



Attorney General's Office

## **Attorney General's Office Business Plan 2011-12**

### **AGO Vision**

The Attorney General's Office (AGO) aims to provide high quality legal and strategic advice and support to the Attorney General and the Solicitor General (the Law Officers) in their functions. We are committed to the values that reflect the distinct work and culture of the office.

The role of the Attorney General includes:

- Chief Legal Adviser to the Crown;
- A Minister of the Crown with responsibility for superintending the prosecuting departments and;
- a number of independent public interest functions.

The Attorney General also holds the separate office of Advocate General to Northern Ireland

### **Our priorities**

To support the Attorney General as:

#### **Chief Legal Adviser**

- provide high quality and timely legal advice on a range of issues;
- facilitate the Attorney General's strategic leadership of the Government Legal Service (GLS);
- support the Attorney General's oversight of Government litigation and representation;
- provide input into the legislative process;
- provide legal input into inquiries and specific issues;
- support the Attorney General's attendance at cabinet committees.

## **Superintendence and Engagement with Criminal Justice System**

- support the Law Officers' superintendence of the prosecuting Departments;
- facilitate the Law Officers' oversight of the Service Prosecuting Authority and of the non superintended prosecutors;
- support and set priorities with Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPPI) for scrutiny of the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS);
- engage with Criminal Justice System partners to shape and contribute to work on reforms, policy development and procedure;
- maintain relationships with the Bar, Law Society and Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC).

## **Public Interest Functions**

- advise on a range of public interest functions including:
  - referring potentially unduly lenient sentences to the Court of Appeal;
  - prosecutions where the Attorney General's consent is required;
  - questions of contempt of court;
  - issuing nolle prosequi, to stop a prosecution on indictment;
  - taking action to restrain vexatious litigants;
  - intervening in the public interest in certain charity and family law cases;
  - considering requests for consent to make an application to the High Court for new coronal inquests;
  - exercising the discretion to appoint "advocates to the court", "special advocates" and "special counsel";
  - referring points of law to the Court of Appeal after an acquittal in criminal cases.

## **Northern Ireland**

- engage with Northern Ireland as Advocate General for Northern Ireland;

## **Accountability and AGO Support**

- provide ministerial support;
- support parliamentary accountability;
- provide information and responses to the public and the media;
- provide a business support function to the office .

## **People and Budgets**

Information about the staff and expenditure of the Attorney General's Office can be found by following the link below:

<http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.uk/GuidetoInformation/Pages/default.aspx>