



Daniel Bonich
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Via email: dmb@clarkekiernan.com

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Dear Daniel,

I am writing to advise you of our intention to extend the [CPS Advocate Panel](#) to include magistrates' court solicitor agents.

Since its introduction in 2012, the Advocate Panel arrangements have provided a time limited list of quality assured advocates to undertake criminal prosecution advocacy for CPS in the Crown Court and Higher Courts.

Any advocate appointed must be able to deliver high quality prosecution advocacy services and be committed to meeting the aims and objectives of the CPS. Membership also provides advocates with a greater opportunity of prosecution work in accordance with CPS business need.

Magistrates' and Youth Courts are vitally important parts of the Criminal Justice System, dealing with over 90% of cases prosecuted by the CPS. Those who prosecute on our behalf are pivotal to us delivering justice through fair and independent prosecutions.

Hitherto, Panel membership has been limited to barristers, or solicitors with Higher Rights of Audience. As such, many of our barrister agents prosecuting in the magistrates' court are on the Panel, whereas their solicitor counterparts are not. This presents an anomaly.

Our [CPS 2025 Advocacy Strategy](#) provides a commitment that our advocates – internal and external – will be quality assured. Accordingly, this change seeks to deliver against that commitment, and to also meet a specific HMCPSI recommendation in respect of solicitor agents¹.

Full details of the online application process will be provided in due course, with applicants required to submit written application and supporting reference. Guidance will be provided to applicants to take them through the process, which we anticipate will begin in March 2022.

¹ <https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmcpsi/updates/press-releases/2020/03/the-effective-use-of-agents-in-the-magistrates-court/>



We know that this marks a change of approach in terms of how we manage our relationship with solicitor agents. This is why I wanted to give you early notification of this change. We value the contribution they make to our work and hope that bringing them within the Panel framework will strengthen our working relationship, allowing us to better support them and recognise the quality of their work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Max Hill". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

MAX HILL QC
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

