Dear Mr Neill,

**RE: Data provided in relation to the dropped rate in Magistrates’ Court in 2016/17**

I wrote to you on 12 December 2017 with further information on a range of issues that were raised during the Committee hearing on 21 November 2017. One part of this related to the dropped rate in the Magistrates’ Court in 2016/17. Regretfully, we made an error concerning the data provided to you in that letter. Please accept my sincere apologies for this error.

The letter stated that the data being provided to you was the Magistrates’ Court caseload in the financial year 2016/17. The actual data provided was for Magistrates’ Court cases, excluding summary motoring prosecutions for Quarter 2 2017/18.

The letter stated that there were 90,358 prosecutions and 9,030 dropped cases, there were in fact 495,235 prosecutions and 47,317 dropped cases in the financial year 2016/17. The letter explained that the dropped rate was 10%. This is correct for that dataset. The dropped rate for the entire financial year is actually slightly lower at 9.6%.

The letter also explained that the prime reason for dropped cases was the failure of victims or witnesses to attend, this is correct: victims and witnesses reasons were the largest category in both datasets but the percentages are different. In the dataset provided, the percentage of unsuccessful outcomes due to victim and witness issues was 47.4%. The actual figure for all cases in the financial year 2016/17 is lower at 41.1%. This is because the dataset provided to you excludes summary motoring matters, very few of which are unsuccessful due to victim and witness issues.
The CPS is able to disaggregate performance data in a number of ways according to the classification of offences to demonstrate performance in particular areas of work. We also disaggregate information over different time periods within years to show performance trends. We made a mistake in selecting the method and timescale required to answer the request, and this error was not picked up by the subsequent clearance process. We will ensure this does not happen again.

Once again, please accept my apologies for this error.

Yours sincerely

Alison Saunders CB
Director of Public Prosecutions