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# Annual Business Plan 2005/06

PUBLIC  
PROSECUTION  
SERVICE

Building a Service  
for the Future



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# **Annual Business Plan 2005/06**

Building a Service for the Future



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# Foreword by the Director



**Sir Alasdair Fraser CB QC**  
Director of Public Prosecutions  
for Northern Ireland

I am pleased to present our Business Plan for the 2005/06 financial year.

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) was established on 13th June 2005. Whilst the introduction of the new Service is the result of a great deal of hard work, much remains to be done.

We must provide the community with an excellent prosecution service which is independent, fair and effective. There are many challenges which lie ahead which include the following:

- The rollout of the Public Prosecution Service throughout Northern Ireland through the establishment of regional offices together with the development of the new services which they will provide;
- Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the prosecution process by ensuring that decisions reached are taken in accordance with the test for prosecution in a timely manner;
- Developing our staff to ensure we have persons who are fully trained with the range of skills they presently need and will require in the future; and

- Developing confidence through the improvement of services to victims and witnesses and the implementation of our community outreach programme.

I consider that this Business Plan represents a comprehensive programme of activity and provides a sound foundation for the agenda of change which we face.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alasdair Fraser." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sir Alasdair Fraser CB QC  
Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland

# Statement of Vision and Aim

## Vision

To deliver an excellent service to the community in an independent, fair and effective manner, working in partnership with others in the criminal justice system, valuing and developing our staff, and thereby providing a prosecution service in which the people of Northern Ireland can have confidence.

### **Aim of the Service**

To provide the people of Northern Ireland with an independent, fair and effective Prosecution Service.

### **Independence**

The Prosecution Service will be wholly independent of both police and Government; its decisions will be impartial, based on an independent and professional 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 for Northern Ireland (PPS) is established by the commencement of the Justice (NI) Act 2002. The Act defines the Public Prosecution Service, its statutory duties and commitments and the legislative framework within which it must provide its services. The new Service is designed to incorporate good practice on a national and international basis.



Laganside Courts

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The PPS is headed by the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland. There is also a Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions. The Deputy Director has all the powers of the Director but must exercise them subject to his direction and control. Both posts are public appointments made by the Attorney General for Northern Ireland and the Director presently discharges his functions, under the superintendence of the Attorney General.

Subject to the full implementation of the PPS (see below), the Director is to assume responsibility for all criminal cases previously prosecuted by the Department of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

The Director will also consider files with a view to prosecution when requested in writing to do so by a Government Department (for example the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency and the Department of Social Development).

The funding for the PPS is provided by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Director is responsible for ensuring that the public monies provided are used efficiently.

All staff are Northern Ireland Civil Servants and enjoy the same terms and conditions as all other Northern Ireland Civil Servants in the Northern Ireland Office.

## **Background**

The Criminal Justice Review (2000) was the key factor that shaped the design of the new Service. The Terms of Reference included a review of "...the arrangements for the organisation and supervision of the prosecution process and for safeguarding its independence". Of the 249 recommendations made by the Criminal Justice review, the largest group (some 49 in total) related to the prosecution of offences.

The Criminal Justice Review specified the services the PPS should provide and is the key strategic driver for the new PPS.

## **Services**

The PPS provides the following key services:

- Prosecutorial and pre-charge advice to police;
- Review of all charges prior to submission to court;
- An enhanced service to victims and witnesses;
- Production and issue of summonses; and
- PPS lawyers will conduct prosecutions in the Magistrates', Youth and County Courts.

A range of options has also been developed to deal with offenders other than through prosecution. These include restorative cautioning and the work of the Youth Justice Agency.

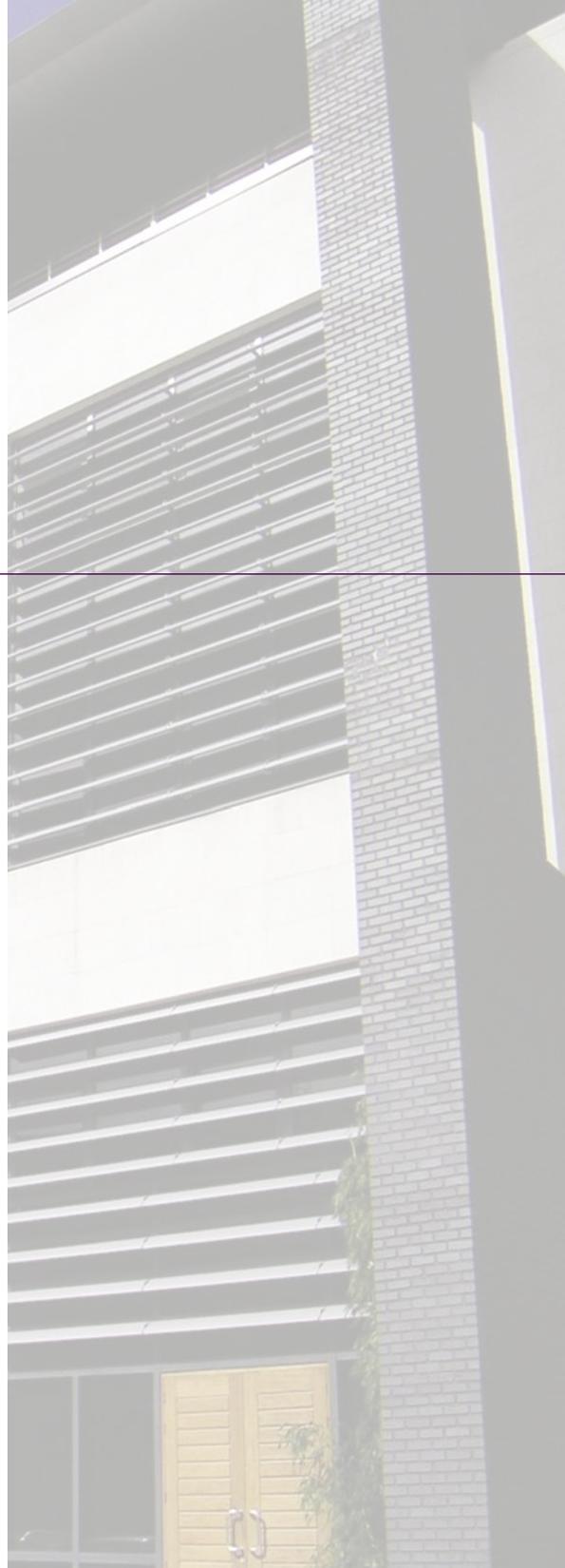
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## Implementation

Whilst the PPS comes into effect as a statutory body in June 2005, the new PPS structures are not yet fully in place throughout Northern Ireland and to date, the full range of services is available in the Belfast Region and five police districts in Fermanagh and Tyrone only. Prosecutors in other areas continue to handle those prosecutions previously submitted to the DPP (i.e. largely the more serious indictable or hybrid cases). We are working to provide full implementation of the new Service throughout Northern Ireland by December 2006.



Proposed PPS Office Locations



PPS Headquarters: Belfast Chambers

# Annual Business Plan

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Our current Corporate Plan covers the four year period from 2004 to 2008. The Plan is based around four strategic priorities.



Royal Courts of Justice, Belfast

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Our four Strategic Priorities are as follows:

- To improve service delivery
- To enhance value for money achieved through modernisation and the better use of resources
- To value, empower, develop and recognise our staff
- To establish a new independent, fair and effective prosecution service as required by legislation and in accordance with the Criminal Justice Implementation Plan

Within each priority area, a number of strategic objectives have been developed which are the focus of our delivery programme for 2004/08.

2005/06 is the second year of the Corporate Plan and this Annual Plan describes how we intend to progress the strategic objectives set out in the Corporate Plan, building on the achievements of 2004/05.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **Objective 1.1**

*To ensure that correct decisions are reached in accordance with the Test for Prosecution*

### **Performance Milestone**

- To establish a legal Quality Assurance Team by end December 2005.

### **Objective 1.2**

*To prosecute in a fair and effective manner, fully complying with the duties of disclosure*

### **Performance Milestones**

- To establish an Operational Policy Team by end September 2005 to maintain and promote existing standards.
- To design and implement a PPS manual for disclosure by end March 2006, taking into account the present arrangements.

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**Objective 1.3**

*To deal with prosecution cases in a timely and efficient manner in partnership with other agencies*

**Performance Milestones**

- To meet agreed 2005/06 targets for issue of decisions by end March 2006.
- To meet agreed 2005/06 targets for the preparation of committal papers by end March 2006.
- To implement agreed recommendations of the 2004 Delays Research by end March 2006.

**Objective 1.4**

*To promote public confidence in the prosecution service and to meet the needs of victims and witnesses, whilst respecting the rights of defendants*

**Performance Milestones**

- To achieve 70% public confidence in the provision of a fair and impartial prosecution service by end March 2006.
- To implement our Community Outreach Strategy by end March 2006.

**Objective 1.5**

*To fully implement the agreed recommendations of the Chief Inspector, Criminal Justice Inspectorate*

**Performance Milestone**

- To implement agreed recommendations for 2005/06 by end March 2006.



Management Information

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**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2:  
TO ENHANCE THE VALUE FOR MONEY  
ACHIEVED THROUGH MODERNISATION  
AND THE BETTER USE OF RESOURCES**

**Objective 2.1**

*To operate within our resource budget and demonstrate we provide value for money*

**Performance Milestone**

- To secure efficiency savings of 2.5% on the 2004/05 baseline.

**Objective 2.2**

*To develop corporate governance and promote a risk management culture*

**Performance Milestones**

- To establish a PPS Management Board by end December 2005.
- To have an Audit and Risk Committee in place by end March 2006.
- To ensure that all requests for information under the Freedom of Information (2000) Act are properly dealt with within the appropriate timescales.

**Objective 2.3**

*To deliver e-business and give effect to modernisation targets*

**Performance Milestone**

- To produce an e-business strategy by end December 2005.

**Objective 2.4**

*To maintain and develop the Case Management System to meet the needs of the new PPS*

**Performance Milestone**

- To implement the 'Causeway-enabled' Case Management System across the PPS by end November 2005.



Case Management System: Training

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**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3:  
TO VALUE, EMPOWER, DEVELOP AND  
RECOGNISE OUR STAFF**

**Objective 3.1**

*To create an environment in which the skills and knowledge of all staff are developed and valued so that they are equipped with the relevant competences to meet individual and business objectives*

**Performance Milestones**

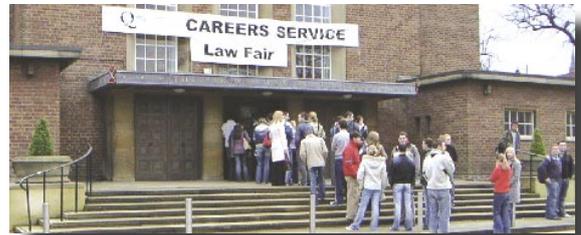
- To fully implement our internal communication strategy by end March 2006.
- To achieve Investors in People (IIP) re-accreditation by end December 2005.
- To implement our 2005/06 Workforce Plan in accordance with the agreed PPS capacity model.
- To reduce average working days lost due to sickness and absenteeism by 5% (2004/05 baseline).

**Objective 3.2**

*To achieve a workforce that is reflective of people from a range of diverse backgrounds and from all parts of the community*

**Performance Milestone**

- To prepare a draft PPS Equality Scheme in line with Equality Commission requirements by end March 2006.



Queen's University Law Fair

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**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4:  
TO ESTABLISH A NEW INDEPENDENT,  
FAIR AND EFFECTIVE PROSECUTION  
SERVICE AS REQUIRED BY LEGISLATION  
AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**Objective 4.1**

*To meet the requirements of the Criminal Justice Review and relevant legislation under the supervision of the Oversight Commissioner*

**Performance Milestone**

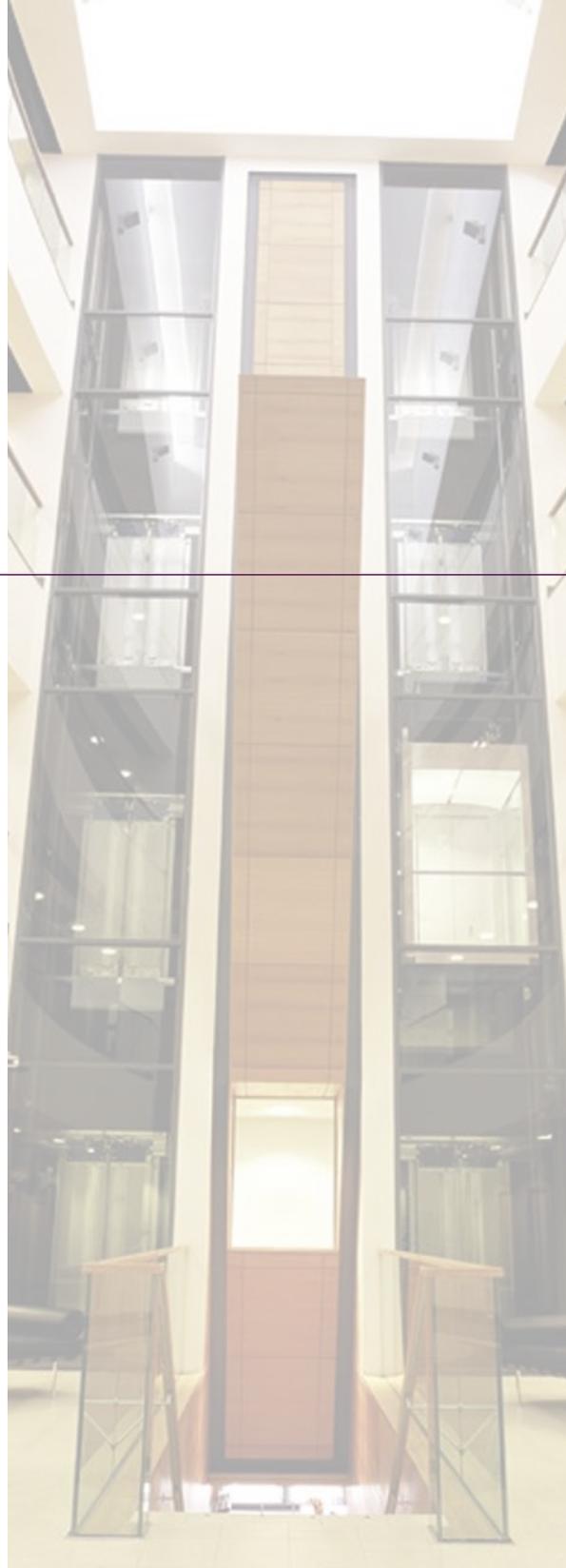
- To complete the evaluation of the Fermanagh and Tyrone PPS Pilot by end December 2005.

**Objective 4.2**

*To deliver all objectives in accordance with the Service Delivery Model agreed by the Project Board to establish the new Public Prosecution Service*

**Performance Milestones**

- To deliver all 2005/06 objectives for the PPS Accommodation Project by end March 2006.
- To establish the PPS Eastern Region office by end March 2006.



Belfast Chambers Atrium









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