



Defence Engagement Pilot

Defence Practitioners

To capitalise on new technologies available, we are launching a four-week pilot offering a new approach to defence engagement. Our intention is to encourage closer working between prosecutors and defence firms by providing a regular virtual meeting space. This will include legal advisers with devolved decision-making powers and police representatives, where appropriate. Our ambition is to reduce ineffective and cracked trials, and to resolve issues outside of the courtroom. The courts within the pilot's scope are:

- **Bexley Magistrates' Courts**
- **Bromley Magistrates' Courts**
- **Highbury Magistrates' Courts**

We strongly encourage Defence colleagues to take advantage of this service, which will provide an opportunity to book a slot at our Microsoft Teams surgery to discuss cases with a CPS District Crown Prosecutor. Our hope is that this new service will lead to earlier resolution of issues and as a result more effective hearings for all parties. Our primary focus is upon contested cases, and the surgery is an ideal opportunity to explore acceptable pleas. However, we will run the pilot on a broad basis that will allow for discussion of any case before the courts in scope.

The Defence Engagement pilot will be tested for a period of four weeks. The first surgeries for all pilot courts are scheduled for Thursday 5 November 2020 between 15:00 and 18:00, and thereafter every subsequent Thursday until 26 November 2020.

How to book a slot

Pre- first hearing

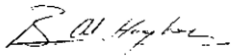
- **Ensure you are in receipt of IDPC as you will require the URN to submit a request for a surgery slot**
- **Fill out a Microsoft Form and submit- which can be accessed through this link ([Defence Engagement Request](#))**
- **Once the request has been triaged, if the issues highlighted cannot be resolved you will be sent a meeting invite to a 20 min surgery slot**
- **The meeting will be led by a District Crown Prosecutor.**
- **HMCTS and the police will also have a single point of contact available to assist in resolving any issues**

Pre- Trial- ideally 10 days before the trial date.

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We would encourage you to make use of this service as a successful pilot will make a good case for further rollout across London.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Hughes".

Barry Hughes, Chief Crown Prosecutor, CPS London North