectorates, oversight bodies and specialist experts both within and outside the criminal justice system to maximise learning and the delivery of better outcomes. We will act with integrity at all times. We will deliver excellence and quality standards in the work we undertake and promote organisational excellence among others.

## CJI'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND KEY THEMES 2023-26

We have six strategic objectives for the three years of this Corporate Plan that are aligned to achieving a better justice system and the four strategic themes of the Department of Justice (DoJ) Corporate Plan for 2022-25 to support safe and resilient communities; address harm and vulnerability; challenge offending behaviours and support rehabilitation and deliver an effective justice system.

We look forward to a restored Northern Ireland Executive and new Programme for Government that has ambitious outcomes for the criminal justice system.

### CJI's strategic objectives are to:

**1**  
Effectively deliver a risk-based, responsive and relevant Inspection Programme.

**2**  
be an effective UK National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) body in support of the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT);

focus on **3**  
achieving better outcomes through recommendation implementation;

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4

**promote performance improvement and better collaboration within the criminal justice system, with relevant external organisations and our partner Inspectorates;**

5

**develop and implement a new communication strategy; and**

6

**value and invest in the professional connections and wellbeing of our staff team.**

These strategic priorities will be supported by objectives and targets in our annual Business Plan. We will report our performance against these strategic priorities and Business Plan targets in the Annual Report and Accounts.

**The key themes of our Inspection Programmes over the next three years will continue to be:**

**BETTER SERVICES AND DELIVERY**

**BETTER EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS**

**BETTER PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING**

**BETTER STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE**

**BETTER OUTCOMES**

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# DELIVERING OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

CJI will deliver our strategic objectives with a focus on:

## PARTNERSHIP

We will continue to:

- Consult widely to develop and deliver a risk-based and relevant Inspection Programme including Inspections and Follow-up Reviews as well as considering any Ministerial requested Reviews;
- continue to utilise the knowledge and professional expertise of other Inspectorates such as His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP), His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS); His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation) and His Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) to benchmark performance with England and Wales;
- maintain relationships with other Inspectorates in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland; and
- source independent specialists, when required, to provide expertise, further enhance the professional expertise of the Inspection Team and the quality of our inspection reports.



We will continue to maintain effective partnerships with other oversight and regulatory bodies in Northern Ireland where they also have a statutory obligation to carry out inspections involving organisations and bodies within CJJ's remit or provide services in those organisations.



The Education and Training Inspectorate  
Promoting Improvement

We will continue to develop our links with Queen's University, Belfast and Ulster University and pursue opportunities to collaborate, inform and engage with students and academia.



**We will explore opportunities for a more explicit rights-based approach to inspections in our annual programmes.**

## COMMUNICATION

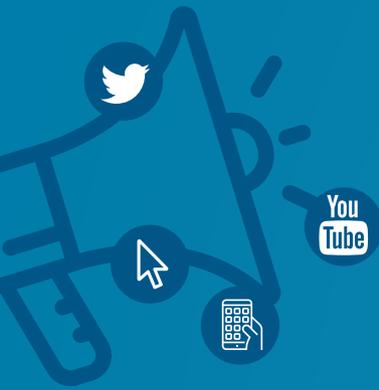
Good communication enables CJI to make a positive impact on the criminal justice system and improve awareness and understanding of the work we do. Our website and social media presence are vital to maintaining affordable and effective communication with inspected organisations, our stakeholders and the wider public.

### In the next three years we aim to:

- I** Influence and affect/enable positive change within the organisations we inspect;
- M** Maintain accountability and accessibility by making our Inspection Reports and Review Reports freely available on our new website and developing our digital communications activity;
- P** Pursue opportunities to further develop partnership working with other Inspectorates, oversight bodies, regulators and members of the voluntary and community sector;
- A** Advocate positive practice that leads to better outcomes for all who engage with the criminal justice organisations we inspect whether that is as a victim, witness, or someone convicted of a criminal offence;
- C** Clearly and consistently communicate our inspection findings and recommendations in an accessible way to stakeholders and inspected organisations; and
- T** Track our progress by setting objectives and targets for our communication activity that support the Corporate and Business Plan objectives of CJI, that we will report on in our Annual Report and Accounts.

We will provide briefings to the future Minister of Justice, the Permanent Secretary and Departmental Officials, the Committee for Justice, All Party Groups and political parties that will enable a better informed and accountable criminal justice system.

We will remain responsive to feedback and mindful of the wider context in which inspected organisations are delivering their services without compromising our independence and professional practice.



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## INDEPENDENCE

CJI will continue to provide independent, impartial and evidence-based information and expert opinion to the public, political representatives and criminal justice stakeholders about the work and performance of inspected bodies and the entire criminal justice system.



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## PERFORMANCE

CJI aims to secure improvements to the effectiveness and efficiency of the criminal justice system through making strategic and operational recommendations which will be evidence-based, take account of benchmarking with other jurisdictions/sectors and promote and secure innovation and best practice.

When appropriate, we will encourage and support inspected organisations to deliver recommendations and implement the required changes where appropriate - this can involve facilitating cross-agency/departmental working in line with the priorities and outcomes contained in the DoJ Corporate Plan and the future Programme for Government.

We will continue to monitor the implementation of recommendations through organisation's self-assessments and inform the planning of future Follow-Up Reviews.



# WHO WE ARE

**CJI was established in 2003 as an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), a Corporation Sole, and is sponsored by the DoJ.**

The delivery of our services is subject to continuous performance improvement.

Effectiveness and efficiency are embedded in our ISO 9001:2015 accredited methodology and working practices.

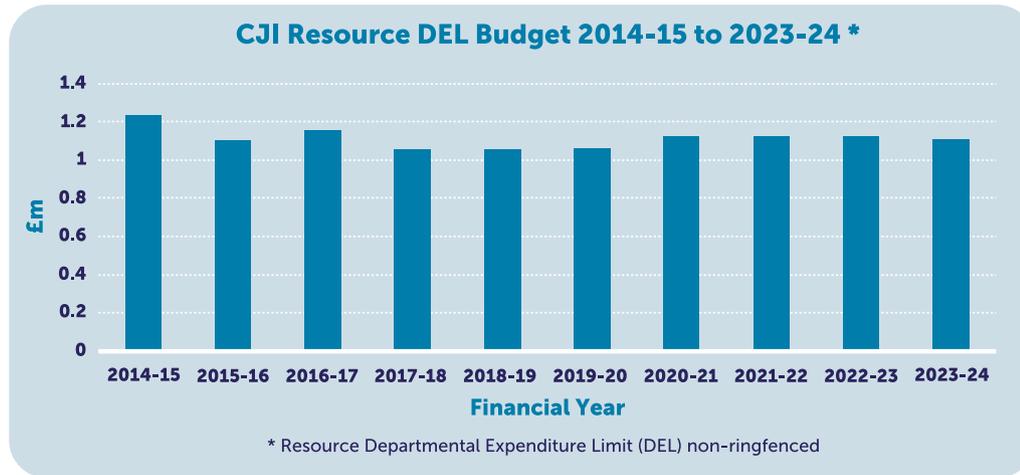
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## OUR BUDGET

CJI is financed by revenue grants from the DoJ. The opening Resource (non-ringfenced) Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) budget for 2023-24 is £1,108,000.

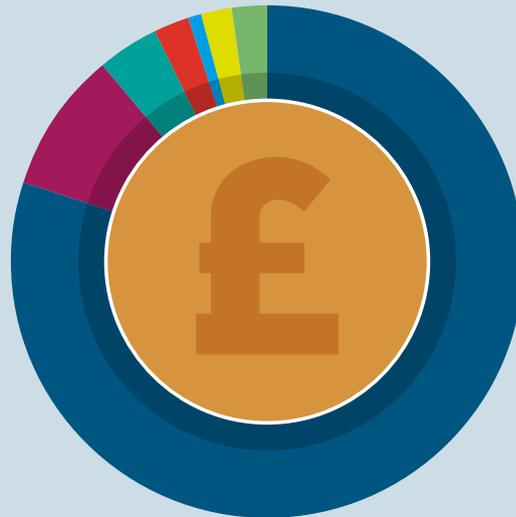
This budget represents a 1.7% reduction compared to the opening 2022-23 Resource budget and in reality, represents a larger funding cut when pay award and inflationary costs are considered. CJI's budget is 0.1% of the DoJ Resource budget and the second smallest budget of all DoJ's NDPBs.

As CJI's costs primarily relate to salaries and other staff, contractual and operational costs the organisation has little scope to reduce spending elsewhere without impacting on our inspection programme.

**FIGURE 1: CJJ BUDGET 2014-15 TO 2023-24**

### CJJ 2023-24 OPENING RESOURCE BUDGET ALLOCATION

- 80% Staff Costs - Pay
- 9% Business support services
- 4% Accommodation
- 2% Consultancy Support
- 1% Audit & Assurance
- 2% Other Professional Services
- 2% Other costs



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## OUR PEOPLE

The Chief Inspector, Jacqui Durkin, and Deputy Chief Inspector and Chief Executive, James Corrigan, have responsibility for the management of CJI.

Our team of six Inspectors (four Full-Time and two Part-Time) are supported by a Business and Communications Manager, Digital Communications and Business Officer and Corporate Secretariat Officer (Part-Time).

Staff training and development through an investment in skills, knowledge and support is important to us. Providing opportunities to develop experience in a small team is vital to ensure we have sufficient Inspectors with the right skills to deliver our programme as is an effective Business Support Team to support this.

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## ORGANISATIONAL GOVERNANCE

Corporate governance and risk management forms a core part of the work of CJI. There are established arrangements in place for audit and accountability together with external accreditation through ISO 9001:2015.

We will continue to maintain good working relationships with our DoJ sponsor. In December 2022, CJI signed a new Partnership Agreement with the DoJ that reflects proportionality and risk appetite.

An Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is chaired by one of our two independent members. The Accounting Officer's responsibility is delegated from the DoJ Permanent Secretary to the Chief Executive.

In the last business year, the DoJ conducted a Review of CJI and a number of recommendations were made that require implementation by the DoJ and CJI.

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# BUSINESS PLAN 2023-24

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# BUSINESS PLAN TARGETS

Commence 90% of Inspections and Follow-up Reviews and progress in line with the Terms of Reference;

Consider and respond to any Ministerial and Departmental Requests for a Review, including resource implications;

Monitor the acceptance of published Inspection Report recommendations and the implementation and progress of previous report recommendations;

Maintain effective working relationships with criminal justice organisations in our statutory remit, relevant community and voluntary organisations and partners, and review and explore opportunities for agreed joint cross cutting inspections;

# INSPECTION PROGRAMME

Effectively fulfil our responsibilities as a member of the UK National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) and Chair the Northern Ireland NPM Subgroup;

Effectively engage with the DoJ on the implementation of the Independent Review Panel report on the Review of the 2007 Protocol relating to the accreditation of community restorative justice projects; and

Consult on the 2024-25 annual Inspection Programme.

## BUSINESS PLAN TARGET 1

### INSPECTION PROGRAMME

To undertake the approved annual Inspection Programme and respond to any Ministerial Requests:

Publish all approved Inspection Reports and Follow-up Review Reports by laying or presenting before the Northern Ireland Assembly and publishing on the CJI website;

Maintain effective engagement and obtain feedback on CJI's work from key stakeholders including the heads of the main criminal justice agencies; the Minister of Justice for Northern Ireland; the DoJ Permanent Secretary, the Attorney General for Northern Ireland; the Lady Chief Justice, Committee for Justice and the justice spokespersons of the main political parties represented in the Northern Ireland Assembly and All Party Groups;

# COMMS

Develop and implement a new quality accessible website;

Develop the use of digital communication including social media; and

Effectively brief the Minister of Justice, DoJ Permanent Secretary, Committee for Justice, All Party Groups and other political representatives on request.

## BUSINESS PLAN TARGET 2

### COMMUNICATIONS

To develop and implement an effective Communications Strategy:

Publish an annual Business Plan incorporating an Inspection Programme which has been approved by the Minister of Justice or in their absence, the DoJ Permanent Secretary;

Maintain effective and proportionate sponsor arrangements and relationships with the DoJ sponsor team in support of the Corporation Sole Partnership Agreement and implement appropriate recommendations falling to CJJ from the DoJ Review of CJJ;

Maintain an effective and proportionate Audit and Risk Assurance Committee including non-executive membership in line with best practice;

Effectively manage known financial pressures in partnership with the DoJ sponsor team by bidding for adequate funding to deliver the agreed Inspection Programme and Ministerial or Departmental Review requests;

# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Process all payments in line with DoJ targets and submit all financial management and governance returns to the DoJ in line with required timeframes;

Obtain an unqualified audit certificate from the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland and publish, by laying before the Northern Ireland Assembly, CJJ's Annual Report and Accounts for the year in the required timescale;

Effectively respond to requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, input to DoJ Assembly Questions and Committee for Justice briefings;

Maintain a quality management system (ISO 9001:2015);

Establish an effective Human Resources support system; and

Develop a CJJ Safeguarding Protocol.

## BUSINESS PLAN TARGET 3

### CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

To effectively fulfil required Corporation Sole governance requirements:

Provide agreed development and training opportunities for all staff to enhance their skills and experience including placements with partner Inspectorates;

Explore the development of an Associate Inspector call off list to provide contingency and supplementary capacity if required;

# PEOPLE

Effectively induct and train a new Business Support Team member;

Maintain effective contingency arrangements to support the delivery of core business activity and Inspection Programme and mitigate risk; and

Promote and support Team wellbeing.

## BUSINESS PLAN TARGET 4

### PEOPLE

To effectively develop and deploy the CJI team to achieve business objectives:

# INSPECTION PROGRAMME

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The 2023-24 Inspection Programme was subject to consultation with the DoJ Permanent Secretary and senior officials, the Attorney General for Northern Ireland and the Lady Chief Justice. The heads of criminal justice organisations in our statutory remit, community and voluntary sector organisations, political representatives, including the previous Minister of Justice, and other stakeholders were also consulted.

This annual programme for 2023-24 sets out:

- Ongoing inspections, a Ministerial Request and Follow-up Reviews scheduled for publication during 2023-24;
- New inspections planned to commence in-year; and
- Follow-up Reviews planned to commence in-year.

It includes inspection activity and Follow-up Reviews related to our responsibilities as a member of the UK NPM to inspect in places of detention.

# ONGOING INSPECTIONS AND REVIEWS

## BETTER SERVICES AND DELIVERY

 Youth Justice Agency Youth Interventions - Youth Justice Agency role and service delivery in early intervention, diversionary and youth conferencing outcomes achieved. Engagement with other service providers and ongoing supports for young people to prevent reoffending.

## BETTER EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

 Forensic Services – incorporating a Follow-up Review of the previous Forensic Science Northern Ireland inspection.

 File quality, disclosure and case progression - incorporating trial recovery.

 Effective Court Administration - assessment of Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service processes, systems, resources and services to support the administration of justice in the Magistrates' and Crown Courts.

## BETTER PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

 Child Protection pilot joint thematic with RQIA and ETI partners.

 Maghaberry Prison inspection.

 Vulnerable Older People - how the criminal justice system engages with and treats vulnerable older people including as victims and witnesses, levels of reported crime and how they are dealt with, investigation and prosecution outcomes, links to safeguarding, support during case progression and court disposal.

# ONGOING INSPECTIONS AND REVIEWS

## CONTINUED

### BETTER STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE

 Transforming Justice.

### BETTER OUTCOMES

 Community Safety and Local Policing arrangements - effectiveness of strategy and governance for community safety and the Police Service's local policing arrangements including the links between strategic planning and operational service delivery, links to Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and Local Government Community Planning, outcomes for communities and responsiveness to crime.

 A Review of the implementation of Part 1 of the Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act (Northern Ireland) 2021.

### MINISTERIAL REQUEST

 Review of Community Restorative Justice Ireland (published in May 2023).

### FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS

 Cyber Crime.

 Victims and Witnesses.

 Operation of Care and Supervision Units in the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

# NEW INSPECTIONS 2023-24

## BETTER SERVICES AND DELIVERY

 The investigation of Abuse of Position complaints by the Office of the Police Ombudsman.

## BETTER EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

 Case processing of criminal offences not investigated by the Police Service of Northern Ireland – an inspection of offences investigated by Northern Ireland Government Departments and Agencies within CJI's statutory remit, including a review of the systems, processes, prosecution arrangements and outcomes.

## BETTER PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING

 Magilligan and Maghaberry Prison Inspections – Independent Review of Progress against report recommendations and concerns, in partnership with His Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, the RQIA and the ETI.

## BETTER STRATEGY AND GOVERNANCE

 Community Restorative Justice schemes (subject to new Protocol arrangements and discussions with anticipated Protocol Lead appointment).

## BETTER OUTCOMES

 Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland – a review of governance and operation including case management, risk management and operational support.

## FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS

 Probation Practice.

 Police Custody.

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