

Janine

Thank you for your reply.

I had also emailed Chief Inspector Wilkes about this.

I would not have emailed you if my complaint was about a particular officer or an individual case. This is a far

My point is that across the whole of the East Midlands' Police forces, the police are making no adjustments to their approach to interviews to try to limit exposures to the virus. They believe that CPS are still insisting on face-to face interviews in every case. They are disregarding all Public Health England and Government guidance in the mistaken belief that the CPS would be "unhappy" if cases went to court without a recorded interview. Surely, in the current climate, this cannot be right?

I understand that this is a police issue, rather than CPS directly, but the police believe that they are carrying out the wishes of CPS.

I just hoped that you would consider getting the message to the police that these are exceptional times and that the normal protocols need to be changed. At present, the police are prioritising interviews over the safety and welfare of everyone that has to be in those interviews. Would you be happy for CPS staff to be compelled to unnecessarily work in custody suites at the present time? Some guidance from CPS would help the police to understand that at the moment, interviews are not essential, or they could be conducted without face-to-face recording (as suggested in my last email). Not only would this protect solicitors, but also detainees and the police themselves, not to mention all members of their respective households.

I have received your email about Derbyshire's alleged measures. On Wednesday morning I asked all of my colleagues for their experiences in custody over the last three days. From the responses, I can assure you that none of the measures in that email are actually in effect. Nobody had seen any masks or gloves at any time. There is no attempt at distancing. There were certainly no protective measures at the Bridewell tonight, and I had to insist that the staff kept a safe distance from me as they all were oblivious to any social distancing. All solicitors feel very vulnerable in having to attend these extremely high risk areas with no protections in place. Are interviews really worth risking lives for?

I know that there is grave concern about this issue nationally, with many firms refusing to attend custody due to the dangerous conditions.

Once again, I apologise for having to contact you about this, but as you can probably tell, I am extremely concerned if this situation was to continue.

Regards

Jon