

Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland

Annual Business Plan 2016-17



Independent, Fair and Effective



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Foreword

By the Director

I am pleased to present our Annual Business Plan for the 2016-17 financial year.

This document sets out our priorities as a Service and the milestones we will use to assess our progress.

During this year ahead the PPS will continue to roll out its Transformation Programme, which has already achieved a re-shaping of the organisation. The scale of the change is significant and reflects current budgetary constraints.

The strategic approach has been to streamline and consolidate our operations so as to maintain a high level of effectiveness. I have brought our operational teams together in three main locations, in Belfast, Foyle and Newry. We have also centralised a range of the most serious indictable cases, including murder, manslaughter and sexual offences, within a new Serious Crime Unit.

In developing this new model I have sought to increase the flexibility and responsiveness of the PPS. A significant test to this will be the organisation's ability to respond to the pressure created by the backlog of indictable cases following the resolution of the recent Legal Aid dispute, which had resulted in the withdrawal of defence services by the Bar Council.

Of some assistance will be the further changes being embedded within the organisation which include new case management arrangements. This is an important development for the prosecutors responsible for difficult and complex cases, enabling access to senior management support at an early stage and ensuring full engagement with external Counsel where appropriate.

I am also seeking to innovate and to improve our services by exploiting the benefits of the latest digital technology. This includes the introduction of electronic tablets at court, following a successful pilot in Ballymena and Coleraine Magistrates' Courts last year. In addition, we will introduce a new online Victim Information Portal which will provide victims and witnesses with secure access to updates on their cases.

As part of our ongoing commitment to victims and witnesses, a revised victims and witnesses policy will be published this year, informed by an active consultation



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*Director of Public
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process. This policy will reflect all of the requirements set out in the new Victim Charter and also our continued investment in the Victim and Witness Care Unit.

I am conscious that all criminal justice agencies are operating within a challenging financial environment and I am prioritising a programme of partnership working. This includes 'Working Together', a joint PPS and police initiative, which is designed to raise our overall performance by improving the quality and timeliness of investigation files.

A clear priority during the year ahead will be to ensure that that all staff are provided with the support they need to make the Transformation Programme a success. I have put in place new initiatives around communications, as well as continuing our commitment to Investors in People and other staff development programmes.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all of the staff of the PPS, both past and present. Last year we lost around a fifth of our experienced staff as part of the NICS-wide Voluntary Exit Scheme, which has in turn created a pressure to accelerate the pace of change. Throughout this period the staff of the PPS have continued to demonstrate high levels of professionalism and dedication in their work and in their commitment to delivering a first class prosecution service to everyone in Northern Ireland.



Barra McGrory QC
Director of Public Prosecutions
for Northern Ireland

April 2016

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.

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 PPS 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 (DPP) 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, two Senior Assistant Directors and two independent Non-Executive Directors.

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.

PPS Services

The primary role of the PPS 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. 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.

PPS Structures

The PPS is a regionally based organisation. There are two regions:

- Belfast and Eastern; and
- Western and Southern.

Each region is headed by an Assistant Director (AD). The AD is responsible for working with the courts and the police to provide a high quality prosecution service in their area. The regions deal with a wide range of cases, from the less serious summary cases, which are heard in the Magistrates' Courts, through to more serious indictable cases which are heard in the Crown Court.

In addition there are four legal sections, based in PPS Headquarters, which are also headed at AD level. These sections are as follows:

- The Serious Crime Unit deals with a range of the most serious offences including murder, manslaughter, rape and other serious sexual offences, human trafficking, prostitution and related offences.
- Central Casework Section deals with some of the most high profile and difficult cases in Northern Ireland, including files relating to terrorism and organised crime.
- Fraud and Departmental Section deals with serious and complex fraud files submitted by the police, as well as files from Government Departments and agencies.
- Appeals and International Section deals with a range of specialist legal matters, including High Court bail applications, restraint and confiscation orders, extradition, international letters of request, judicial reviews, appeals to the Court of Appeal and cases referred by the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Appeals and International also provides the PPS's legal guidance and advice and quality assurance functions.

Corporate Services is responsible for the organisation's support services such as Finance, Human Resources and ICT, as well as the Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU).

An Organisation Chart for the PPS is presented at Annex A.

Working in Partnership: Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland (CJSNI)

The PPS works in partnership with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS), the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI), the Youth Justice Agency (YJA) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), as part of the Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland. The PPS is represented on the Criminal Justice Board which comprises senior officials from each of these Services.

The Director is a member of the Criminal Justice Delivery Group which is chaired by the Minister of Justice. This was established by the Minister to improve engagement between the most senior leaders within the criminal justice system, and to provide strategic oversight to the work of the Criminal Justice Board.

PPS Resources

The PPS's budget position continues to be challenging. In particular, the demand-led nature of the PPS workload makes budgetary management difficult as the standard measures of reducing services or discontinuing activities are not readily available.

A shortfall in funding was identified for 2015-16 and PPS had made the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) aware that additional funding would be required in-year. However due to the withdrawal of services from the defence by the Bar Council for Northern Ireland in May 2015, prosecutions in the Crown Courts were suspended during the period and only resumed in February 2016. The resulting 'saving' in counsel fees eliminated the PPS's in-year funding pressure.

PPS Budget Settlement 2015-16 and 2016-17

PPS	Budget Settlement (£m)	
	2015-16	2016-17
<u>RESOURCE</u>		
Current Expenditure	34.3	32.4
<u>CAPITAL</u>		
Capital Investment	0.8	1.5

The 2016-17 budget settlement is based on the 2015-16 baseline, but with a further 5.7% (£1.9 million) budget reduction. Beyond the actions PPS has committed to within its Transformation Programme (see below), there is little further PPS can do to reduce operating costs while meeting its statutory obligations. PPS has made DFP aware that it will be necessary to bid for additional funding during 2016-17.

PPS Transformation Programme

The Transformation Programme was established by the PPS Management Board to take forward a fundamental review of the delivery of the Service's functions, in the light of the proposed budget settlements for 2015-16 and the next Spending Review period. This was to enable the PPS to minimise operational spend, while protecting the impact on front-line services and particularly those provided to victims and witnesses.

The Transformation Working Group (TWG) commenced in October 2014 in order to support the Board in the development of future operational structures and plans. Following consideration of a number of options, a new model for the Service was presented to the Board in June 2015. This was formally signed off by the Board in September 2015. Key changes include:

- The consolidation of operations across four office locations, at Belfast Chambers, Foyle Chambers, and Newry Chambers, with a satellite office to be retained in Omagh. The plan provided for the closure of Ballymena Chambers, Lisburn Chambers and Linum Chambers (Belfast).
- Implementation of a 2 region structure, reducing from the 4 regions in place previously.
- The creation of the new centralised Serious Crime Unit.
- A more streamlined senior management team, with the number of SCS Grade 5 posts reducing from 8 to 6.
- A reduction in PPS staff numbers from a complement of 566 to 483, to be delivered through the Northern Ireland Civil Service Voluntary Exit Scheme.

At their planning meeting in January 2015, members of the Management Board had acknowledged that many of the necessary changes would only be achievable in the medium term. However the Board was forced to accelerate the Transformation Programme, with the new structures implemented in January 2016, and dates for office closures brought forward to the first quarter of 2016-17. This was largely due to the impact of the NICS Voluntary Exit Scheme; the loss of experienced staff through the scheme meant that there was a need to consolidate staff in order to ensure the ongoing delivery of the Service's core prosecution functions.

PPS Strategic Priorities

The PPS Corporate Plan is based around four strategic priorities which 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.

Strategic Priority 1: Providing a high quality prosecution service

- 1.1: To promote the highest standard of decision-making, case preparation and advocacy, applying our Quality Standards on a fair and consistent basis.
- 1.2 To reduce avoidable delay and improve our service delivery through stronger partnership working.

Strategic Priority 2: Building the trust of victims, witnesses and the community we serve

- 2.1 To meet our commitments under the Victim Charter, providing victims and witnesses with the information and support they need.
- 2.2 To improve public confidence by engaging effectively with stakeholders and the wider community.

Strategic Priority 3: Strengthening our capability to deliver

- 3.1 To embed our Transformation Programme and build a resilient and sustainable business model within the resources available.
- 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 inspire our people and promote a culture of continuous improvement.

What We Plan to Achieve in 2016-17

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

Strategic Priority 1: Providing a high quality prosecution service

Objective 1.1: To promote the highest standard of decision-making, case preparation and advocacy, applying our Quality Standards on a fair and consistent basis

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>We will maintain existing quality assurance arrangements to ensure that quality standards are met consistently across all business areas.</p> <p>In identifying our Quality Assurance Team’s priorities we will consider the inspections carried out by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) and will review compliance with recommendations made by inspectors. We will respond to any issues identified via quality assurance by providing the necessary training and guidance to staff.</p> <p>We will continue to set out 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.</p> <p>Certain classes of crime, such as serious sexual offences, are of particular concern to the public. We will review all cases where there has been a ‘No Bill’ or Acquittal by Direction in the Crown Court to ensure that any lessons learned are used to deliver improvements.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete our quality assurance reviews to agreed schedules and provide relevant legal guidance / training to staff as required. • Respond to all recommendations made by CJINI. • Publish revised Code for Prosecutors. • Release policy statements for consultation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cases involving Youth Offenders. - Guidelines for Diversion. - Domestic Violence. - Use of Social Media. • Review No Bills and Acquittals by Direction in the Crown Court.

Objective 1.1: To promote the highest standard of decision-making, case preparation and advocacy, applying our Quality Standards on a fair and consistent basis (continued)

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>New case management arrangements were implemented in January 2016. The purpose of these arrangements is to ensure that risks to a successful outcome in difficult and complex cases are identified at an early stage. A number of measures have also been introduced to improve strategic planning in such cases, for example through the introduction of Prosecution Strategy Documents. Case management panels will serve as a forum for the consideration of selected complex and/or high profile cases, involving a structured meeting between the prosecutor, the AD and senior management with a view to discussing issues and challenges and providing additional support and guidance as needed.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embed our new case management arrangements, and evaluate their effectiveness.

Objective 1.2: To reduce avoidable delay and improve our service delivery through stronger partnership working

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>The improvement of service delivery, particularly a reduction in avoidable delay, is a priority for the PPS and its partners.</p> <p>We will contribute to improving the efficiency of the criminal justice system. This will include working with the DOJ, PSNI, NICTS and other agencies as part of the overall programme to implement the range of initiatives set out in the Justice Act 2015; for example the direct transfer of cases to the Crown Court and the implementation of Prosecutorial Summonses.</p> <p>The aim of the ‘Working Together’ initiative, set up between the PPS and police, is to devise and implement revised procedures to improve performance in respect of several key areas for the two organisations, in particular the quality and timeliness of police files and disclosure. The initiative was launched in response to the findings of a CJINI report published in November 2015. Inspectors made six strategic recommendations which will be addressed via the initiative. Progress will be monitored jointly over the course of the year.</p> <p>During 2015 PPS worked with partner agencies in the operation of a new Indictable Cases Pilot (ICP). This initiative was intended to reduce avoidable delay, for example by promoting early engagement between PPS and police in the use of proportionate case building, and by providing a clear and defined method of enabling early guilty pleas to be taken by the court in appropriate cases. While the ICP is a resource intensive process, initial assessments have demonstrated substantial benefits in terms of timeliness. The ICP principles have already been adopted for all murder and manslaughter cases considered by the PPS’s new Serious Crime Unit. Subject to the availability of resources, PPS will work with DOJ and partners during 2016-17 with a view to extending the scope of the offences covered under ICP.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the implementation of the Justice Act 2015 and related initiatives. • Meet agreed objectives of the Working Together initiative. • Work with DOJ, PSNI and other partners to evaluate the resource impact of Indictable Cases Pilot and examine how the scope of the current arrangements can be extended.

Strategic Priority 2: Building the trust of victims, witnesses and the community we serve

Objective 2.1: To meet our commitments under the Victim Charter, providing victims and witnesses with the information and support they need

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>The maintenance of effective services and support is vital to building relationships between victims and witnesses, the PPS and the criminal justice system.</p> <p>During 2016 we will publish an updated Victims and Witnesses Policy, taking on board the requirements of the Victim Charter. The public will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the policy.</p> <p>The purpose of the Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU), 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. The two VWCU offices, located in the PPS’s Belfast and Foyle Chambers, have now been fully implemented. A key objective for 2016-17 will be to examine the operation of the Unit, with a view to refining procedures in the light of operational and stakeholder experience.</p> <p>Information will be made available to victims and witnesses via a new online Victim and Witness information Portal. Victims and witnesses will be able to log on securely to the Portal to obtain details of their case, such as forthcoming court dates. Over the year, a number of enhancements will be taken forward as part of a second phase.</p> <p>PPS is a member of the CJSNI’s Victim and Witness Task Force and will contribute to the new five year ‘Making a Difference’ Strategy.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish our revised Victims and Witnesses Policy. • Conduct a review of the VWCU (PPS Belfast and Foyle offices). • Implement the Victim and Witness Information Portal. • Contribute to 2016-17 CJSNI Victim and Witness Strategy objectives.

Objective 2.1: To meet our commitments under the Victim Charter, providing victims and witnesses with the information and support they need (continued)

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>In October 2014, the Director announced that a leading human rights lawyer, Sir Keir Starmer QC, was to conduct an independent review of three interlinked cases involving sex abuse and terror-related charges. The review, which encompassed all aspects of the prosecution of these cases by the PPS, was published in May 2015. The PPS has responded to the review’s recommendations by way of a detailed action plan. The Director has invited CJINI to carry out a review to assess the effectiveness of the PPS’s response, to be taken forward later in the year.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to any issues highlighted by CJINI in respect of the Starmer Review.

Objective 2.2: To improve public confidence by engaging effectively with stakeholders and the wider community

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>We will seek to improve our approach to communicating with stakeholders and the public in order to increase understanding of what we do and the actions we take.</p> <p>A programme of work to improve internal and external communications will continue to be progressed. This includes a focus on developing: insights into stakeholder needs; new digital platforms; partnerships with other criminal justice agencies; and a fresh approach to the production of content for stakeholders and the wider public. These priority areas will be part of an overarching communications strategy that seeks to build a greater understanding of the work of the PPS and increase confidence in the criminal justice system.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>We will continue to develop our links with partner agencies and to agree Service Level Agreements (SLAs), clearly setting out the working arrangements, roles and responsibilities of each agency.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet agreed communication objectives for 2016-17, including development of a new website and publication of a corporate communications strategy. • Publish the findings of the PPS Omnibus Survey. • Agree SLAs with relevant Departments and Agencies, as appropriate.

Strategic Priority 3: Strengthening our Capability to Deliver

Objective 3.1: To embed our Transformation Programme and build a resilient and sustainable business model within the resources available

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>The budget settlement for 2016-17 represents a challenge for the Service. We will continue to review our expenditure and operational processes in order to enhance value for money.</p> <p>We will ensure that all agreed savings delivery / transformation objectives identified for 2016-17 are met. We will work with DFP to manage any funding gaps during the year and will carry out relevant preparations for the next Spending Review period.</p> <p>Where possible, efficiencies from the use of information technology will be taken forward, allowing us to explore and exploit the benefits offered by digital working. An example is the use of tablet computers to prosecute cases at court, reducing the need for hard copy files which have to be transported to each court venue.</p> <p>We will meet the objectives set out in our 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.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet agreed savings delivery / transformation objectives for 2016-17. • Engage with DFP in funding 2016-17 adequately and in making relevant preparations for the Spending Review. • Deliver our 2016-17 ICT Strategy objectives, including the rollout of tablet PCs for use by prosecutors at court. • Deliver our Corporate Social Responsibility objectives for 2016-17.

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	How we plan to make it happen
<p>We are committed to ensuring that corporate governance arrangements are effective and developed in accordance with DFP’s Code of Good Practice NI.</p> <p>We will continue to improve our information assurance capability, ensuring that arrangements are driven by the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 our DDA / Equality Scheme Action Plan objectives for 2016-17.

Strategic Priority 4: Our People

Objective 4.1: To inspire our people and promote a culture of continuous improvement

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>Our people are central to the achievement of our objectives and this requires a working environment in which staff are inspired to develop and contribute to their full potential.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify corporate training needs and meet agreed corporate training priorities.

Objective 4.1: To inspire our people and promote a culture of continuous improvement (continued)

What we plan to achieve	How we plan to make it happen
<p>The PPS recognises the Investors in People (IiP) standard as a benchmark for the quality of its people management and training and development. During 2016-17 the Service will seek re-accreditation under the scheme.</p> <p>During the year we will also seek to maintain an effective absence management framework and promote health and well-being as part of the NICS WELL Programme.</p> <p>We will continue to promote Business in the Community’s Employee Volunteering Scheme.</p> <p>We will also maintain robust workforce planning arrangements, with a view to protecting PPS business delivery. A priority will be to maintain effective employee relations, engaging with trade unions and providing staff with the information they need.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve re-accreditation under the Investors in People Standard. • We will maintain an effective absence management framework and promote health and well-being. • We will carry out our employee volunteering programme for 2016-17. • We will maintain effective workforce planning arrangements, engaging with staff and trade unions.

Key Performance Indicators and Targets

The following are the key delivery targets for 2016-17 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

Objective	Key Performance Indicator(s)	2016-17 Target
1.1	Quality Assurance ¹ Percentage of decisions as to prosecution taken in accordance with the Code for Prosecutors	98%
	No Bills / Acquittals by Direction ² Number of No Bills (All charges) granted in the Crown Court Number of Acquittals by Direction (All charges) in the Crown Court	Not to exceed 2014-2015 average
1.2	Review of Charges Percentage of 28 day charge cases where charge sheets are reviewed within at least 3 working days of first appearance.	90%
	Decisions Issued (Timeliness) ³ Percentage of indictable decisions issued within: (a) 100 days (b) 180 days Percentage of summary decisions issued within: (a) 15 days (b) 40 days Percentage of diversionary decisions issued within: (a) 15 days (b) 30 days Percentage of no prosecution (indictable) decisions issued within: (a) 50 days (b) 150 days Percentage of no prosecution (summary / hybrid) decisions issued within: (a) 30 days (b) 75 days	(a) 50% (b) 80% (a) 65% (b) 80% (a) 65% (b) 80% (a) 65% (b) 80% (a) 65% (b) 80%

Notes 1–3: See page 25.

Key Performance Indicators and Targets (Continued)

Strategic Priority 2: Building Confidence and Trust

Objective	Key Performance Indicator(s)	2016-17 Target
2.2	<p>Public Confidence ⁴</p> <p>Percentage public confidence in the provision of a fair and impartial prosecution service</p> <p>Percentage of respondents who feel that the PPS is effective at prosecuting people who are accused of committing a crime</p>	Maintain / improve on 2015 Survey

Strategic Priority 3: Our Capability to Deliver

Objective	Key Performance Indicator(s)	2016-17 Target
3.1	<p>Better Payments</p> <p>Percentage of invoices paid within 10 working days</p> <p>Percentage of Purchase Orders compliant with Account NI procurement guidance ⁵</p>	<p>95%</p> <p>80%</p>
3.2	<p>Freedom of Information ⁶</p> <p>Percentage of requests answered within agreed time limits</p> <p>Complaints ⁶</p> <p>Percentage of complaints (a) acknowledged within 5 working days (b) dealt with within 20 working days</p>	<p>100%</p> <p>(a) 95% (b) 95%</p>

Notes 4-6: See page 25.

Key Performance Indicators and Targets (Continued)

Strategic Priority 4: Our People

Objective	Key Performance Indicator(s)	2016-17 Target
4.1	Sickness and Absenteeism ⁷	
	Average working days lost	7.5 days
	Long-term absence – frequency rate	7.6%

Note 7: See page 25.

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 2016-17 financial year include the following:

No.	Risk Description	Risk Owner(s)
Providing a high quality prosecution service		
1.	Case Management There is potential for reputational damage to the organisation due to the ineffective management of serious / high profile cases.	Deputy Director
2.	Justice Act / CJSNI Initiatives The Service does not have the resources available to provide effective support for ongoing Justice Act / CJSNI initiatives, including the rollout of the Indictable Cases Pilot.	Senior Assistant Director, Serious Crime and Regional Prosecutions
3.	Legacy Cases The Service has insufficient resources to manage legacy cases effectively, resulting in potential reputational damage.	Deputy Director
Building the trust of victims, witnesses and the community we serve		
4.	Victim Charter The information and services delivered by the PPS do not meet our obligations under the Victim Charter.	Senior Assistant Directors
5.	Stakeholder Engagement The Service does not engage effectively with CJSNI partners and the wider community, resulting in a failure to influence criminal justice policy and to build political and public confidence in the organisation.	Senior Assistant Director, Resources and Change

Managing Risk (Continued)

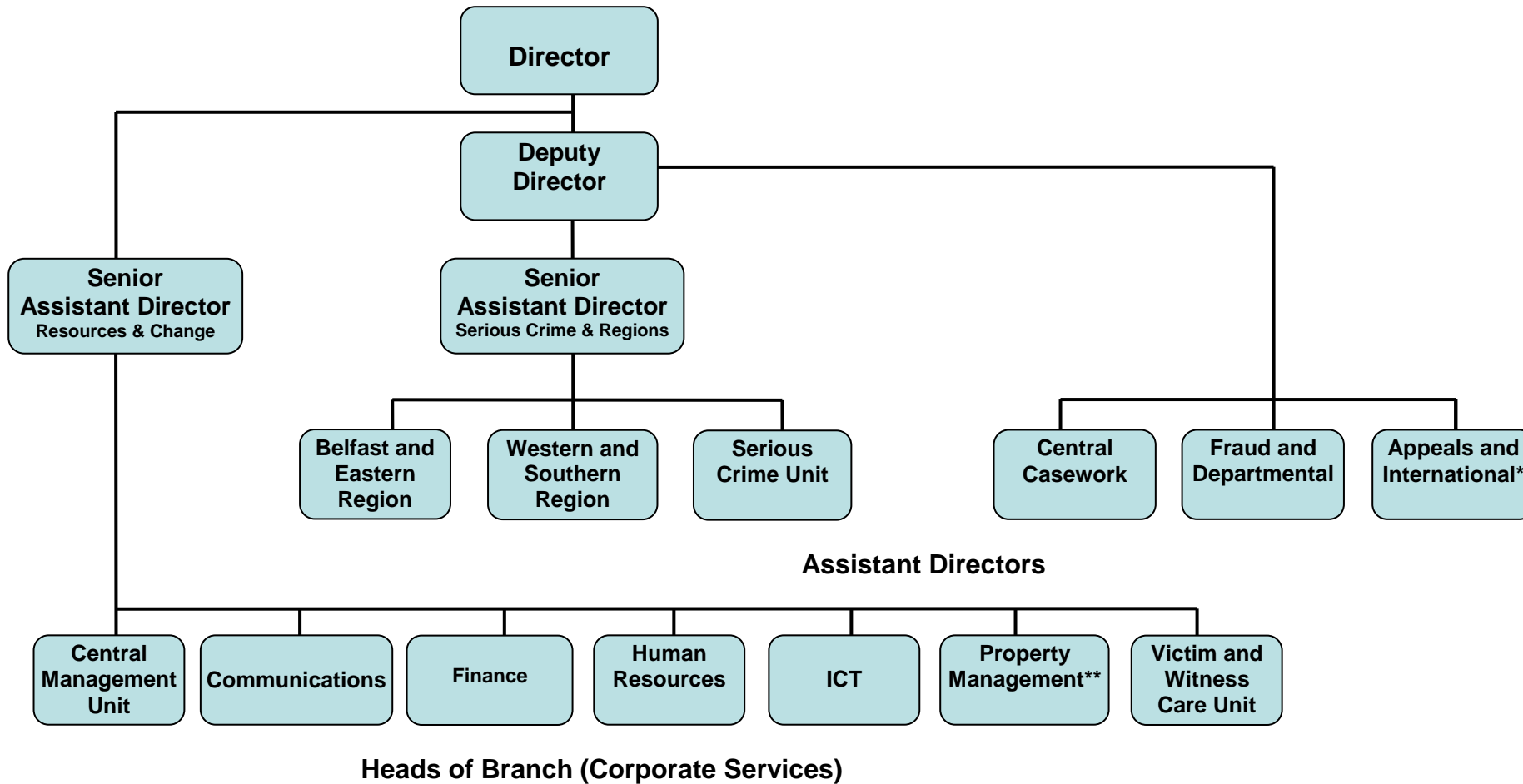
No.	Risk Description	Risk Owner(s)
<p>6.</p> <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p>	<p>Strengthening our capability to deliver</p> <p>Transformation Programme Implementation of the Transformation Programme does not deliver the required business benefits and outcomes, resulting in a failure to achieve our business objectives.</p> <p>Funding The full range of statutory functions and current levels of service cannot be maintained due to planned reductions in the Service’s funding.</p> <p>Our people</p> <p>Business Resilience There are potential deficiencies in the Service’s capacity and capability due to the loss of experienced staff.</p>	<p>Senior Assistant Directors</p> <p>Senior Assistant Director, Resources and Change</p> <p>Senior Assistant Directors</p>

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 financial year.

Notes

1. To be assessed via dip sampling of PPS cases by Assistant Directors, based on the new PPS Prosecution Quality Standards Framework. All cases for dip sampling are selected independently by statisticians from the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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'. In the January 2015 survey, 74% of respondents were very or fairly confident that the PPS provides a fair and impartial prosecution service. Sixty-seven percent of respondents were very or fairly confident that the PPS is effective at prosecuting people accused of committing a crime.
5. Excludes non-procurement spend.
6. Except where an extension is applicable, subject to agreement.
7. Reflect sickness absence targets agreed with DFP.

Annex A: PPS Organisation Chart



* Includes Legal Guidance and Advice Section. ** Includes Business Assurance.

Contact Us

If you require any further information about the PPS, or a copy of this document in an alternative format, please contact:

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