

Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland

Annual Business Plan

2014-15



Independent, Fair and Effective

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Foreword

by the Director

I am pleased to present our Annual Business Plan for the 2014-15 financial year.

This document sets out our priorities as a Service, the milestones we will use to assess our progress and the risks we will have to manage in order to ensure that we deliver.

Over the last 12 months I believe there has been sustained progress in shaping the PPS to meet the demands of the future. In particular, the implementation of the new Victim and Witness Care Units in our Belfast and Foyle Offices represents an important step forward in terms of the quality and range of services we provide.

While real gains have already been delivered, there is still scope to improve our service delivery and, more generally, our approach to managing and embedding change. Therefore I have implemented a new change initiative, the 'First Class Prosecution Service Programme'. Within this two-year programme a number of projects will be taken forward, focusing on key issues for the PPS and our stakeholders, such as: external communication; our relationship with the police; and the effectiveness of our structures and performance management arrangements. I would expect to see significant developments in these areas during the life of the programme.

During 2013-14 efforts have been made to improve the timeliness of our decision-making, particularly in the most serious indictable cases. These efforts have produced tangible results, although further work remains to be done. We will continue to work collaboratively with other criminal justice agencies in tackling avoidable delay, as part of the overall programme agreed by the Criminal Justice Board to deliver 'Faster, Fairer Justice'. A PPS project team is to examine the broad range of reforms under the Faster, Fairer Justice umbrella, scoping their impact on the organisation and ensuring that relevant preparations are made in line with the legislative timetable.



Barra McGrory QC

*Director of Public
Prosecutions
for Northern Ireland*

“ There has been sustained progress in shaping the PPS to meet the demands of the future. ”

The current budget settlement also presents challenges for the organisation. The demand-led nature of the services provided means that remaining within budget is not solely within our control and has required the PPS to review its expenditure and operational processes. This will continue during 2014-15 as we seek to deliver on the commitments set out in our Savings Delivery Plan.

Of course driving forward a change and efficiency agenda must not be at the expense of the quality of our decision-making, case preparation and presentation at court. During 2014-15, new arrangements will be implemented for the formal monitoring of prosecutor advocacy, initially on a pilot basis. We will also publish new PPS Quality Standards, modelled on those in place in England and Wales and other jurisdictions, clearly setting out the levels and standards of service which our stakeholders and the public can expect.

The various initiatives outlined above will not succeed without the dedication of PPS staff. I see at first-hand how our people are adjusting to the many challenges presented by change while continuing to go about their jobs with professionalism and genuine commitment. As an organisation we will continue to provide the support needed by staff, helping the Service to achieve its vision of being recognised as providing a first class prosecution service.

I am confident that we can rise to the challenges presented to us in the year ahead and continue to improve the service we provide.



Barra McGrory QC
*Director of Public Prosecutions
for Northern Ireland*

April 2014

“ ... driving forward a change and efficiency agenda must not be at the expense of the quality of our decision-making, case preparation and presentation at court. ”

Vision and Aim

Our Vision

To be recognised as providing a first class prosecution service for the people of Northern Ireland.

Our Aim

The aim of the Public Prosecution Service is to provide the people of Northern Ireland with an independent, fair and effective prosecution service.

Independence

The Service will be wholly independent of both police and Government; its decisions will be impartial, based on an independent and impartial assessment of the available evidence and the public interest.

Fairness

All actions will be undertaken with complete impartiality, to the highest ethical and professional standards. All persons, including those accused of offences, will be treated fairly. All victims and witnesses will be treated with respect and sensitivity.

Effectiveness

All prosecution decisions will be taken and every prosecution conducted in an effective and efficient manner. We will provide value for money, while delivering a timely and quality service.

“ All actions will be undertaken with complete impartiality, to the highest ethical and professional standards. ”

Introduction

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) is the principal prosecuting authority in Northern Ireland. In addition to taking decisions as to prosecution in all cases initiated or investigated by the police, it also considers cases initiated or investigated by other statutory authorities, for example, HM Revenue and Customs.

The Service was established on 13 June 2005 by the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002. The Act creates the Public Prosecution Service and defines its statutory duties and commitments and the legislative framework within which it must provide its services.

Accountability and Governance Arrangements

Since the devolution of policing and justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly in April 2010, the PPS has been designated as a non-ministerial government department. Funding for the PPS is provided by the Northern Ireland Assembly and, as Accounting Officer for the Service, the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for ensuring that the public monies provided are used efficiently and effectively. All members of staff are Northern Ireland Civil Servants.

The PPS Management Board supports the Director in his leadership of the PPS and in reaching decisions on the strategic direction of the PPS, the development and implementation of appropriate strategy and in meeting his corporate governance responsibilities. The Board comprises the Director (as Chair), Deputy Director and two Senior Assistant Directors. There are also two independent non-executive members.

In May 2010 John Larkin QC was appointed as the Attorney General for Northern Ireland, as part of the devolved justice arrangements. The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 provides for the Director and Attorney General to consult with each other from time to time on any matter for which the Attorney General is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly. In accordance with the 2002 Act the functions of the Director shall be exercised by him independently of any other person.

“...the Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for ensuring that the public monies provided are used efficiently and effectively.”

PPS Services

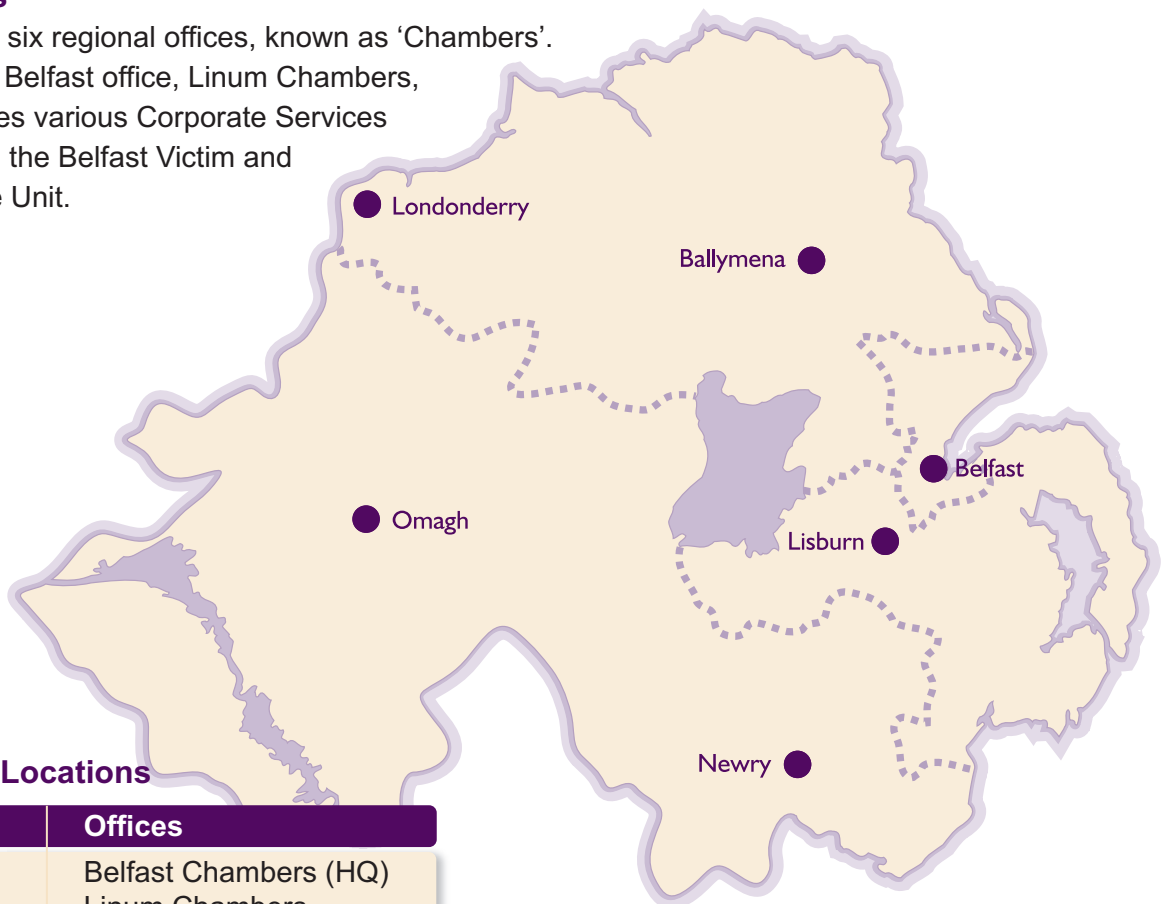
The primary role of the Public Prosecution Service is to reach decisions to prosecute or not to prosecute and to have responsibility for the conduct of criminal proceedings. Additional services are also available which have been designed to enhance the effectiveness of the Service, including the provision of prosecutorial and pre-charge advice.

Options are available to allow prosecutors to deal with offenders other than through prosecution. These include restorative cautioning, informed warnings and youth conferencing. Prosecutors may also refer offenders to the NI Driver Improvement Scheme or to a Community Restorative Justice Scheme. The purposes of diversion include dealing quickly and simply with less serious offenders; reducing the risk of re-offending; and engaging the offender in a restorative process with the victim and society as a whole.

“ Additional services are also available which have been designed to enhance the effectiveness of the PPS. ”

PPS Offices

The PPS has six regional offices, known as ‘Chambers’. An additional Belfast office, Linum Chambers, accommodates various Corporate Services functions and the Belfast Victim and Witness Care Unit.



PPS Office Locations

Regions	Offices
Belfast	Belfast Chambers (HQ) Linum Chambers
Eastern	Lisburn Chambers
Northern	Ballymena Chambers Foyle Chambers (Derry)
Western and Southern	Omagh Chambers Newry Chambers

PPS Resources

The final Budget settlement for the four year period from 2011-12 to 2014-15 reduced PPS current expenditure year on year. Taking into account estimated inflationary increases of 2.5% each year, the PPS budget will have been reduced in real terms by 18% by 2014-15.

PPS	Budget 2010 Settlement (£million)				
	2010-11 Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Resource					
Current Expenditure	37.386	37.313	35.970	35.394	34.132
% Change against 2010-11 baseline	n/a	-0.2%	-3.8%	-5.3%	-8.7%
Capital					
Capital Investment	0.270	0.178	0.663	0.195	0.150
% Change against 2010-11 baseline	n/a	-34.0%	+145.5%	-27.8%	-44.4%

This has represented a challenging settlement which has required the Service to review its expenditure and operational processes. In particular the demand-led nature of the PPS workload makes budgetary management difficult as the standard measures of applying reductions to services or discontinuing activities are not readily available.

The PPS continues to undertake detailed planning in order to operate within this budget, whilst minimising the impact on front-line services and victims and witnesses. A shortfall in funding has been identified for the 2014-15 financial year. The Department of Finance and Personnel is aware that this is largely driven by costs outside the control of the PPS. Funding for 2014-15 will be considered by the Assembly in-year.

First Class Prosecution Service Programme 2014 – 2015

The PPS Management Board has identified a gap in the Service’s approach to managing change. It was recognised that the PPS is working in a very dynamic situation, and in recent years has experienced significant changes in terms of its governance and accountability, resources and operating environment. Therefore members agreed that there was scope for the PPS, as a relatively ‘young’ organisation, to improve and embed its change management arrangements, taking into account the operating environment and ongoing initiatives, as well as internally and externally driven change.

In response a new PPS change initiative, the ‘First Class Prosecution Service Programme’, has been implemented. As part of this programme, the Management Board has identified a number of priority change issues which will be taken forward via four projects, as follows:

- **Project 1: Faster, Fairer Justice (see objective 1.2, page 12)**
- **Project 2: Interface with Police (see objective 1.2, page 13)**
- **Project 3: Communication (see objective 2.2, page 16)**
- **Project 4: Service Effectiveness (see objective 4.1, page 19)**

The Senior Assistant Director for Resources and Change has been nominated as the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the programme. All change projects will report directly into a Change Programme Board, with each having a separate Project Manager and Deputy. A Programme Manager will act as the link between the individual projects and the Programme Board. It is anticipated that the work of the change projects will not extend beyond December 2015.

Responsibility for existing projects will remain with the Management Board’s Sub-Committees.

PPS Strategic Priorities

The PPS Corporate Plan is based around four strategic priorities which will act as a framework to drive our planning outcomes and our approach to managing performance and risk. Within each priority area a number of objectives have been set out as the focus of our work programme and which will progress the delivery of our vision for the Service.

The strategic priorities and objectives were originally agreed as the focus for the Service's Corporate Plan over the three year period to 2013-14. However the PPS Management Board has agreed to extend this Corporate Plan for a further year; that is, for 2014-15 the Service will publish an annual business plan based around these strategic priorities and objectives. A new Corporate Plan will take effect from 1 April 2015.

This decision was taken to allow the PPS to align its future planning arrangements with CJSNI partners, including the Department of Justice. This recognises that, as an organisation, we do not work alone and that our strategic objectives need to be aligned with the approaches our partners are taking to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system as a whole. The availability of resources is a further consideration. Commencement of the next corporate planning cycle in April 2015 will also allow the Service to align its plans with the next Comprehensive Spending Review period (Budget 2015).

Strategic Priority 1:

Delivering an efficient and effective prosecution service

- 1.1 To promote the highest standard of prosecutorial decision-making and case preparation and prosecute in the most effective manner.
- 1.2 To work with partners to improve our service delivery and reduce avoidable delay.
- 1.3 To develop and embed our advocacy strategy.

Strategic Priority 2:

Building the confidence and trust of the community we serve

- 2.1 To provide an enhanced service to victims and witnesses.
- 2.2 To engage effectively with stakeholders and the wider community.

Strategic Priority 3:

Strengthening our capability to deliver

- 3.1 To provide value for money through the improved management of resources and the development of our resource planning.
- 3.2 To strengthen our accountability as a non-ministerial department by developing and maintaining a transparent and effective governance framework.

Strategic Priority 4:

Building the Capability of our People

- 4.1 To develop our staff and promote a culture of continuous improvement.

What We Plan to Achieve in 2014-15

This Annual Business Plan describes how we intend to take forward our strategic objectives, building on the achievements of the previous years.

Strategic Priority 1: Efficiency and Effectiveness

Objective 1.1: To promote the highest standard of prosecutorial decision-making and case preparation and prosecute in the most effective manner

What we plan to achieve

We will build on our existing quality assurance arrangements to ensure that quality standards are met consistently across our business areas.

We will respond to any issues identified via quality assurance by providing the necessary training and guidance to staff. In developing its programme, the PPS Quality Assurance Team will have regard to the inspections carried out by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland and will review compliance with recommendations made by inspectors.

We will set out clearly the standards and levels of service which all stakeholders can expect. During the year we will publish a number of new or updated policy statements, which will be subject to public consultation.

How we plan to make it happen

We will:

- Complete quality assurance reviews to agreed schedules.
- Develop appropriate responses to quality assurance and CJINI recommendations and provide legal guidance / training to staff as required.
- Release policy statements for consultation including:
 - A new policy on Youth Offenders.
 - Updated Guidelines for Diversion.
 - Updated Policy on Prosecuting Cases of Rape.
- Consider all stakeholder responses to policy consultation.

Objective 1.1 continued

What we plan to achieve

We will also develop new PPS Quality Standards with a view to strengthening our existing quality assurance and monitoring framework. In taking this forward, we will have regard to quality standards in place in other jurisdictions, including England and Wales.

There are classes of crime, such as serious sexual offences, which are of particular concern to the public. We will review all such cases in which there has been an unsuccessful outcome, including 'No Bills', to ensure that any lessons learned are taken on board. These quality assurance arrangements will also apply in any case in which a request for review has resulted in a change to the original prosecutorial decision.

How we plan to make it happen

- Develop new PPS Quality Standards and implement improvements in our existing quality monitoring framework.
- Review unsuccessful outcomes in classes of crime of concern to the public.
- Review all cases in which a request for review has resulted in a change to the original decision.

Objective 1.2: To work with partners to improve our service delivery and reduce avoidable delay

What we plan to achieve

The improvement of service delivery, particularly a reduction in avoidable delay, is a priority for the PPS and its criminal justice partners.

We will contribute to improving the efficiency of the criminal justice system. This will include working as part of the overall programme agreed by the Criminal Justice Board to deliver Faster, Fairer Justice. Internally a project team has been established under the 'First Class Prosecution Service Programme' to scope the impact of the various Faster, Fairer Justice initiatives (for example, the direct transfer of cases to the Crown Court and the implementation of Prosecutorial Fines) and to ensure that relevant preparations are made by the PPS.

How we plan to make it happen

We will:

- Contribute to the CJSNI's Faster, Fairer Justice programme objectives for 2014-15.
- Meet agreed objectives of the PPS Faster, Fairer Justice Project.

Objective 1.2 continued**What we plan to achieve**

Recognising the importance of the relationship between PPS and PSNI, another of the projects under the First Class Prosecution Service Programme will examine several key issues for the two organisations, including:

- The development of relationships between PPS and PSNI at all levels.
- The definition and development of performance reports to support the management of the relationship.
- Establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding to support the development of more detailed Service Level Agreements.

Police file quality is also a key focus for the project. Members of the project team will work with PSNI to reduce the number of incomplete files, a key cause of delay. A number of PSNI 'gatekeepers' have already been appointed, whose role is to review case material prior to submission to PPS. This is seen by both organisations as an important step which should lead to a substantial improvement in file quality. The progress of this initiative will be monitored jointly over the course of the year.

Efforts will continue to embed a number of the changes made in our performance management arrangements, both at a strategic and operational level. This will include the use of improved performance data and the implementation of quarterly performance reviews at regional and section level.

How we plan to make it happen

- Meet agreed objectives of the PPS Interface with Police Project, including measures designed to improve file quality.

- Meet 2014-15 performance improvement milestones and embed changes implemented via the PPS Performance Action Plan.

Objective 1.3: To develop and embed our advocacy strategy

What we plan to achieve

We will build on our advocacy strategy, developing the advocacy role of PPS prosecutors. We will also implement enhanced arrangements for the assessment of in-house advocacy and external counsel.

Advocacy Standards, modelled on those in place in England and Wales, have been adopted by the PPS and form the basis for the assessment of advocacy. Plans are in place to address the need to have formal quality review systems in respect of advocacy.

A new Advocacy Monitoring Unit has been established on the basis of a 12 month pilot, the role of which will be to assess the quality of in-house advocacy.

We will also seek to introduce arrangements to assess the advocacy standards of external counsel, in conjunction with the Bar Council. As an interim measure, new monitoring forms, to be completed by PPS Court staff, have been introduced.

The steps we will take to make it happen

We will:

- Implement the advocacy monitoring pilot and conduct an evaluation.
- Conduct advocacy training in response to identified needs.
- Agree arrangements for the monitoring and assessment of external counsel advocacy.

Strategic Priority 2: Building Confidence and Trust

Objective 2.1: To provide an enhanced service to victims and witnesses

What we plan to achieve

Improving services and support is recognised as being vital to building effective relationships between victims and witnesses, the PPS and the criminal justice system.

New Victim and Witness Care Units (VWCUs) have now been established in the PPS Belfast and Foyle offices. The purpose of the VWCUs, operated in conjunction with police and other partners, is to improve the experience of victims and witnesses by, for example, identifying particular needs at an early stage. A key objective for 2014-15 will be to examine the operation of the units with a view to refining procedures in the light of operational experience. This review will include consultation with VWCU stakeholders and users of the service.

Information will also be made available to victims and witnesses via a new online 'Victim Information Portal' (VIP). Victims and witnesses will be able to log on securely to the VIP to obtain details of their case, such as forthcoming court dates.

Greater support is being provided to vulnerable witnesses via a Registered Intermediaries Scheme which aims to help PPS and other agencies to work better with witnesses who have communication difficulties. While this is operating on a pilot basis, funding has been provided by the Department of Justice to extend the pilot to cover all indictable offences which occur in Northern Ireland.

During 2014 we will consult on a revised Victims and Witnesses Policy, which will take on board various recommendations made by CJINI and lessons learned as a result of the VWCU initiative.

PPS is also a member of the CJSNI's Victim and Witness Task Force and will contribute to the new five year 'Making a Difference' Strategy.

The PPS pays expenses incurred by witnesses arising out of their attendance at court on behalf of the prosecution. A review of these arrangements will be conducted during 2014-15.

The steps we will take to make it happen

We will:

- Conduct a review of the Victim and Witness Care Units in Belfast and Foyle.
- Implement the Victim Information Portal.
- Continue to support the Registered Intermediaries Pilot Scheme and contribute to evaluation as required.
- Review our Victims and Witnesses Policy and publish for consultation.
- Contribute to 2014-15 CJSNI Victim and Witness Strategy objectives.
- Review arrangements for the payment of witness expenses and implement a revised scheme.

Objective 2.2: To engage effectively with stakeholders and the wider community

What we plan to achieve

We will seek to improve the way we communicate with stakeholders and the public and to increase understanding of what we do and the actions we take.

A new project, established under the umbrella of the First Class Prosecution Service Programme, will take forward a number of initiatives designed to improve internal and external communication, as well as our approach to community outreach. This will include the development of a new Communication Strategy for the organisation. The project will also take forward the recommendations of an independent review of our approach to external communication, which was commissioned by the Director in 2013.

We will consider the findings of the annual PPS Omnibus Survey with respect to public perception of the PPS, and in particular our fairness, effectiveness and impartiality, and take action accordingly.

As part of our Community Outreach Strategy we will ensure that Regional Prosecutors and other senior staff are increasingly visible as they attend meetings and other events, including those organised by the voluntary sector and community groups. We will publish details of our outreach activity via the PPS website on a regular basis.

We will continue to develop our links with partner agencies and to agree service level agreements (SLAs) and Memoranda of Understanding, clearly setting out the working arrangements, roles and responsibilities of each agency. This will include SLAs with partner agencies involved in combating organised crime.

The steps we will take to make it happen

We will:

- Meet agreed objectives of the PPS Communication Project, including the development of a new Communication Strategy.
- Consider the findings of the PPS Omnibus Survey.
- Carry out Community Outreach activity in accordance with the PPS Outreach Strategy.
- Agree SLAs and MoUs with relevant Departments and Agencies.

Strategic Priority 3: Our Capability to Deliver

Objective 3.1: To provide value for money through the improved management of resources and the development of our resource planning

What we plan to achieve

The 2011-15 budget settlement represents a challenge for the Service. In the current fiscal environment we will continue to review our expenditure and operational processes in order to enhance value for money.

We have published our spending plans and savings proposals. The bulk of the anticipated savings will be delivered through procurement savings, including those derived from the procurement of general goods and services and the use of external counsel. We will work with the Department of Finance and Personnel to resolve any funding gaps during 2015-16 and carry out relevant preparations for Budget 2015.

The PPS proposes to implement a revised fees payment scheme for Independent Counsel. The defence remuneration scheme is also being reviewed and there have been discussions between PPS, Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service and DoJ officials to ensure the schemes progress in tandem to deliver fair remuneration to Counsel, while delivering the required savings in overall costs.

Where possible, ICT efficiencies will be taken forward, allowing us to explore and exploit the benefits offered by digital working, for example in the use of tablet PCs to prosecute cases at court.

The Service will seek to develop a Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy, confirming our commitment to being responsible and sustainable, managing our policies and practices in order to balance environmental, social, ethical and economic considerations.

The steps we will take to make it happen

We will:

- Meet our Savings Delivery Plan objectives for 2014-15.
- Engage with the Department of Finance and Personnel in funding 2014-15 adequately and in making relevant preparations for 2015-16 and Budget 2015.
- Implement revised arrangements for the assessment and payment of Counsel fees.
- Deliver our 2014-15 ICT Strategy objectives, including the rollout of tablet PCs for use by prosecutors at court.
- Develop our Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy.

Objective 3.2: To strengthen our accountability as a non-ministerial department by developing and maintaining a transparent and effective governance framework

What we plan to achieve

We are committed to ensuring that corporate governance arrangements are effective and developed in accordance with DFP's Code of Good Practice.

We will continue to improve our information assurance capability, ensuring that arrangements are driven by the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework.

During the year we will continue to meet our objectives under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The steps we will take to make it happen

We will:

- Comply with the mandatory requirements of the Security Policy Framework.
- Complete all actions identified through Information Assurance and Risk Policy/Information Asset and Risk Registers.
- Meet DDA / Equality Scheme Action Plan objectives for 2014-15.

Strategic Priority 4: Our People

Objective 4.1: To develop our staff and promote a culture of continuous improvement

What we plan to achieve

Our people are central to the achievement of our objectives and this requires a working environment in which staff can develop and contribute to their full potential. The Service has achieved re-accreditation under the Investors in People (IiP) Standard and we will ensure that we build on this success, introducing improvements where necessary.

We need to make sure that all staff have the skills and support they require and will achieve this through training and the promotion of coaching, mentoring and peer review.

We also need to ensure that performance is well managed and individual objectives are clearly set out so that we can consistently offer a high level of service to the public. While a great deal of work has already been carried out in this regard, a number of areas for improvement have been identified by the Management Board. Therefore a new 'Service Effectiveness' project has been established to implement a range of initiatives, focusing in particular on performance management, performance monitoring and the delineation of structures and roles. Succession planning will also be considered.

During the year we will take all steps required to implement the new NICS Performance Management System and Competence Framework as set out in the 2014-15 NICS Annual People Plan. We will also seek to maintain an effective absence management framework and promote health and well-being as part of the NICS WELL Programme.

We will seek to address any matters raised by staff through our participation in the 2013 NICS Staff Attitude Survey.

Operational areas will be subject to ongoing review by the PPS Business Improvement Team, who will provide advice regarding working arrangements and processes and the optimum number of legal and administrative staff needed to carry out the duties required.

The steps we will take to make it happen

We will:

- Identify corporate training needs and meet agreed corporate training priorities.
- Meet agreed objectives of the Service Effectiveness Project.
- Implement the new NICS Performance Management System and Competence Framework.
- Consider and respond to the findings of the 2013 NICS Staff Attitude Survey.
- Conduct a Business Improvement review programme.

Key Performance Indicators and Targets

The following are the key delivery targets for 2014-15 against which the performance of the PPS will be assessed. Performance against the targets will be accounted for in our Annual Report for the coming financial year.

Strategic Priority 1: Efficiency and Effectiveness

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators	2014-15 Target
1.1	<p>Quality Assurance ¹</p> <p><i>Percentage of decisions within the range a prosecutor could reasonably take</i></p>	98.5%
	<p>Cracked / Ineffective Trials ²</p> <p><i>Percentage of Cracked Trials where all charges were withdrawn (Crown / Magistrates' Courts)</i></p> <p><i>Percentage of Ineffective Trials attributed to the Prosecution (Crown / Magistrates' Courts)</i></p>	Improve on 2013-14
	<p>No Bills / Acquittals by Direction ³</p> <p><i>Number of No Bills granted in the Crown Court</i></p> <p><i>Number of Acquittals by Direction in the Crown Court</i></p>	Not to exceed 2012-2013 average

Notes 1–3: See page 26.

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators	2014-15 Target
1.2	<p>Review of Charges</p> <p><i>Percentage of 28 day charge cases where charge sheets are reviewed within at least three working days of first appearance.</i></p> <hr/> <p>Decisions Issued (Timeliness) ⁴</p> <p><i>Percentage of indictable decisions issued within (a) 100 (b) 180 days</i></p> <p><i>Percentage of summary decisions issued within (a) 15 (b) 40 days</i></p> <p><i>Percentage of diversionary decisions issued within (a) 15 (b) 30 days</i></p> <p><i>Percentage of no prosecution (indictable) decisions issued within (a) 50 (b) 150 days</i></p> <p><i>Percentage of no prosecution (summary / hybrid) decisions issued within (a) 30 (b) 75 days</i></p> <hr/> <p>Committal Papers</p> <p><i>Percentage of Committal Papers available within 30 days</i></p>	<p>95%</p> <hr/> <p>(a) 50% (b) 80%</p> <p>(a) 65% (b) 80%</p> <p>(a) 65% (b) 80%</p> <p>(a) 65% (b) 80%</p> <p>(a) 65% (b) 80%</p> <hr/> <p>Improve on 2013-14</p>
1.3	<p>Advocacy Monitoring</p> <p><i>Percentage of Magistrates' / Youth Court sittings reviewed where prosecutor performance was assessed as satisfactory or better</i></p>	<p>Establish baseline</p>

Note 4: See page 26.

Strategic Priority 2: Building Confidence and Trust

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators	2014-15 Target
2.1	<p>Victim and Witness Satisfaction ⁵</p> <p><i>Percentage of victims and witnesses satisfied with the overall service provided by the PPS</i></p>	<i>Improvement on 2011 survey</i>
2.2	<p>Public Confidence ⁶</p> <p><i>Percentage public confidence in the provision of a fair and impartial prosecution service</i></p> <p><i>Percentage of respondents who feel that the PPS is effective at prosecuting people who are accused of committing a crime</i></p>	<i>Improvement on 2014 survey</i>

Strategic Priority 3: Our Capability to Deliver

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators	2014-15 Target
3.1	<p>Better Payments</p> <p><i>Percentage of invoices paid within 10 working days</i></p>	95%
3.2	<p>Freedom of Information ⁷</p> <p><i>Percentage of requests answered within agreed time limits</i></p>	100%
	<p>Complaints ⁷</p> <p><i>Percentage of complaints (a) acknowledged within five working days (b) dealt with within 20 working days</i></p>	(a) 95% (b) 95%

Notes 5–7: See page 26.

Strategic Priority 4: Our People

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators	2014-15 Target
4.1	<p>Sickness and Absenteeism ⁸</p> <p><i>Average working days lost</i></p> <p><i>Long-term absence – average duration</i></p>	<p>7.5 days</p> <p>Not to exceed 46 days</p>
	<p>Training and Development</p> <p><i>Percentage of staff who identify a training need by 31 July 2014</i></p>	<p>90%</p>
	<p>Performance Management</p> <p><i>Percentage of staff with an agreed Personal Performance Agreement (PPA) by 31 July 2014</i></p>	<p>90%</p>

Note 8: See page 26.

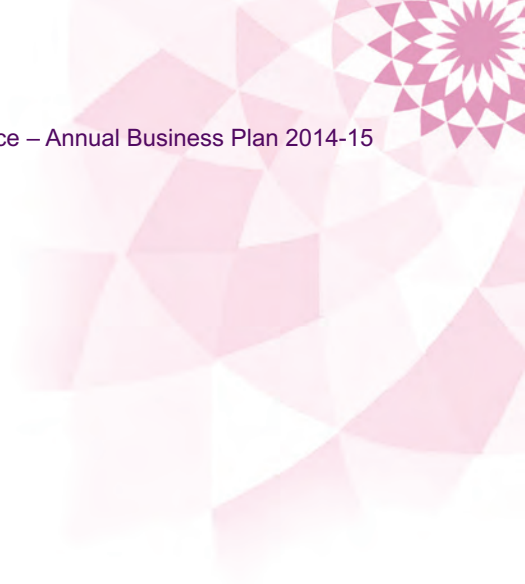
Managing Risk

The Public Prosecution Service faces a range of risks and uncertainties in delivering its strategic priorities over the next year.

The Service will address these through its risk management strategy, thereby enhancing its ability to anticipate and deal with risks to the successful delivery of its strategic priorities and objectives.

The corporate risks identified at the beginning of the 2014-15 financial year include the following:

No.	Risk Description	Risk Owner(s)
Efficiency and Effectiveness		
1	Avoidable Delay Initiatives aimed at tackling avoidable delay in indictable cases do not produce sustained improvement across all operational areas, leading to adverse comment.	Senior Assistant Director, Regional Prosecutors
2	Quality Assurance The legal quality assurance framework does not provide the Director with the assurances he requires in respect of the quality of prosecutorial decision-making, case presentation and advocacy	Deputy Director
Building Confidence and Trust		
3	Provision of Services to Victims and Witnesses Current arrangements for the provision of information and services to victims and witnesses do not meet their needs, resulting in a loss of victim and witness confidence.	Senior Assistant Director, Regional Prosecutors
4	External Communication The Service does not seize opportunities to engage and influence its stakeholders and the public, resulting in the potential loss of political and public confidence.	Director
Our Capability to Deliver		
5	Change Management The First Class Prosecution Service Programme does not produce the desired benefits, thereby damaging staff morale and standards of service delivery.	Senior Assistant Director, Resources and Change



Managing Risk continued

No.	Risk Description	Risk Owner(s)
6	<p>Funding The Service does not respond effectively to changes in funding and emerging financial pressures, with the result that it is unable to live within agreed budgets.</p>	Senior Assistant Director, Resources and Change
7	<p>Use of Independent Counsel There is a risk to the delivery of PPS advocacy due to the implementation of new arrangements for the payment of Counsel Fees.</p>	Senior Assistant Director, Resources and Change
8	<p>Our People</p> <p>Staff Engagement The Service will not have the fully engaged and energised workforce that it needs to deliver improvements in service delivery.</p>	Deputy Director

The identification and review of corporate risks is the responsibility of the Management Board. All corporate risks are owned by a member of the Management Board and will be actively managed by the Board over the course of the year.

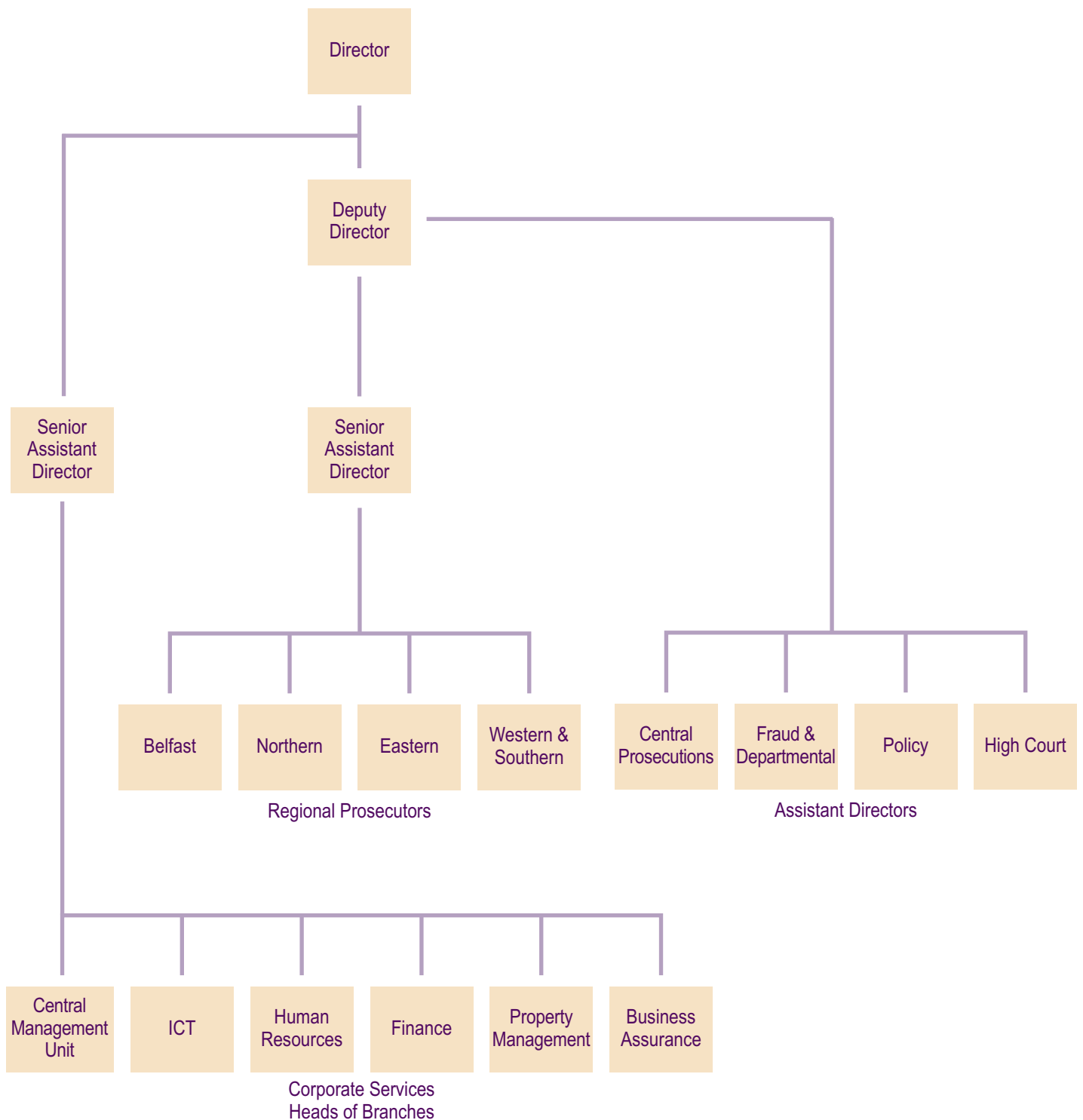
Notes

- 1 To be assessed via dip sampling of PPS cases by Regional Prosecutors / Assistant Directors. All cases for dip sampling are selected independently by statisticians from the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).
- 2 Cracked Trial - on the trial date, the defendant offers acceptable pleas or the prosecution offers no evidence. A cracked trial requires no further trial time.

Ineffective Trial - on the trial date, the trial does not go ahead due to action or inaction by one or more of the prosecution, the defence or the court and a further listing for trial is required. 'Attributed to the prosecution' includes cases withdrawn by the PPS.
- 3 A 'No Bill' occurs in cases before the Crown Court where the Judge, prior to commencement of trial, determines that there is insufficient evidence to proceed on any count or charge. During trial, and on completion of the prosecution case, a defendant may be 'acquitted by direction' where the Judge determines that there is insufficient evidence to proceed.
- 4 Monitoring covers the period (in calendar days) from the date initial papers (charge cases only) or files are received by the PPS to the date when the prosecutorial decision issues. Time required for response to Decision Information Requests (DIRs) by police is excluded.
- 5 To be assessed via the NI Victim and Witness Survey, to be conducted by the Department of Justice.
- 6 To be assessed via the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey, conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. Satisfaction rates will be based on respondents who are either 'very confident' or 'fairly confident'.
- 7 Except where an extension is applicable, subject to agreement.
- 8 Reflect agreed sickness absence targets as set out in the NICS strategy for 2010-15.

Annex A:

PPS Organisation Chart



Getting in Touch

This document is available in a range of alternative formats, for example Large Print and Braille. If you require a copy of this document in an alternative format, or any further information about the Public Prosecution Service and its role, please contact:

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PROSECUTORS



INVESTORS
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