

Disrupting Law Firm Billing via Bill-of-Costs Forensics

2-page opportunity brief • 21 Apr 2026

Opportunity

Public-sector legal spend (NHS, policing, local authorities, regulators) is often driven by opaque, high-volume costs claims where the paying party lacks practical tools to test: (i) whether the costs process was properly executed, (ii) whether work was performed by authorised persons, and (iii) whether time/rates reflect the true level of supervision and accountability. This creates systemic overbilling risk and weak deterrence.

What we build — Bill-of-Costs Forensics Platform

A repeatable workflow that ingests electronic bills, certificates, correspondence, and time ledgers; extracts metadata; maps authorship and supervision; flags suspect entries; and generates court-ready outputs (Requests for Further Information / Points of Dispute). Where defects are material, outputs support setting aside default costs certificates (DCCs) and resisting enforcement.

Pillar	What we test	Examples of red flags
Authorisation & reserved activity	Whether non-authorised persons appear to have performed litigation-facing steps (including costs-procedure steps) and whether responsibility is provable.	Costs draftsman/paralegal driving court-facing steps; unclear signatory identity; supervision asserted without an audit trail.
Overbilling & proportionality	Whether time/rates/narratives show duplication, circular work, or inflated "costs of costs" not justified by the procedural history.	Heavy costs-team spend despite no negotiation/DA prep; repeated "considering/perusing" loops; vague narratives.
Metadata & supervision reality	Whether bill version history and ledger attributes match the claimed grade mix and supervision level.	Large bill-prep effort vs minimal partner sign-off; pooled/unmapped timekeepers; missing underlying ledger exports.

Who pays for this

Public bodies (NHS Trusts, police forces, councils), insurers, in-house legal teams, and paying parties who routinely face high-value costs claims and enforcement pressure.

Operating Model & Commercial Path

How it works • why it wins • what authorities receive

Workflow (repeatable)

- 1) Ingest** e-bill + certificates (N252/DCC-related) + time-ledger export + key correspondence.
- 2) Parse** timekeeper roster, grades, rates, phase/task structure, and pooled/unmapped entries.
- 3) Detect** litigation-facing verbs and procedural steps; match against authorisation status and responsibility chain.
- 4) Score** risk: authorisation gap, supervision gap, narrative insufficiency, duplication, proportionality.
- 5) Output** pack: flagged schedule + "who did what" RFI + PoD drafts + exhibit-linked bundle index.
- 6) Escalate** (where warranted): compliance dossier to insurer/regulators/authorities with supporting exhibits.

Differentiators

- **Evidence-first:** outputs are exhibit-linked and court-consumable (not just analytics).
- **Supervision reality check:** compare bill authorship vs sign-off effort; require underlying ledger + version trail.
- **Procedural leverage:** defects can support setting aside default certificates and resisting enforcement.
- **Public-interest lane:** where overbilling affects the UK purse (NHS/police), produce an auditable referral pack.

Commercial model

Tier 1: fixed-fee screening report (48–72h) • **Tier 2:** full PoD + RFI pack (court-ready) • **Tier 3:** dispute support on capped fee / success-linked basis (where permissible).

Authority referral pack (when public money is at risk)

Where findings suggest systemic overbilling, misleading certification, or unauthorised conduct affecting public funds, produce a referral pack: executive summary, flagged schedules, key exhibits, timeline, and requested actions (audit, supervision verification, review).

Important note

This is a compliance and analytics service and does not replace legal advice. Outputs should be reviewed by a qualified solicitor before use in litigation. Any referrals to authorities should follow applicable reporting and data-protection rules.