

Business Plan Financial Year 2015/16: Mid-year update

The Sentencing Council's Business Plan includes a commitment to review the indicative timeline for preparation and publication of guidelines on a bi-annual basis and to publish updates as appropriate. While there are no major changes to the work plan, the timing of some projects has changed.

The implementation dates for three definitive guidelines have changed: the guidelines for theft offences; and health and safety, food hygiene and safety and corporate manslaughter offences will now come into force on 1 February 2016 and the allocation guideline will come into force on 1 March 2016, in order to allow time for training and implementation.

The dangerous dogs definitive guideline will be published in March 2016, one month later than originally planned, in order to accommodate the revised timetable for the consultation on the guilty plea guideline, which is now scheduled for February 2016. The consultations on youths and breach of orders have been postponed to the next financial year because of additional work required at the development stage for both guidelines.

In an addition to the published work plan, the Council has also decided to produce updated guidance on imposition of community and custodial sentences, prior to the consultation on breach of orders. It intends to run a short consultation targeted at stakeholders before the end of the financial year.

The timetable for projects towards the end of the plan, in particular for public order and motoring offences causing death or injury, is likely to be subject to significant change.

In addition to changes to the publication timetable, some changes have been made to the milestones relating to objective 3 of the Business Plan (monitoring and evaluation). The review of the assault guideline was published in October 2015. The outcomes of initial analysis on burglary offences covered by the guideline are still being considered, and as part of this work the Council will decide whether there is a need to conduct further work to support the evaluation. As a result, publication of an evaluation report is postponed.

In addition to the objectives included in the Business Plan, a scoping study to explore what data is held in the magistrates' courts that could support the Sentencing Council's monitoring and evaluation work has been commissioned and will be published early in 2016/17.

An external evaluation of theft and drugs offences has also been commissioned; data collection will start in the third quarter of the current financial year, with a

second phase in 16/17. Final reports will therefore not be published until the Council has had an opportunity to analyse the data from both phases.

Monitoring to support the environmental offences guideline has been extended by six months, until the end of December 2015, after which analysis will take place. Similar monitoring to support the health and safety, food hygiene and corporate manslaughter guideline will commence in quarter four of the current financial year.

Changes to the publication timetable published in April are highlighted in red in the table.

Sentencing Council Guideline Work Plan – 2015 to 2018: updated October 2015

Guideline	First discussion of guideline by Council	Consultation period	Publish definitive guideline	Definitive guideline in force
Theft	July 2013	April – June 2014	October 2015	February 2016
Health & Safety	October 2013	November 2014 – February 2015	November 2015	February 2016
Robbery	January 2014	October 2014 – January 2015	January 2016	April 2016
Dangerous Dogs	June 2014	March – June 2015	March 2016	July 2016
Allocation	March 2015	June – July 2015	December 2015	March 2015
MCSG explanatory material	January 2014	December 2014 – January 2015	Autumn 2015	Autumn 2015
MCSG offence specific guidelines	March 2015	May – July 2016	September 2016	January 2017
Imposition of Community and Custodial sentences	June 2015	January – February 2016	June 2016	September 2016
Breach of order	October 2014	July - September 2016	June 2017	September 2017
Guilty pleas	November 2014	February – May 2016	October 2016	January 2017
Youths	October 2014	April - June 2016	February 2017	June 2017
Assault	March 2015	July – October 2016	April 2017	July 2017
Knife/ bladed article possession	January 2016	September – November 2016	July 2017	October 2017
Manslaughter	April 2016	March – June 2017	January 2018	April 2018
Public order	March 2016	October 2016 – January 2017	October 2017	January 2018
Motoring (death/injury)	October 2016	May – August 2017	April 2018	July 2018