

Connecting Criminal Justice

A follow-up review of the exchange of
information by Criminal Justice Organisations
through the Causeway IT programme

October 2007

Criminal Justice Inspection
Northern Ireland
a better justice system for all





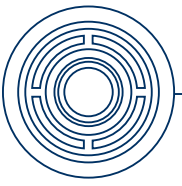
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List of abbreviations

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
BIS	Business Information System
CJI	Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland
CJO	Criminal Justice Organisation
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CJX	Computerised Messaging System
CRV	Criminal Record Viewer
DSM	Data Sharing Mechanism
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
Horizon	PSNI Enterprise Wide IT Project
FSNI	Forensic Science Northern Ireland
ICOS	Integrated Court Operations System
IS	Information System
ICIS	Integrated Crime Information System
ICT	Information Communication Technology
Niche RMS	Niche Records Management System
NIPS	Northern Ireland Prison Service
NPIA	National Police Improvement Agency
OCMT	Occurrence and Case Management Team
OCU	(Police) Operational Command Unit
OGC	Office of Government Commerce
OPONI	Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
PBNI	Probation Board for Northern Ireland
PCNI	Police College of Northern Ireland
PET	Programme Executive Team
PNC	Police National Computer
PPS	Public Prosecution Service
PSD	(Police) Professional Standards Department
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
RFI	Request for Further Information
RMS	Record Management System
SRO	Senior Responsible Owner



Chief Inspector's Foreword

This is the first review of our 'Connecting Criminal Justice' report into the Causeway IT system. We have examined how participating agencies addressed our recommendations and we have assessed the overall progress of the programme.

The Causeway Programme is now at a critical stage. Implementation of DSM1 has been rescheduled to take account of delays previously mentioned in 'Connecting Criminal Justice', and a more robust programme management structure has been put in place. Relationships have continued to develop between CJOs and there has been a more open approach to reporting progress and difficulties if they arise. CJOs have allocated appropriate resources to their part of the overall programme and have continued to work closely with the Causeway team to revise anticipated benefits.

Recommendations have for the most part been implemented and although the programme remains a high risk one, processes are in place which have increased the chance of it being delivered in line with the revised schedule. If risks are mitigated and there is no further delay Inspectors anticipate that DSM1 will be delivered in June 2008, on time. There is to be an investment appraisal of DSM 2 and 3 and Inspectors hope that approval will be given for the funding to enable delivery of these further elements and that full functionality of the Causeway system will be established by December 2009.

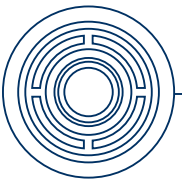
Bill Priestley led this inspection review for CJI and I would like to acknowledge the willing support and openness of all partner CJOs and the Causeway team.



Kit Chivers

Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice in Northern Ireland

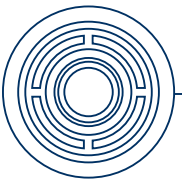




Section



Follow-Up Review



Introduction



The Causeway Programme is a joint undertaking by the criminal justice organisations in Northern Ireland. It aims to improve the administration of criminal justice through the development of new ways of working and better information systems. The organisations participating in Causeway are:

- The Criminal Justice Directorate of the Northern Ireland Office;
- The Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland;
- The Police Service of Northern Ireland;
- Northern Ireland Court Service;
- The Probation Board for Northern Ireland;
- Northern Ireland Prison Service; and,
- Forensic Science Northern Ireland.

Between March and April 2006 CJI undertook inspection fieldwork that resulted in publication of a report, *'Connecting Criminal Justice'* in July 2006. The terms of reference for that inspection limited the scope to an examination of;

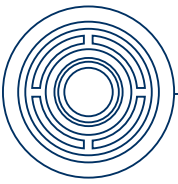
- how information is placed on the system;
- business change;
- how organisations are moving to facilitate Causeway;
- emerging and anticipated benefits; and,

- lessons learned by existing 'Causeway' organisations and their application to preparatory work across the criminal justice sector.

It was also agreed through the steering group formed for the duration of the first inspection that there would be further annual CJI reviews which may include inspection of:

- agency and collective progress towards realising the capabilities of Causeway identified in the implementation plan of the Review of the Criminal Justice System;
- progress towards the stated efficiency and effectiveness objectives by analysing agency and collective responses, case monitoring and disposal data, and measures of accessibility of information; and,
- progress in utilising the Causeway programme to establish better partnership working between participants to improve the administration of criminal justice.

It was agreed that any inspection work undertaken by CJI should be considered alongside the OGC Gateway™ reviews of which the latest (4b), was published in April 2005. A further OGC health check of Causeway was undertaken in June 2007. The stated primary purpose of the June



2007 OGC Health Check of Causeway was to provide assurance to the SRO that the Programme was in good shape to deliver DSM1 by June 2008 and in particular that:

- the governance structure is fit for purpose;
- delivery plans at Programme level and at CJO Project level are robust, realistic, controlled and achievable;
- the Programme is affordable and that appropriate financial management controls are in place to deliver DSM1 in line with the updated business case; and,
- that the original projected benefits have been appropriately reviewed and updated and that an appropriate realisation plan is in place to track the delivery of benefits.

This CJI inspection review examines progress made against the recommendations of the '*Connecting Criminal Justice*' report as well as other areas identified by the report as requiring improvement. In addition, those matters agreed at the original steering group for inclusion in future reviews, (see above), that do not overlap with the OGC work of June 2007 have been included.

By concentrating CJI inspection work on previous recommendations, areas for improvement and progress towards better partnership working amongst CJOs there has been minimal overlap or duplication with the OGC review undertaken in June 2007.

Progress against Recommendations



Recommendation 1

That the PSNI use the results of their training needs analysis to inform the design of training for users of the Niche RMS case preparation system. Training should be delivered as close to roll-out as possible and a test system should be made available.

Status: Achieved

There had been good progress against this recommendation. The Niche RMS case preparation system was due to begin going live across the PSNI in September 2007. An analysis of training needs had been undertaken and a training strategy had been formulated. This is a critical area of work and there remains a risk that Niche DSM 0 regression testing would cause slippage in implementation of the training schedule.

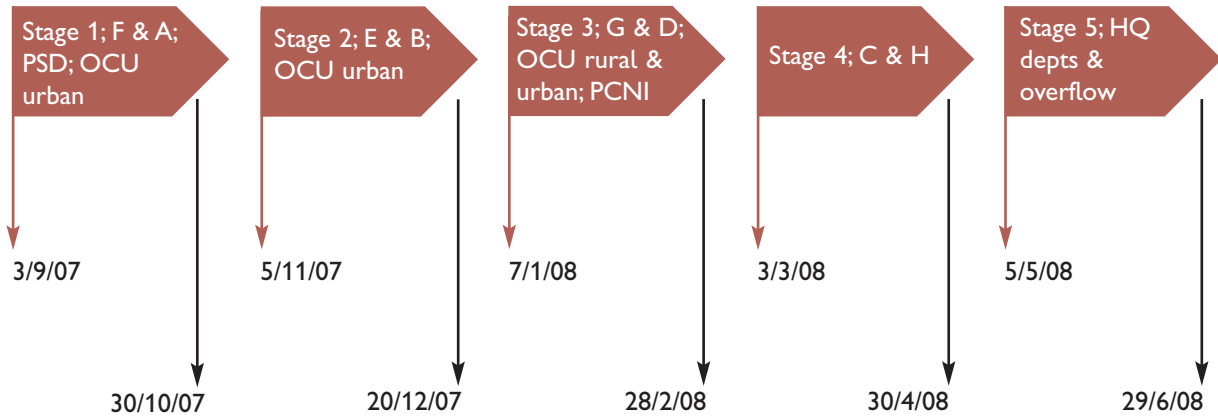
Training had been planned to be conducted 'just in time' so that Niche RMS case prep users would immediately follow up their training with live usage of the system. Training had been designed to be delivered in a phased programme which would start in Belfast and finish in Newry and Mourne. This was designed to mitigate any risks associated with the roll out of the PPS

where the last operational police area to go live will be Newry and Mourne. Current schedules at the time of fieldwork indicated that there was no serious risk of any additional delay in the PPS roll-out. Diagram One illustrates the PSNI roll-out schedule for Niche RMS case prep training.

Planning was in place to make available a virtual case prep system for the duration of the training using terminals installed in each district. After the training period it was expected that facilities would be retained by the districts and a comprehensive e-learning help package would be available to case prep users. This facility was planned to aid users in real time as they inputted data thus assisting in the drive for better quality reports. In addition the existing 24-hour help desk would be retained and there were plans to increase staff levels.



Diagram One: Police Districts A-H, Headquarters and other Departments



Recommendation 2

To aid the drive for quality the PSNI should put in place a system of monitoring how supervisors carry out quality checking of files submitted through them.

Status: Achieved

Within the Core Leadership and Development Programme a Criminal Justice Module that includes a workbook on case building had been included. At the time of inspection this had been piloted with the Police College and had just been included in the programme. The Criminal Justice Unit of the PSNI was the owner of quality in relation to case files. Under the

new Police District structures it had been decided to build in quality control in the form of Occurrence and Case Management teams (OCMT). It was expected that these would operate in a way similar to the Omagh system mentioned in the first CJI 'Connecting Criminal Justice' report. Within the OCMT a number of roles and processes had been established to monitor the quality of file preparation by officers. Under this arrangement officers would have less input to file preparation. Alongside the quality control exercised by the OCMT, local operational supervisors would be required to monitor quality. Supervisors would have access to detailed feedback supplied to them by the OCMT which should be used to develop officers' skills.



Recommendation 3

The PSNI should implement the recommendations contained in paragraphs 6.12; 6.14; and 6.16 of the CJI report 'Avoidable Delay' published in May 2006.

Status: Not Achieved

Progress against this recommendation is still being pursued through the NIO's Delay Action Team and will be assessed in future reviews by CJI.

Recommendation 4

The PPS and PSNI should continue to work together to ensure that replies to RFIs and case file updates are handled without delay prior to inclusion of the processing of RFIs in DSM 1.

Status: Achieved

There had been good progress with this recommendation. PPS liaison Sergeants had been appointed to monitor requests for further information (RFIs). Liaison Sergeants answered some of the RFI's themselves thereby saving time and effort but most were forwarded to officers in charge of the case and their supervisors. Messages contained alert flags for both the officer and supervisor. Knowledge of PPS requirements gained by the liaison Sergeants could be used to help reduce the numbers of RFIs in the long term though there had been no noticeable decrease as yet. Management information on the promptness of returning the RFI's was recorded. Liaison Sergeants had only recently been appointed and no system of monitoring their effectiveness had as yet been implemented.

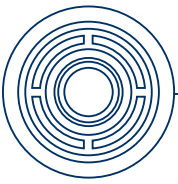
Recommendation 5

The PPS and the PSNI should work together to review the processing of Form 1 applications to reduce the number of cases being discontinued due to being out of time (statute barred).

Status: Achieved

There was a systematic monitoring system in place within the PPS to identify cases approaching their statute barred dates. Any paused messages were analysed on a daily basis so that potential statute barred cases are identified 15 days before the due date to enable timely Form 1 applications. The PPS system also identified any queued cases that were approaching their statute barred date. The solution to identifying potential statute barred cases at an early stage was being further refined and it was anticipated that it would be in place by September 2007.





Recommendation 6

The Causeway team should continue their efforts to baseline and review the benefits of the Causeway programme and ensure that these are communicated across the whole of the CJS.

Status: Achieved

Substantial progress has been made on this recommendation. The Causeway Programme Management Team developed a benefits review to take account of the programme delay, cost increase and any additional features not identified in the original benefits realisation document. Individual progress reports from the PSNI, PPS, NIPS and NICtS were collated in a Causeway interim progress report on the benefits review produced in May 2007.

Since the original Business Case was written benefits have accrued to organisations outside the original Causeway CJO partners. For example, the extension of the Criminal Record Viewer (CRV) to additional agencies such as Youth Justice, Police Ombudsman's Office, Compensation Agency and Access NI had not been identified as a benefit in the original Business Case.

The review indicated an increase in benefits accruing directly and indirectly from the Causeway Programme. The Causeway team and CJOs are in the process of verifying figures but initially it appears that the overall return rate compares favourably with that set out in the original Business Case.

The importance of ensuring that benefits are effectively tracked and realised had been recognised and a member of the OGC team had been retained for a period in order to provide a quality assurance and advisory role in this respect.

Results of the benefits review are discussed at meetings of the Causeway steering group. The most recent meeting of this group was on 27th June at which a draft report on the review had been tabled for CJO review and approval. Work was ongoing to establish a benefits realisation plan and embedded processes in line with Managing Successful Programmes (MSP) best practice.

Recommendation 7

The Causeway team should introduce a system of case priority marking for requests transferred between the PSNI and FSNI.

Status: Not achieved

Although discussions between the Causeway team, FSNI and the PSNI have taken place this recommendation has not as yet been achieved. Work is still ongoing to establish what the requirements are to enable appropriate case priority marking.



Recommendation 8

CJOs implementing projects that directly impact on the Causeway programme that are not already subject to independent validation, should seek guidance from the NIO OGC Gateway co-ordinator on engagement with the OGC Gateway process.

Status: Not Achieved

In addition to existing CJO governance arrangements for their own projects the new Causeway programme governance arrangements detailed below have partly addressed elements of this recommendation. However, CJI reiterates that projects being implemented by CJOs that impact on the programme should be subject to independent validation and that CJOs should seek guidance in this respect from the NIO OGC Gateway co-ordinator.

The PPS has entered into new arrangements with their software supplier who has allocated additional resources to ensure that the CMS is fully functional when it is required to fully integrate with Causeway. The approach had been externally validated by PA Consulting.

NIPS had established a small team led by a project manager to handle its Causeway/PRISM interface project that had been subject to the monthly reporting arrangements under the new governance arrangements as well as the OGC health check. Both of these mechanisms were seen by NIPS as useful assurance measures.

Monthly reporting is mandatory under the revised governance arrangements and a traffic light status indicator system is used by each of the CJOs to report on their

progress. If any one of the CJO projects is highlighted as being red then the status of the whole programme is also moved to red to reflect the risks involved. At time of inspection the overall programme status was red because of the delay to the PSNI Niche RMS regression testing. However the programme remained on schedule to deliver in June 2008.

Recommendation 9

The Causeway team should continue to work towards an appropriate direct link with the Police National Computer (PNC) to ensure that information held on the CRV is as comprehensive and accurate as possible.

Status: Feasibility yet to be established

The PSNI had direct links with the PNC via ICIS and provided this information to the PPS. The CRV was available to the Access NI project but had not as yet been utilised whilst connection to the PNC had been established using the existing CJX. Work was continuing with the PNC and interface specialists to allow direct access to PNC data. Additionally, a group comprising representatives from the NPIA, PNC, PSNI, HMIC, Causeway, and the Home Office had also been established to pursue the feasibility of direct access by the PNC to the NI criminal record.

Updating of criminal record information is now done, based on information supplied by NICTS, within 24 hours of a court result being known. Daily updating also included information on bail conditions. Although there was a backlog of older records still to be completed, in general the information held on the CRV was current.



Recommendation 10

It is recommended that the PPS continue to review and implement their planning for DSM 1 in partnership with the Causeway Programme Board.

Status: Achieved

There had been very good progress with this recommendation. The PPS had agreed a detailed design with costs for DSM 1 and an internal PPS team led by a newly appointed Causeway Integration manager was managing this project. Planning was well advanced for the roll out of the CMS internally across the PPS and some staff had been reassigned to deliver phased training beginning in August.

The new programme governance arrangements ensured that reporting was more robust and reports including risk registers were updated monthly in preparation for the PET meetings.

Recommendation 11

It is recommended that the Causeway team produce a publication outlining good practice in implementing the programme and that this is disseminated to all CJOs.

Status: Achieved

The provision of a best practice guide for implementing Causeway together with the establishment of the Technical Architects Group (TAG) meant that all CJOs involved in the programme were now aware of recommended approaches to delivering the programme. CJOs confirmed that they had used the best practice guide together with the 'Lessons Learned' report from DSM 0 to inform their planning for DSM 1. Fieldwork interviews with the CJO project managers confirmed that they were fully aware of the best practice guide.



Recommendation 12

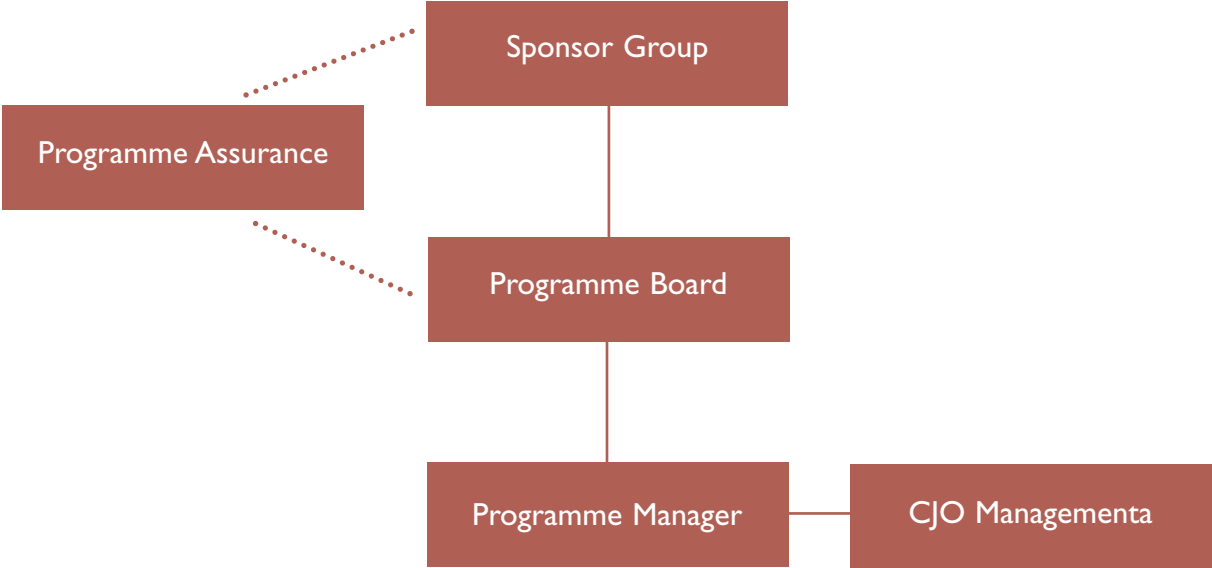
All participants should ensure that their representation on the Causeway Programme Board should be their appointed senior responsible officer for the programme.

Status: Achieved

There had been a restructuring of the governance arrangements for the Causeway Programme. Diagram Two illustrates the governance structures (top level) that were in place at the time of the first CJI report.

Between December 2006 and March 2007 a review of these structures was conducted and a new structure was put in place in March 2007. Within the new structure the role of the SRO had been enhanced, the role of the steering group had been strengthened, and a new group, the executive team, had replaced the Programme Board. Diagram Three illustrates the revised structure. These changes have addressed the Inspectors' recommendation regarding representation at Programme Board level which was aimed at ensuring that governance arrangements were fully effective. CJOs are represented by the most appropriate persons at each level of the governance structure.

Diagram Two: Governance Structures at the time of the first CJI Report



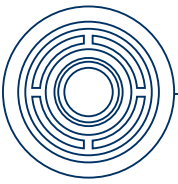
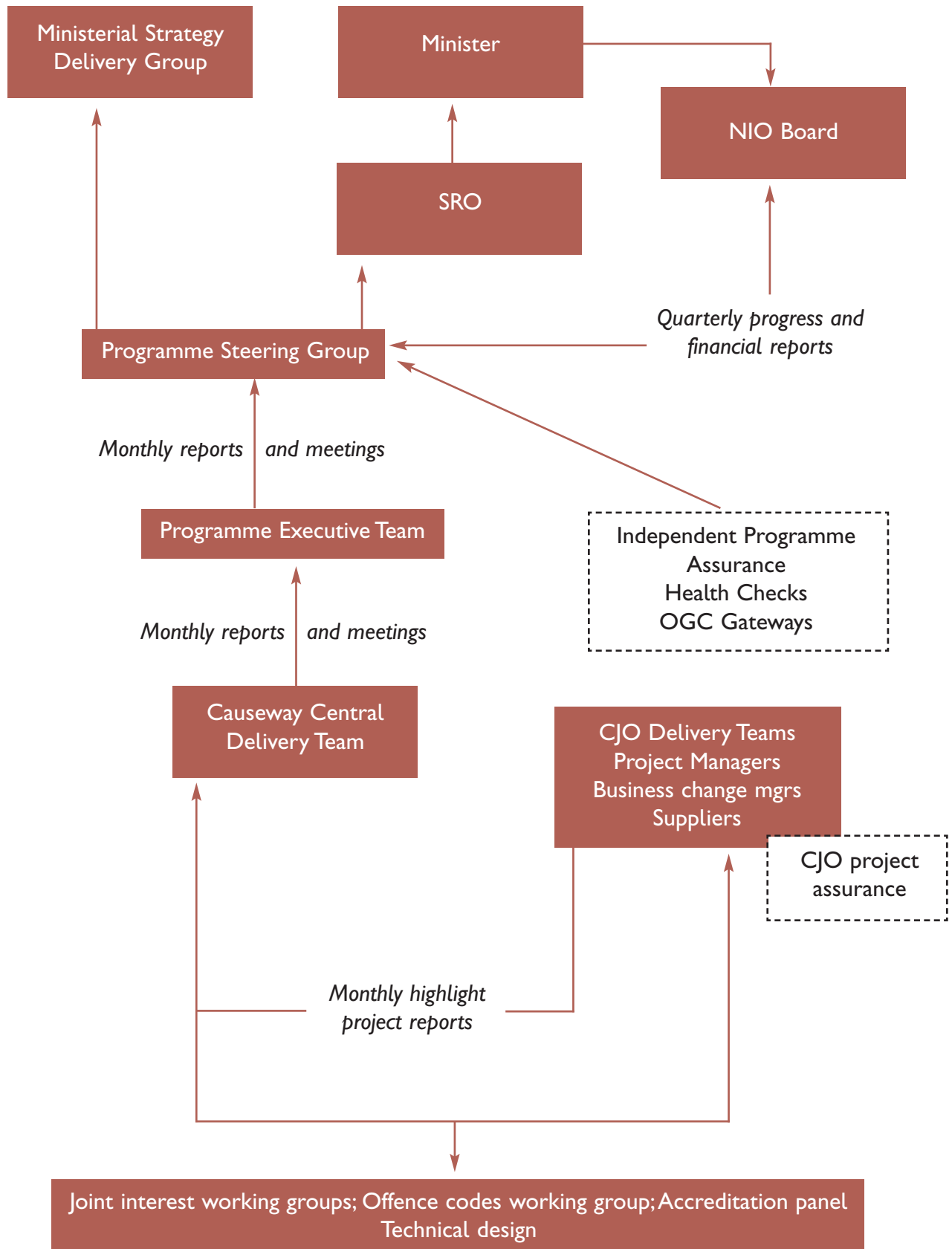


Diagram Three: Revised Governance Structures



Conclusion




A revised delivery plan was approved by the Steering Group in November 2006. This plan envisaged the delivery of full Causeway functionality in December 2009 with DSM1 having been rolled out in June 2008. The Business Case was also reviewed and updated in the light of the delays to delivery of the completed programme. Whilst there are critical elements of the revised plan that are subject to risk, such as the on-time delivery of DSM 1, the plan itself and the processes by which it is monitored are robust and risks have been mitigated early. However, this remains a high-risk programme subject to many risks and pressures. Slippage is dependent on many factors and remains a possibility as the programme enters this phase.

The Causeway programme is a critical part of the strategy to deliver the criminal justice reform agenda. Additional investment was required to enable delivery of all elements of the programme. The funding department accordingly approved the additional investment required to deliver DSM 1 functionality and to undertake a further investment appraisal of DSM 2 and 3. Inspectors hope that any investment appraisal of DSM 2 and 3 will yield a positive outcome to keep the programme on track to deliver full functionality by December 2009.

Delays to the programme impacted both on costs and on benefits realisation. All participating CJOs and the Programme team worked on revising benefits (see Chapter 2) and early indications are that the return on investment will compare well with that originally set out. Work is continuing to further refine the actual financial benefits and to verify figures.

The changes in structure to the programme management were beneficial and ensured that risks were identified and mitigated early through the revised CJO reporting arrangements. The difficult issue of accountability of disparate organisations to the programme itself was handled in a creative, inclusive and effective way and participating CJOs were allocating appropriate resources to those projects that impacted on Causeway.



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