



News Release

Friday 3 July 2015

RISING LEVELS OF PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE PPS

The Public Prosecution Service has today published its fifth Annual Report.

Highlighting the key performance areas set out in the report, the Director of Public Prosecutions Barra McGrory QC paid tribute to the work of the PPS's staff.

He said: "I commend the staff of the PPS for their dedication and commitment to excellence. Over this year we have continued to maintain our performance in key areas including our high levels of convictions in both the Crown and Magistrates' Courts and exceeding our targets in terms of the timeliness of our decision-making.

"It is also welcome to see the rising levels of public confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the Service, which has increased by six percentage points to 74% over the last two years.

"Our staff work tirelessly to deliver a first class prosecution service to everyone in Northern Ireland. Over the coming years we will face new challenges due mainly to budgetary pressures, but I am confident that we have the plans in place to meet these effectively."

Key achievements in the 2014-15 year include:

- **A conviction rate of over 85% in the Crown Court;**
- **A conviction rate of 80% in the Magistrates' Court;**
- **74% of the public having confidence in the PPS providing a fair and impartial service (according to the NI Omnibus Survey of 2015);**
- **68% of victims and witnesses being satisfied with the PPS service (according to the Department of Justice's Victim and Witness Survey);**
- **Exceeding ten out of the ten targets set for the timeliness of prosecutorial decisions;**

- **These results included 87% of summary prosecution decisions being issued within 40 days; 87% of diversionary decisions being issued within 30 days and 83% of indictable prosecution decisions being issued within 180 days.**

The Annual Report examines a number of areas which were identified as significant priorities for the PPS.

As part of this, it looks at progress on the work of the Victim Witness and Care Unit (VWCU) which was officially launched in May 2014 to act as a single point of contact for cases sent to the PPS for consideration.

The Director added: "We are fully committed to taking all necessary steps to ensure that we, together with our partners in the criminal justice sector, continue to improve our services to victims and witnesses.

"The Unit, which we operate in conjunction with the PSNI and Victim Support NI, is a single point of contact for victims and witnesses to help them navigate what can be a confusing, and at times daunting, legal system."

The Annual Report provides an overview of the PPS's work during the financial year, together with a summary of progress made against the objectives set out in the PPS Annual Business Plan. It also sets out details of the Service's expenditure and financial position at the end of the year.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS:

*A copy of the Annual Report and Resource Accounts 2014-15 is available via the PPS website at www.ppsni.gov.uk.

*This is the fifth PPS Annual Report and Resource Accounts to be published since the PPS was designated as non-ministerial department in April 2010, following the devolution of policing and justice to the Northern Ireland Assembly

*The Public Prosecution Service's Victim Witness and Care Unit was launched in May 2014. It was based on the success of a pilot project which had been running since November 2012.

*VWCU also works with the NSPCC Young Witness Service to provide support to young victims and witnesses.

For media enquiries, please telephone PPS Communications on 02890 897187 or email to ppspressoffice@ppsni.gov.uk. An out of hours officer can be contacted on 07790 031568.