

Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland

Annual Business Plan 2012-13



Independent, Fair and Effective

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Foreword

**by the Director of Public Prosecutions
for Northern Ireland**

I am pleased to present our Annual Business Plan for the 2012-13 financial year.

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

Since taking up post as Director of Public Prosecutions on 7 November 2011, I have had the opportunity to hold detailed discussions with senior staff, the Attorney General and other key stakeholders. These discussions have focused on a wide range of areas, including our approach to casework and advocacy, the services provided to victims and witnesses and the corporate governance and accountability arrangements in place for the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). This has allowed me not only to develop an appreciation of the issues facing the organisation, but also of the many ongoing projects and strategies and the achievements made under the leadership of my predecessor Sir Alasdair Fraser, and the former Acting Director James Scholes.

Over recent months my focus has been on examining ways to build on these achievements. During 2012-13 we will implement a number of initiatives, ensuring that progress is maintained across our four strategic priorities which span service delivery, public confidence, governance and accountability and our people.

- **Strategic Priority 1 - Delivering an efficient and effective prosecution service**

We will continue to engage with other agencies across the criminal justice system in order to reduce avoidable delay. We will also seek to introduce further efficiencies in our internal processes. In particular we must ensure that there is a reduction in the time taken to issue decisions in the more complex cases and new arrangements aimed at improving timeliness will be taken forward with police. Any improvements in timeliness must not be at the expense of the quality of our decision-making. During 2012-13, the PPS Quality Assurance Team will conduct thematic reviews across a range of issues, and will also review compliance with recommendations made by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI).



Barra McGrory QC

*Director of Public Prosecutions
for Northern Ireland*

“We will continue to engage with other agencies in order to reduce avoidable delay.”

Since the implementation of the PPS, public prosecutors have conducted cases in the Magistrates', Youth and County Courts. Public prosecutors and support staff engage with victims and witnesses on a daily basis and thereby help to shape the public perception of the Service. As such I believe that in-house advocates play a crucial part and I am keen to develop the advocacy role of prosecutors within the organisation. Therefore during the year ahead we will take steps to roll out a Higher Court Advocacy Scheme, which will extend the role of public prosecutors into the Crown Court.

- **Strategic Priority 2 - Building the confidence and trust of the community we serve**

We must strive to improve the services available to victims and witnesses, building on the provision already in place. While our regional presence enables us to address local issues and makes the PPS increasingly accessible to the community, there is a need for a more 'joined up' approach to the provision of services. A new inter-agency project has been established to implement 'Witness Care Units', similar to those in place in England and Wales, which will manage the care of victims and witnesses from the charging of the defendant through to the conclusion of a case. Planning is still at an early stage, however I believe that this initiative has great potential.

“ We must strive to improve the services available to victims and witnesses...”

It is essential that the PPS provides a service in which the people of Northern Ireland can have confidence. In order to build public confidence, we recognise the need to reach out to the community and explain what we do. Over the next year we will continue to implement a comprehensive communication strategy to engage with the community, the media and key stakeholders, including the voluntary sector.

- **Strategic Priority 3 - Strengthening our capability to deliver**

The Service must demonstrate that it provides value for money through its management of resources, performance and procurement. We have recently published our spending plans for the next three years in the light of the final budget settlement. This settlement presents many challenges for the Service which has required us to review our 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. One of the key initiatives will focus on how we remunerate independent counsel. During 2012-13 we will implement a new fees payment scheme for counsel which will bring with it the benefits of clearly evidenced value for money and greater predictability within this area of spend.

- **Strategic Priority 4 - Building the Capability of our People**

I have been struck by the obvious dedication and talent of the staff within the Service. Ongoing development is key and we will ensure that the training and development provided to staff continues to meet our business needs. The Service remains committed to the Investors in People standard and will seek re-accreditation during the year ahead.

Above all we must aim to be judged as a first class prosecution service; an organisation that will provide the people of Northern Ireland with an independent, fair and effective prosecution service. This is becoming more and more difficult in the context of ever increasing demands on the Service and a decreasing budget. However I am confident that we can rise to these challenges.



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

May 2012



Vision and Aim

Vision

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

Aim of the PPS

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 is the principal prosecuting authority in Northern Ireland and is responsible for all criminal cases previously prosecuted by the former Department of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPPNI) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). In addition to taking decisions as to prosecution in all cases initiated or investigated by the police in Northern Ireland, it also considers cases initiated or investigated by other statutory authorities, for example, HM Revenue and Customs.

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



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 Service, the development and implementation of appropriate strategy and in meeting his corporate governance responsibilities. The Board comprises the Director (as Chair), Deputy Director and 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

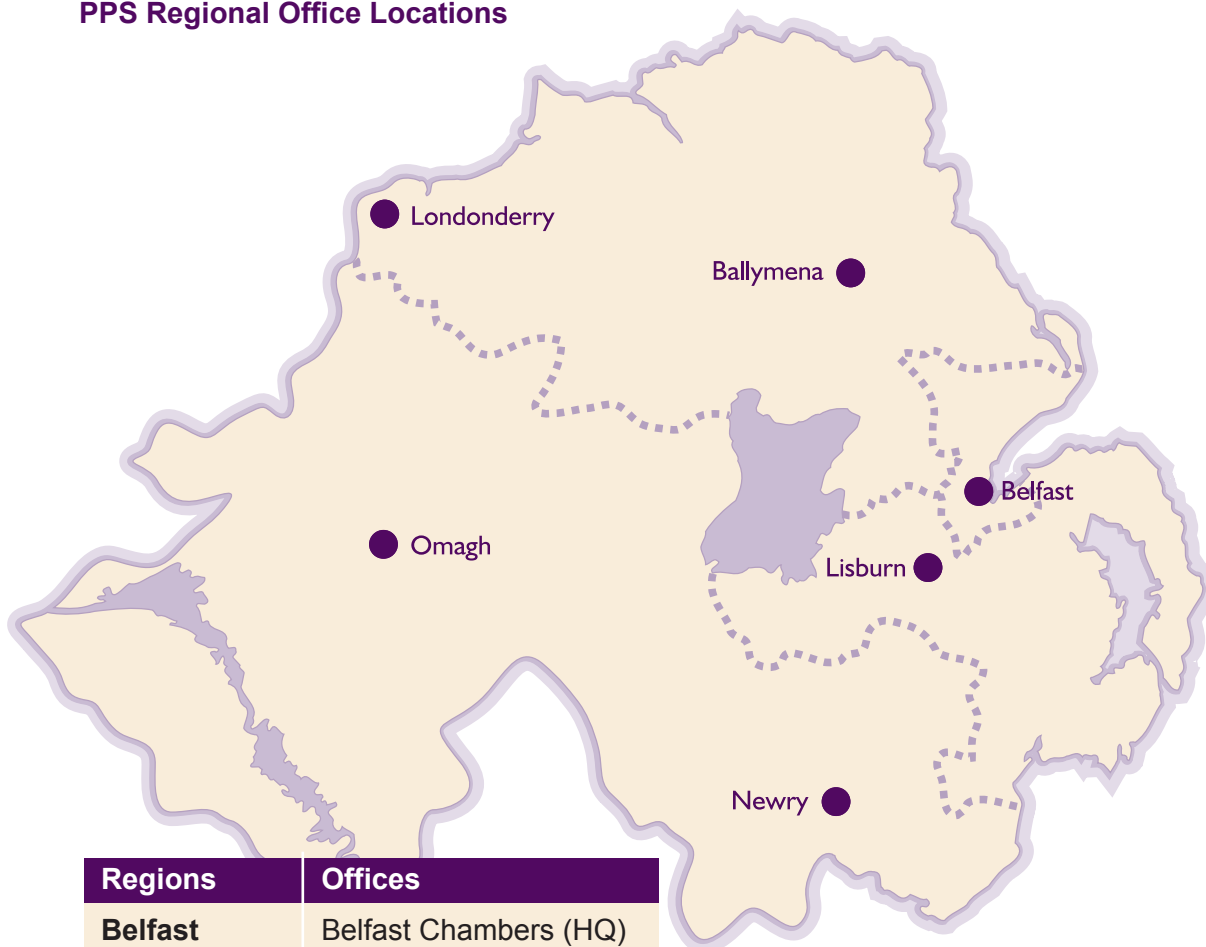
matter for which the Attorney General is accountable to the Northern Ireland Assembly. In accordance with the 2002 Act the functions of the Director shall be exercised by him independently of any other person.

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. A range of additional services are available which have been designed to enhance the effectiveness of the Service, including the provision of prosecutorial and pre-charge advice.

“... the functions of the Director shall be exercised by him independently of any other person.”

PPS Regional Office Locations




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

Each regional office provides the full range of services. For example, each office includes a Community Liaison Team which provides information to victims and witnesses regarding the progress of their case and arranges for their attendance at court.

A range of options is also available for dealing with offenders other than through prosecution. These options 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.

“ A range of options is also available for dealing with offenders other than through prosecution. ”



Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland

The PPS is subject to review by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland, within the provisions of Part 3 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002. The Service works in co-operation with the Chief Inspector of Criminal Justice Inspection, with a view to improving service delivery and the quality of PPS decision making. This may include matters relating to prosecutorial policy.

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

The Public Prosecution Service works in partnership with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service, the Northern Ireland Prison Service, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Youth Justice Agency and the Department of Justice, as part of the Criminal Justice System Northern Ireland.

The Director is a member of the Criminal Justice Board which comprises the Heads of these Services and he is also a member of the Criminal Justice Delivery Group, chaired by the Minister of Justice.

PPS Strategic Priorities 2011-2014

The current PPS Corporate Plan is based around four strategic priorities. Within each priority area a number of objectives have been set out as the focus of our work programme for the three year period from 2011 - 2014 and which will progress the delivery of our vision for the Service.

Strategic Priority 1:

Delivering an efficient and effective prosecution service

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

Strategic Priority 2

Building the confidence and trust of the community we serve

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

Strategic Priority 3

Strengthening our capability to deliver

- To provide greater value for money through the improved management of resources and the development of our resource planning.
- 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

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

PPS Resources

The Northern Ireland Executive's 'Draft Budget 2011-15' was announced by the Minister for Finance and Personnel on 15 December 2010, setting out the proposed departmental current expenditure and capital allocations for the four year budget period. The announcement of the Draft Budget marked the commencement of a period of public consultation.¹

The final Budget settlement reduces PPS current expenditure year on year (see below). Taking into account estimated inflationary increases of 2.5% per annum the PPS budget will experience a reduction in real terms of 18% by 2014-15.

PPS	Budget 2010 Settlement (£million)				
	2010-11 Baseline	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Resource PPS Current Expenditure Outcome	37.386	37.313	36.345	35.507	34.249
% Reduction against 2010-11 baseline		-0.2%	-2.8%	-5.0%	-8.4%
Capital PPS Capital Investment Outcome	0.270	0.178	0.176	0.195	0.150
% Reduction against 2010-11 baseline		-34.0%	-34.8%	-27.8%	-44.4%

The PPS has undertaken detailed planning to allow the Service to operate within this budget whilst minimising the impact on front-line services and victims and witnesses. It has been assumed for planning purposes that caseloads will remain steady at 2009-10 levels and that there will not be an increase in the levels of crime which impact most significantly on costs such as serious organised crime and terrorist cases.

¹ The PPS completed public consultation on its proposed 2011-15 spending plans on 9 February 2011, in line with other NI Civil Service Departments. The paper set out the impact of the Draft Budget on the spending plans of the Service over the period 2011-15. The full effect of the devolution of the PPS was not fully apparent at that point and after taking further financial pressures into consideration, some of which were outside of the PPS's direct control, the Service identified the need to review and revise these plans. Revised spending plans and savings proposals have been published.

Annual Business Plan 2012-13

2012-13 is the second year of the current PPS Corporate Plan. This Annual Business Plan describes how we intend to take forward our strategic objectives, building on the achievements of 2011-12. For each objective we set out the major milestones against which our progress can be measured.

The Plan also sets out the key delivery targets for 2012-13 against which the performance of the Service will be assessed. We will account for these targets in our Annual Report.

Strategic Priority 1:

Delivering an efficient and effective prosecution service

Objective 1.1:

To promote the highest standard of prosecutorial decision-making and case preparation and, where appropriate, prosecute in the most effective manner.

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
Quality Assurance During 2012-13 the PPS Quality Assurance Team will continue to carry out quality checks and thematic reviews across the full range of prosecutorial activity. The Team will set out its work programme at the beginning of the financial year. In developing this programme the Team will have regard to the inspections carried out by Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland and will also review compliance with recommendations made by inspectors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree 2012-13 Quality Assurance Thematic Review Programme. 	31 May 2012

Objective 1.1 (continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>The formal quality assurance carried out by the Quality Assurance Team will be complemented by regular 'dip sampling' of cases by senior legal staff.</p> <p>Policy Development A number of new policy areas will be developed, including policies on handling cases involving people trafficking and dealing with youth offenders. These policy statements will set out clearly the standards and levels of service which all stakeholders can expect and will be subject to a period of public consultation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct dip sampling of prosecutorial decisions. • Policy on Dealing with Cases involving People Trafficking published for consultation. • Policy on Dealing with Cases involving Youth Offenders published for consultation. 	<p>Monthly</p> <p>30 June 2012</p> <p>31 March 2013</p>

Objective 1.2:

To work with partners to improve our service delivery and reduce avoidable delay.

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>Working with CJSNI Partners: Combating Avoidable Delay The PPS is working as part of an overall programme agreed by the Criminal Justice Board to deliver speedier justice. The work is wide-ranging and covers a number of different strands. Key issues under consideration include administrative listing arrangements at court, statutory incentivisation of early guilty pleas and the direct transfer of defendants to the Crown Court.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet 'Speedier Justice' Programme Objectives for 2012-13. 	<p>In line with agreed timetable</p>

Objective 1.2 (continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>PPS senior management has also agreed a joint action plan to take forward the recommendations made by Criminal Justice Inspection following their thematic review of avoidable delay (June 2010). PPS will continue to work with PSNI, NICTS and other partners to ensure that the various initiatives outlined in the plan are delivered successfully.</p> <p>Early Intervention Initiative A 'Decision Information Request' (DIR) will be issued by PPS where the evidence and information contained in a police file is incomplete and a further written report or action is required. The time taken to process DIRs has been identified as a key issue in delay, particularly in the more complex indictable cases, dealt with in the Crown Court.</p> <p>During 2012-13 the PPS will work with police on a new initiative which is aimed at reducing the volume of DIRs in indictable cases. The initiative, to be introduced on a pilot basis, will involve PPS prosecutors engaging with police early in the case preparation stage. This will ensure that investigators have a clear understanding of the Service's evidential requirements in the event of a prosecution and should lead to a reduction in the number of incomplete files.</p> <p>Protocols with Partner Agencies A protocol governing the relationship between PPS and police has been in place since December 2003. A review of the document is now underway which will take account of recent changes in law and procedure. It is anticipated that the updated protocol will be in place by the end of the financial year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Avoidable Delay Action Plan Objectives for 2012-13. • Implement Indictable Early Intervention Pilot. • Updated PPS / Police Protocol in place. 	<p>In line with agreed timetable</p> <p>31 January 2013</p> <p>31 March 2013</p>

Objective 1.2 (continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>In addition to taking prosecutorial decisions in police cases, the PPS also considers cases investigated by a range of statutory authorities. A series of service level agreements (SLAs) has been agreed, setting out the working arrangements, roles and responsibilities of the PPS and the individual departments and agencies. This programme will be progressed during 2012-13 and the SLAs, including any charging arrangements, will be reviewed on an annual basis.</p> <p>Alternatives to Prosecution The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2011 introduced a provision for prosecutors to give a 'conditional caution'; that is a caution with conditions attached with which the offender must comply. Conditions will have the objective of facilitating the rehabilitation of the offender and/or ensuring the offender makes reparation for the offence. The Service will ensure that the necessary internal arrangements are in place for the introduction of conditional cautions, including any training requirements for staff.</p> <p>The PPS will also work with the PSNI and the Youth Justice Agency to take forward arrangements for an immediate youth conferencing scheme whereby PPS youth conference decisions can be made by telephone.</p> <p>Associate Prosecutors The Service will examine the scope for introducing a new Associate Prosecutor role. The intention would be for Associate Prosecutors to focus mainly on decision-making in the more straightforward summary cases, thereby releasing prosecutor capacity, for example, to improve prosecutor coverage in the lower courts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service level agreements in place with relevant departments and agencies. • Arrangements for conditional cautioning in place. • Arrangements for immediate youth conferencing scheme in place. • Complete Associate Prosecutor scoping study. 	<p>31 March 2013</p> <p>In line with legislative timetable</p> <p>To agreed timetable</p> <p>31 March 2013</p>

Objective 1.3:

To develop and embed our advocacy strategy.

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>Higher Court Advocates The vast majority of prosecutions in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts are conducted by public prosecutors. However, external counsel would normally represent the PPS at the Crown Court, High Court and the Court of Appeal.</p> <p>During 2012-13 it is intended to extend the use of PPS prosecutors as advocates in Crown Court cases. This follows on from a successful pilot study which commenced in spring 2011 to trial a new 'Higher Court Advocate' (HCA) role. Initially four HCAs will be appointed, however it is likely that further appointments will be made in 2013.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Higher Court Advocacy Scheme. 	31 October 2012
<p>Panel Counsel Scheme In 2009 the Service established a Panel Scheme for the instruction of external counsel. During 2012-13 a new panel will be established. All appointments will be made via open competition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel of External Counsel reconstituted (via open competition). 	30 November 2012
<p>Assessment of Advocacy Advocacy Standards, modelled on those in place in England and Wales, have been agreed by the PPS Management Board. These standards form the basis for the formal assessment of external counsel and public prosecutor performance.</p> <p>The PPS Advocacy Working Group is considering enhanced assessment options and the new arrangements will be implemented during 2012-13.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced arrangements in place for assessment of panel counsel and public prosecutor advocacy. 	31 March 2013
<p>CJINI Review of PPS Advocacy CJINI, in conjunction with HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, is to review the standard of PPS advocacy. The PPS will respond to this review and develop an action plan to address any recommendations made by the inspection team.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan developed in response to CJINI Review of PPS Advocacy. 	To agreed timetable

Strategic Priority 2:

Building the confidence and trust of the community we serve

Objective 2.1:

To provide an enhanced service to victims and witnesses.

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>Witness Care Unit Proposals to implement Witness Care Units (WCUs), similar to those in England and Wales, are being considered by PPS and police. The purpose of the WCU model is to manage the care of victims and witnesses from the date the defendant is charged (or reported to PPS) onwards, encompassing both the Crown and Magistrates's Courts. While planning is still at an early stage, it is anticipated that the service to victims and witnesses will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single point of contact for victims and witnesses, communicating by their preferred means where possible; • A full needs assessment for all victims and witnesses in cases where defendants have pleaded not guilty, for example, to identify specific support requirements; • Dedicated witness care officers to guide and support individuals through the criminal justice process and to co-ordinate support and services; • Continuous review of victim and witness needs throughout the case; and • Greater communication and contact with witnesses about cases throughout the prosecution process. <p>WCUs will include both PPS and police staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet PPS WCU objectives for 2012-13. 	31 March 2013
<p>CJSNI Victims and Witnesses Strategy The PPS is a member of the CJSNI's Victim and Witness Taskforce (VWTF). PPS representatives will work with the Department of Justice and other partners to develop a new strategy to succeed the current five year 'Bridging the Gap' initiative, on services for victims and witnesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet PPS VWTF objectives for 2012-13. 	31 March 2013

Objective 2.1: (continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>PPS Victims and Witnesses Policy In recent months a new working group has reviewed key aspects of the services which PPS provide to victims and witnesses. An important work area has been the audit and review of existing correspondence issued to victims. Other issues being addressed include the review of information leaflets.</p> <p>The working group also commenced a review of the current PPS Victims and Witnesses Policy, published in 2007. In examining the policy statement, the working group will take on board the various recommendations made by CJINI in their report (December 2011) on the services provided to victims and witnesses across the CJSNI. The updated policy document will be published for consultation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish updated Victims and Witnesses Policy for consultation. 	31 March 2013
<p>Court Witness Expenses The PPS pays expenses incurred by witnesses arising out of their attendance at court on behalf of the prosecution. The expenses scheme operated by the PPS is compensatory in nature and rates of payment are equivalent to those paid by the Crown Prosecution Service for the conduct of cases in England and Wales. A review of these arrangements will be conducted during 2012-13.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised Court Witness Compensation Scheme in place. 	31 March 2013
<p>Intermediaries Service for Vulnerable Witnesses A new 'Intermediaries' service will be implemented during 2012-13. The aim of the service is to help PPS and other criminal justice agencies to work better with witnesses who have communication difficulties. A similar scheme is in place in England and Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Intermediaries service for vulnerable witnesses. 	31 March 2013

Objective 2.2:

To engage effectively with stakeholders and the wider community.

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>Communicating with Stakeholders and the Public</p> <p>The Service is to review its external communication strategy, published in 2011. The revised strategy will set out how the Service will engage with the public, the media and key stakeholders, and will include a detailed action plan.</p> <p>As part of our Community Outreach Strategy we will ensure that Regional Prosecutors and their senior staff are increasingly visible as they attend meetings and other events, including those organised by the voluntary sector and community groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement agreed actions arising from the revised 2012-2014 Communication Strategy and Action Plan. 	31 March 2013
<p>PPS Equality Scheme / Disability Discrimination Act Action Plan</p> <p>Under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) (as amended by Article 5 of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006), the PPS is required when carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation by disabled people in public life. Under section 49B of the DDA 1995, the PPS is also required to submit a disability action plan to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland showing how it proposes to fulfil these duties.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet DDA Action Plan objectives for 2012-13. 	31 March 2013
<p>A new PPS Equality Scheme, which sets out how the Service proposes to fulfil its obligations under s.75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, has been approved by the Equality Commission. The new document has been accompanied by a detailed action plan covering the period to the end of the 2013-14 financial year. The action plan was published for consultation via the PPS website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit annual DDA / s75 review to Equality Commission. 	31 August 2012
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Equality Scheme Action Plan objectives for 2012-13. 	31 March 2013

Strategic Priority 3:

Strengthening our capability to deliver

Objective 3.1:

To provide greater value for money through the improved management of resources and the development of our resource planning.

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>Account NI The purpose of Account NI is to provide an integrated Resource Accounting and Budgeting System for all NICS Departments.</p> <p>Much of the preparatory work needed for PPS to join the shared service has now been carried out and the new arrangements will be implemented across the Service in early summer 2012.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Account NI system across PPS. 	2 July 2012
<p>Payment of Counsel Fees The PPS has carried out a major project to develop a new fees payment scheme for independent counsel. The objective of the project was to establish a framework for the payment of all fees, including appropriate policies and procedures. The target date for implementation had been deferred to 2012-13. This was to allow PPS to assess the outcome of the consultation exercise carried out by the NI Courts and Tribunals Service with respect to proposed amendments to legal aid payments under the Legal Aid for Crown Court Proceedings (Costs) (Amendment) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2010, and a recognition that a broad equivalence between defence and prosecution fees was desirable.</p> <p>The new scheme broadly aligns PPS fees with the NICTS rates and will bring with it the benefits of clearly evidenced value for money and greater predictability for this demand-led area of spend.</p> <p>In the medium term it is intended that both defence and prosecution rates should align with those paid in England and Wales. Over the next 12 months there will be further discussions with NICTS and DoJ officials as to how this will be achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement revised arrangements for establishing and paying counsel fees. 	30 November 2012

Objective 3.1: (Continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
Sustainable Development The Service produced its first Sustainable Development Action Plan in July 2007. The Service will continue to deliver on its action plan commitments during 2012-13.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Produce Annual Progress Report against PPS Action Plan.	31 March 2013
ICT Strategy The effective use of ICT is central to increasing the efficiency of the PPS and the wider criminal justice system. The Service has produced a five year ICT Strategy. Initiatives during 2012-13 will include the use of electronic tablets at court (initially on a pilot basis), the scoping of electronic presentation of evidence / disclosure and the implementation of revised victim and witness documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meet 2012-13 ICT Strategy objectives.	31 March 2013

Objective 3.2:

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

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
Corporate Governance Framework The Director and Management Board are committed to ensuring that corporate governance arrangements are effective and developed in accordance with HM Treasury's Code of Good Practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree 2012-13 Internal Audit Programme.	31 May 2012
Key issues for the year ahead will be to review the membership and terms of reference of the Management Board's sub-committees and to take forward an independent review of the senior management team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct review of PPS senior management team.	30 September 2012
CJINI is to review the corporate governance arrangements within the PPS. The Service will respond to this review and develop an action plan to address any recommendations made by inspectors to improve the governance framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Action Plan developed in response to CJINI Review of Corporate Governance.	To agreed timetable

Objective 3.2: (Continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
Information Assurance and Business Resilience <p>The public must have confidence that PPS information systems will protect the information they handle, under the control of legitimate users. The Service is committed to developing its information assurance plans in line with Cabinet Office's Security Policy Framework.</p> <p>The Security Policy Framework emphasises the need for effective business continuity management (BCM). The PPS has established a programme to deliver BCM in a manner that enables the continued delivery of key services during an interruption and which will align the PPS with the British Standard (BS25999).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete all actions set out in the Information Assurance Maturity Plan. • Meet all mandatory requirements of the Security Policy Framework. 	<p>31 March 2013</p> <p>31 March 2013</p>

Strategic Priority 4:

Building the capability of our people

Objective 4.1:

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

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
Corporate Training <p>The delivery of timely training to staff is essential for the successful operation of the PPS. The development of our annual Corporate Training Plan will be built around the training requirements identified by line managers, Policy and Information Section, the Quality Assurance Team and as a result of initiatives within the NICS. The Corporate Training Plan will be aligned with the annual business planning cycle to ensure that the identification of training is in line with business objectives and value for money.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree 2012-13 Corporate Training Plan. 	<p>31 May 2012</p>

Objective 4.1: (Continued)

Planned Activities during 2012-13	Milestone(s)	Target Date for Completion
<p>Investors in People The PPS recognises the Investors in People (IiP) standard as a benchmark for the quality of its people management and training and development. During 2012-13 the Service will seek re-accreditation under the scheme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve re-accreditation under the Investors in People Standard. 	31 March 2013
<p>Staff Survey and Action Plan The PPS participate in the NICS Staff Attitude Survey. It provides all members of staff with an opportunity to put forward their views about the PPS, its work and their role within the organisation and the wider Civil Service. The findings of the survey are made available to all staff.</p> <p>The findings will also inform the ongoing development of the PPS Organisational Development Action Plan. Key issues include internal communication and leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet Organisational Development Action Plan objectives for 2012-13. 	31 March 2013
<p>Workforce Planning Due to the demand-led nature of the PPS workload, effective workforce planning is essential. We will ensure that all operational and corporate services areas are subject to ongoing review by the PPS Business Improvement Team, taking account of resource needs across the Service as a whole.</p> <p>Reviews conducted by the team during the year will include the Crown Court and Case Preparation functions, as well as a number of headquarters sections.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 2012-13 Business Improvement Review Programme. 	31 March 2013

Key Performance Indicators and Targets

The following are the key delivery targets for 2012-13 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	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Target
1	<p>Legal Quality Assurance¹ Percentage of decisions to prosecute, divert or not to prosecute within the range a prosecutor could reasonably take.</p> <p>Timeliness² Percentage of:</p> <p>(a) Indictable prosecution decisions issued within 100 days 180 days</p> <p>(b) Summary prosecution decisions issued within 15 days 75 days</p> <p>(c) Diversionary decisions issued within 15 days 60 days</p> <p>Crown Court Outcomes³ Number of (a) cases (b) defendants in the Crown Court subject a 'No Bill' (All counts).</p>	<p>99%</p> <p>50% 80%</p> <p>65% 90%</p> <p>65% 90%</p> <p>Not to exceed 2010 – 2011 averages (24 and 32 respectively)</p>

1, 2, 3: See notes, page 26.

Strategic Priority	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Target
2	<p>Witness Expenses Percentage of claims processed and authorised for payment within 4 working days.</p> <p>Public Confidence⁴ Percentage confidence in:</p> <p>(a) PPS provision of a fair and impartial prosecution service</p> <p>(b) PPS effectiveness in prosecuting people accused of committing a crime</p> <p>Community Outreach⁵ Number of regional outreach events.</p>	<p>95%</p> <p>70%</p> <p>68%</p> <p>At least 24</p>
3	<p>Budget 2010 Percentage saving on 2011-12 Baseline</p> <p>Better Payments Practice Code Percentage of invoices processed and authorised for payment within 4 working days</p> <p>Requests under Freedom of Information⁶ Percentage of requests answered within agreed time limits</p>	<p>1.5%</p> <p>95%</p> <p>100%</p>
4	<p>Attendance Management ⁷ Average days lost due to sickness and absenteeism (per whole time equivalent staff member).</p> <p>Long term absence – frequency rate.</p> <p>Staff Satisfaction Percentage of staff who feel that the PPS is a good organisation to work for.</p>	<p>Not to exceed 8.1 days</p> <p>8.1%</p> <p>58%</p>

4, 5, 6, 7: See notes, 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 2012-13 financial year include the following:

No.	Risk Description	Risk Owner(s)
1.	Avoidable Delay Current initiatives aimed at tackling avoidable delay in indictable cases do not produce the required outcomes leading to adverse comment.	Deputy Director
2.	Savings Delivery Plan Planned savings initiatives are not delivered with the result that the Service does not make the efficiency savings needed to live within its agreed budget.	Senior Assistant Director, Finance and Resources
3.	Security Policy Framework Lack of compliance with the Security Policy Framework, including business resilience and information assurance requirements, damages the Service's reputation.	Senior Assistant Director, Finance and Resources
4.	Change Management The pace and direction of change are not managed effectively, thereby damaging staff morale and standards of service delivery.	Director
5.	Provision of Services to Victims and Witnesses Weaknesses in the PPS approach to communication, the delivery of services and the arrangements established for inter-agency working arrangements result in loss of victim and witness confidence.	Senior Assistant Director, Regional Prosecutions (Victims' Champion)
6.	External Communication The work and role of the PPS are not communicated effectively to stakeholders and the public, resulting in unduly negative public reaction in high profile cases and the loss of public confidence.	Deputy Director

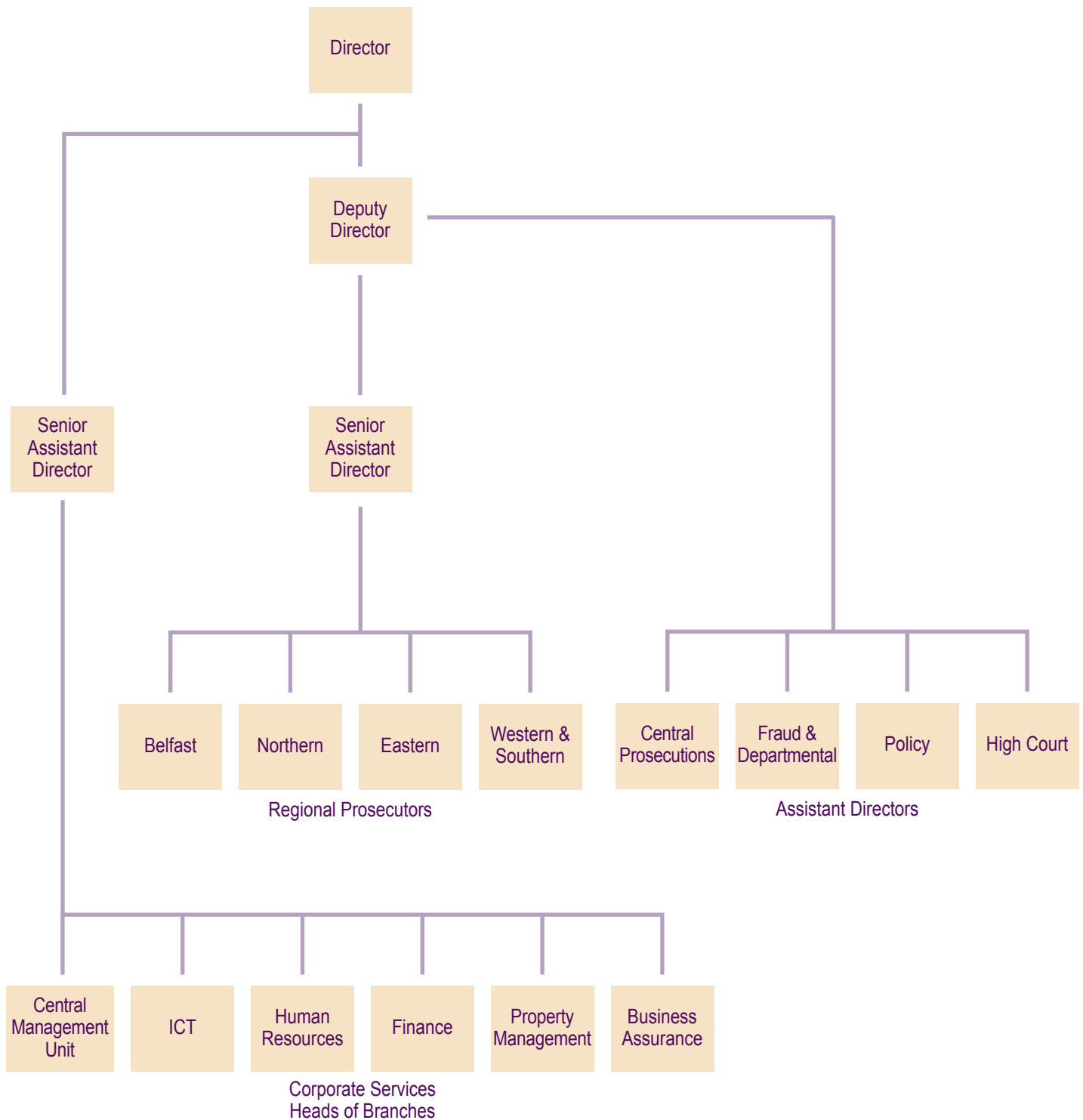
The identification and review of corporate risks is the responsibility of the Management Board. All corporate risks will be actively managed by the Management Board.

Notes

1. To be assessed via dip sampling of PPS cases. At least 720 cases will be reviewed during 2012-13 based on a random sample.
2. 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.
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.
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'.
5. Based on a minimum of six events per region, to include at least three involving local communities and at least three involving statutory bodies, agencies and other organisations.
6. Normally 20 working days, except where clarification is required and an extension is applicable.
7. 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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