



Date Issued: 27 January 2015

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **PPS sets out support for new Discretionary Disposals Strategy**

Responding to the publication of 'Police Use of Discretion, Incorporating Penalty Notices', an inspection report by the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) which makes a number of recommendations around the governance and management of discretionary disposals by the PSNI, Senior Assistant Director of the Public Prosecution Service Stephen Herron said:

"The PPS is supportive of non-prosecutorial disposals as a proportionate, effective and speedy response to low-level offending. We welcomed involvement in the evaluation processes to develop this report, and agree with its findings and recommendations, particularly the strategic recommendation in the areas of governance and quality assurance.

"The PPS is fully committed to continue to work with PSNI to improve the management of non PPS disposals, with the aim of ensuring greater visibility and appropriate use of such alternatives to prosecution. In this regard we are also working with PSNI to develop clear guidance for officers to ensure discretion is applied as consistently as possible.

"It is important to recognise the inspection report's finding that the use of discretionary disposals by the PSNI is appropriate in the vast majority of cases. These processes for minor crimes are an important part of the criminal justice response on behalf of victims and we commit our full support to improve oversight arrangements so that public confidence can be maintained."

**ENDS**

## **Note to Editors:**

1. The PPS is the principal prosecuting authority in Northern Ireland. In addition to taking decisions as to prosecution in cases investigated by the police in Northern Ireland, it also considers cases investigated by other statutory authorities, such as HM Revenue and Customs.
2. The Public Prosecution Service is regionally based, with four regions in total, each coterminous with one or more divisions. Each region is headed by a Regional Prosecutor (Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions) who have overall responsibility for decision making on investigation files and for the conduct of prosecutions in that region. Additionally, there are also a number of Sections, each headed by an Assistant Director, which deal with specialised or complex areas of work, these include; Central Prosecutions, Fraud and Departmental, Policy and High Court and International.
3. Full report can be found [here](#).

*For further information please call PPS Communications on 02890897187 or out of hours officer on 07790 031568. Email: [ppspressooffice@ppsni.gov.uk](mailto:ppspressooffice@ppsni.gov.uk)*