

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

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to arrive not later than two weeks after publication of this report.

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Wells, Jim (South Down)
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 5 July 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Management of the Proposed Peace Building and Reconciliation Centre

Mr Nesbitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they have any plans to put the management of the proposed Peace Building and Reconciliation Centre at the Maze/Long Kesh site out to tender.

(AQW 23914/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): Decisions on the management of the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre remain under consideration.

Victims and Survivors Service: Funding Applications

Mr Hussey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to list the funding applications (i) received; (ii) approved; and (iii) declined by the Victims and Survivors Service which came from (a) security force based groups; and (b) republican groups, since the inception of the Service.

(AQW 24271/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) does not hold information regarding groups on the basis of the question asked.

Information on all funded organisations will be published on the VSS website when the assessment process is complete and Final Letters of Offer/notice of unsuccessful applications have been issued.

Northern Ireland Memorial Fund: Resource and Budgetary Needs

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what are the resource and budgetary needs of the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund in 2013/14.

(AQW 24291/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The current resource budget allocation to the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund (NIMF) for 2013/14 is £574,000.

Historical Abuse Inquiry: Victims

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether all the victims who come forward in respect of the Historical Abuse Inquiry will be afforded the opportunity to give evidence to the inquiry in its formal sittings.

(AQW 24316/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry is independent from our Department, therefore this is a matter for the Chair of the Inquiry.

Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation: Unspent Funding

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 23405/11-15, how the unspent funding awarded to the Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation in 2010/11 and 2011/12 was allocated.

(AQW 24368/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: All unspent funding is managed as part of the monitoring round process and it is therefore not possible to identify specifically how the Northern Ireland Centre for Trauma and Transformation underspend was allocated.

Former Ballykelly Army Base

Mr Campbell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any further steps have been taken to actively promote the former Ballykelly Army Base in addition to the section currently earmarked for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development headquarters.

(AQW 24378/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We are awaiting the outcome of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) business case on the requirements for its new headquarters, which will affect the amount and location of land available for other uses. However, consideration of alternative uses for the site are continuing in parallel to the DARD business case process and in the interim we are continuing to receive expressions of interest and meet with interested parties. The position will be reviewed when agreement is reached on the portion of the site DARD require.

Meeting with the Prime Minister of Libya

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what was the purpose and outcome of their meeting on 18 June 2013 with the Prime Minister of Libya.

(AQW 24481/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Our meeting was to establish relationships with the Libyan Government. Discussions focused on sharing experiences of building a post conflict society during which we discussed a number of opportunities for developing partnership in post conflict reconstruction work.

Additional Fiscal Powers

Dr McDonnell asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the additional fiscal powers which the economic pact, announced on 14 June 2013, will bring.

(AQO 4423/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The economic package, 'Building a Prosperous and United Community', was announced on 14 June 2013 and ratified by the Executive on 27 June. The package recognises that the devolution of some further tax powers might have the potential to enable the Executive to respond in a more tailored way to the social and economic challenges the local economy faces. The package recommends that the British Government and Executive examine the potential for devolving specific additional fiscal powers. It is too early to say how the commitment in the Economic Pact to examine the potential for devolving additional fiscal powers will be taken forward. However, it is envisaged at this stage that this work will involve a consideration of the broad range of taxes and duties that might be devolved. This will include consideration of the potential for a corresponding and ongoing increase in the Executive's annual capital borrowing limit, proportionate to any additional revenue raising powers and considering wider issues of affordability. Following this examination, recommendations for further devolution will be put to the Executive and Government Ministers by autumn 2014.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Helicopter Service Providers

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the helicopter service providers that (a) had available equipment; and (b) offered to assist farmers by providing food drops for stranded animals during the severe weather around Easter; (ii) how many helicopters were offered by each provider; and (iii) how she determined which helicopters to engage.[R]

(AQW 22463/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The severity of the weather conditions at the end of March was unprecedented for the current generation of farmers. It quickly became apparent that we were faced with an immediate and major animal welfare crisis and we had to act without delay. The priority was to identify and deploy resources that could provide an effective solution to distribute fodder to stranded and starving animals in the affected areas as quickly as possible.

Contact with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) confirmed that they had both the response capability and integrated logistics available to commence a fodder relief operation immediately. In addition The Irish Air Corps (IAC) also offered assistance to carry out reconnaissance and fodder drops. Other helicopter providers identified did not have the breadth of capability and resource capacity to provide the level of integrated logistical response needed within the required timescale. In total five helicopters, three from the MOD and two from the IAC were offered and employed in reconnaissance and fodder drop operations.

While the helicopters were very effective in providing immediate relief to inaccessible areas, I also deployed my department's soft track vehicles that had the capability of accessing additional areas where further emergency relief was needed.

Farm Maps

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) who was awarded the contract to provide farm maps for her Department; (ii) when the contract was approved by her Department; (iii) any sub-contractors who were commissioned; (iv) what assessment was made to determine the need for sub-contractors.[R]

(AQW 22464/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In response to your question I can advise that: -

(i) & (ii) DARD established a partnership with Land & Property Services (LPS), the national mapping authority and part of the Department of Finance & Personnel, to assist DARD with the creation and updating of the mapping and aerial photography data in the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS). Information held within LPIS, together with other DARD information and aerial photography, is combined and processed by DARD which then produces the individual maps.

The relationship between DARD and LPS was the subject of a Memorandum of Understanding initially, and latterly, a Service Level Agreement.

(iii) One of the roles for LPS in the project was to align DARD field boundaries to the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland mapping and also to improve the mapping positionally to make it compatible with satellite-based measurement devices. The positional improvement part of the work was carried out by two LPS sub-contractors. This contract was awarded in April 2011.

(iv) Sub-contractors were used to carry out the Positional Improvement work due to the timescales involved, the lack of sufficient numbers of trained technical staff within the NICS and the experience of other national mapping organisations who had carried out similar projects.

Tree and Hedge Cutting Contracts

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many tree and hedge cutting contracts her Department, and its arm's-length bodies, awarded between 1 March and 31 August, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24389/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The following table details the number of tree and hedge cutting contracts awarded between 2010 and 2012.

1 March – 31 August 2010	1 March – 31 August 2011	1 March – 31 August 2012
3	4	6

Fishing Fleet Vessels

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline what current funding opportunities exist for the local fishing fleet to modernise its vessels.

(AQW 24452/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: European Fisheries Fund (EFF) funding is available to the local fishing fleet for vessel modernisation under the “Investments onboard fishing vessels and selectivity” measure. The EFF may contribute to the financing of equipment and the modernisation of fishing vessels of five years of age or more. Such investments may concern improvements to safety onboard, working conditions, hygiene, product quality, energy efficiency and selectivity of fishing gear, providing the investments do not increase the ability of the vessels to catch fish.

£2.4m of EFF and National funding has been allocated to this measure which will remain open for applications until the end of 2013. To date over £755k of public funding has been committed to over 80 vessel modernisation projects.

European Fisheries Fund

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the funding opportunities, for the local fishing industry, available through the European Fisheries Fund.

(AQW 24453/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The European Fisheries Fund (EFF) is intended to promote a fisheries sector that is sustainable and profitable and which supports strong local communities, managed effectively as an integral part of coherent policies for the marine environment.

In the north of Ireland, EFF is targeted at the fishing industry through several measures under three priority areas:

Axis 1 - Adaptation of the community fishing fleet. EFF support under this axis is targeted at the modernisation of fishing vessels and to providing support to the small scale coastal fishing sector. To date, over £785k of public funding has been committed to projects which aim to, for example, improve the safety and working conditions of crews and improve gear selectivity and fuel efficiency. Two measures under this axis “Investments on Board fishing vessels and selectivity” and “Small-scale coastal fishing” are currently open for applications.

Axis 2 – Aquaculture and processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products. EFF support under this axis is targeted at improving the profitability and competitiveness of the aquaculture and processing sectors. To date, over £2m of EFF and national funding has been committed to projects aimed at, for example, improving operating efficiency, supporting diversification and adapting facilities to meet changing market demands. Two measures under this axis “Productive investments in aquaculture” and “investments in processing and marketing” are currently open for applications.

Axis 3 – Measures of common interest. EFF support under this axis is targeted at supporting operations with a broader scope than measures normally undertaken by private interests, and which help to meet the objectives of the common fisheries policy. To date, over £7.5m has been committed to collective projects aimed at, for example, improving port infrastructure, promoting safety, upgrading professional skills and promoting partnerships between scientists and operators in the fishing sector. Two measures under this axis “Collective actions” and “Fishing ports, landing sites and shelters” are currently open for applications.

Axis 4 “Sustainable development of fisheries areas”, while aimed at supporting fishing communities, will also provide support for the fishing industry for projects which help to meet the objectives identified in the Local Development Strategy. Axis 4, consistent with the Commission ethos of a “bottom up” approach, will be implemented by the South East Fisheries Local Action Group (SEFLAG) and will open later in 2013.

Local Fishing Industry: Protect and Enhance

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what measures her Department has taken in order to protect and enhance the local fishing industry, in the last five years.
(AQW 24454/11-15)

Mrs O’Neill: Over the last five years my Department has helped to protect and enhance the local fishing industry in a number of ways.

Through the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute my Department has carried out research into fish stocks around our coast to provide scientific evidence to try to maintain and increase the quotas available to our fleet. Significant investment in camera surveys of Nephrops grounds and acoustic surveys of Irish Sea herring stocks has allowed us to prove that these stocks are being fished sustainably. The additional work on herring will also enable the industry to obtain Marine Stewardship Council accreditation and thereby secure future markets.

Since the implementation of the Cod Recovery Plan from 2008 our prawn fleet’s base level of fishing days has been cut by two thirds. However by working closely with the industry on cod conservation measures, such as highly selective gear, my Department has been able to justify to the Commission the allocation of sufficient additional Days at Sea to allow the fleet to take its fishing opportunities. Whilst the adjustments have been difficult at times the alternative is to fish on only a third of the days presently fished or adopt extreme gear that the fleet finds unworkable.

In relation to the inshore sector, my Department has been working with stakeholders to develop a draft Sustainable Development Strategy for Inshore Fisheries which is currently out to consultation. The aim of the strategy is, in partnership with the industry and other stakeholders, to help manage and develop the inshore sector in a sustainable way and place it in a position to be able to take up future opportunities as they arise.

My Department has also provided direct financial assistance to enhance the fishing industry over the last five years and this is presented in the table at Annex A (placed in library). Programmes of investment such as the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) are developed in co-operation with local stakeholders to identify investment priorities. This work has already commenced for the successor to the EFF, the European and Maritime Fisheries Fund, involving an initial local stakeholder workshop.

Opportunities for the Local Fishing Industry

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline (i) the opportunities that exist for the local fishing industry to grow over the next ten years; and (ii) what her Department is doing to enable the industry to successfully capitalise on such opportunities.
(AQW 24455/11-15)

Mrs O’Neill: Any growth in the local fishing industry will be largely dependent on the fishing opportunities available to it. Fishing opportunities for the “offshore” fleet, are dependent on the health of fish stocks, which determine the quotas and days at sea that are set by Europe. Our focus over the

next ten years will be to ensure that these fish stocks are fished at levels that will result in Maximum Sustainable Yield. For stocks such as Nephrops and herring this will mean maintaining stocks in their current sustainable state and ensuring that fishing effort is controlled. For stocks such as cod and other whitefish the focus will continue to be on stock recovery and rebuilding. If these stocks recover there might be increased opportunities for the whitefish fleet.

Therefore for the “offshore” fleet, opportunities to expand are limited and the main opportunities for growth in future will come from adding value to existing catches. This might be achieved through developing new innovative products or markets, or through achieving recognised accreditation for certain fisheries such as Irish Sea herring.

In relation to the “inshore” fleet that targets mainly non-quota species my Department is currently consulting on a draft Sustainable Development Strategy, which is seeking stakeholders’ views on the future management of the sector. The strategy considers issues such as governance, sustainability, technology, enforcement, data collection, and the alternative opportunities available to the sector. When this consultation ends on 2 August 2013, responses received will be considered and, in partnership with the industry, we plan to develop an inshore management system that will not only help sustain the inshore sector, but also place it in a position to be able to grasp any future opportunities that may be identified.

My Department will continue to carry out fisheries research and stock surveys to help us to secure increases in fish quotas where these are justified, and under the new Common Fisheries Policy we will be engaging with other Member States to develop regional and fish stock management plans, and fish stock management measures appropriate for the seas around our coast.

The main mechanism for financially assisting the fishing fleet as a whole over the next seven years will be the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). This is due to run from 2014 to 2020 but the final shape of the EMFF and the funding that will be available depends on the final agreement that will be reached between the EU Council of Ministers and the European Parliament. This is not now expected until late 2013 at the earliest. Initial discussions have already been held with local stakeholders to try to identify funding priorities under the EMFF.

The Commission proposal for the new EMFF is focused more on environmental sustainability and it is likely that future funding will include support for adapting to the obligation to land all fish, adoption of conservation measures, reduction in impact on the marine environment, and improving quality and value of fish. My Department will be working with the local industry to identify the best way to use the range of measures in the EMFF to develop the fleet in a sustainable way.

Ballykelly

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 23383/11-15, for her definition of rural; and based on this definition, how rural is Ballykelly.

(AQW 24502/11-15)

Mrs O’Neill: The NISRA Report of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group Statistical Classification and Delineation of Settlements, concludes that defining urban/rural should be done in the context of its use i.e. the policy objectives being considered should inform what is defined as urban or rural.

As you will be aware, the process that led to me deciding on Ballykelly started with the production of a long list of potential locations. This long-list of potential locations was taken from the Regional Development Strategy (RDS). The RDS defines rural as settlements with a population of 4,500 or less. With approximately 1753 inhabitants, (source: NISRA 2011 Census) Ballykelly falls well within the definition of rural.

Forestry Grant Schemes

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans her Department has to ensure that there is no delay in the provision of Forestry Grant Schemes in the transition from the current to the new Rural Development Programme.

(AQW 24556/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Transitional regulations are being developed by the Commission to support annual premia payments in the transitional period between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2015. However, the transitional regulation does not make provision for new agreements to be undertaken for new planting after 31 December 2013.

My Department expects to submit a new programme to the Commission in early 2014 and after this date we can proceed at risk and make new agreements for planting. This may mean that agreements for planting cannot be made between January and when the Rural Development Programme is submitted.

My officials will continue to monitor the development of the transitional regulations to ensure the best outcome for our forestry sector.

Forestry Grant Schemes

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her plans for the future of Forestry Grant Schemes.

(AQW 24557/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Forestry Grant Scheme proposals for inclusion in the next Rural Development Programme have been developed in consultation with stakeholders. A full public consultation on the draft Rural Development Programme is due to be launched on 1 July 2013 and this includes questions on forestry support. My Department will continue to work on the draft Programme taking account of stakeholder views and further information and guidance from EU Commission for preparation of a redraft in November/December 2013.

Proposals for the Forestry Grant Schemes include a Woodland Expansion Scheme which will be integrated, where possible, with the Agri-Environment Scheme. A Forestry Plantation Scheme is proposed which aims to encourage the creation of larger scale woodlands based on landscape scale considerations. Proposals for owners of existing woodland include a Forestry Competitiveness Scheme to support small scale infrastructure improvements, and investments in new forest technologies, and for processing and marketing of forest products. Support for sustainable forest management to enhance biodiversity are also proposed.

Woodland Creation Targets

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the delivery of the woodland creation target.

(AQW 24558/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Forest Service business plan target in 2012/13 was to create 250 ha of new woodland under the Woodland Grant Scheme and at the year end this target was met and 252 hectares was planted. However I acknowledge that this rate of planting is insufficient to meet our aim to increase woodland cover to 12 % of land area by the middle of this century.

To help achieve our long term aim, the 2013/14 Forest Service business plan identifies the operation of a pilot Forestry Challenge Scheme for creation of at least 100 hectares of new woodland in addition to a target of 250 ha. The Forestry Challenge Scheme will be aimed at encouraging farmers and landowners to establish new woodland on a landscape scale and applications will be assessed by judging which proposals contribute most to delivering the aims of the Forestry Challenge Scheme on a best value basis.

Rural Villages in Ards Borough Council

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the villages in Ards Borough Council area that are classified as rural villages.

(AQW 24561/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The villages in Ards Borough Council Area that are classified as rural for Rural Development funding purposes are

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| ■ Ballygowan | ■ Balloo |
| ■ Portaferry | ■ Ardmillan |
| ■ Millisle | ■ Ballybarnes |
| ■ Portavogie | ■ Ballyboley |
| ■ Ballywalter | ■ Ballydrain |
| ■ Kircubbin | ■ Ballyeasborough |
| ■ Greyabbey | ■ Ballyfrenis |
| ■ Killinchy | ■ Ballygalget |
| ■ Carrowdore | ■ Ballystockart |
| ■ Lisbane H | ■ Cotton |
| ■ Ballycranbeg | ■ Glastry |
| ■ Cloughey | ■ Kirkistown |
| ■ Ballyhalbert | ■ Kilmoor |
| ■ Whiterock | ■ Rubane |

Castlewellan Forest Park: Trees

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why trees in Castlewellan Forest Park, that are infected by *Phytophthora ramorum*, are being felled during nesting season.

(AQW 24610/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The felling of trees at Castlewellan Forest Park has commenced immediately as this action is the most effective way of reducing the risk of the disease spreading to other forest species.

Castlewellan Forest Park: Nesting Birds

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether any checks were carried out for nesting birds before felling commenced of 25,000 trees in Castlewellan Forest Park.

(AQW 24611/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Forest Service manage a species recording system which catalogues sightings of bird species as well as their breeding sites, particularly important for birds which are protected or under threat. Information is recorded and verified on the system using competent and reliable sources such as RSPB, Raptor Study Group and Forest Service staff. This information was checked prior to commencing disease control felling operations.

Additionally, Forest Service has deployed a wildlife warden with specialist knowledge and skills to check all areas to be felled for the presence of rare and protected species and information provided has been used to schedule felling operations to minimise the risk of disturbance.

Forest Service in conjunction with RSPB have been monitoring the activity and breeding success of the Red Kite in the Castlewellan Area. RSPB and Forest Service have jointly assessed the fell areas and the progression of felling has been carefully considered to avoid disruption to the Red Kite species in particular.

Central Investigation Service

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether the Central Investigation Service has completed any work outside in either the Republic of Ireland or Scotland, as permitted under the Service Level Agreement it holds with the Special EU Programmes Body.

(AQW 24626/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Central Investigation Service has not completed any work in either the south of Ireland or Scotland for the Special European Union Programmes Body.

Rivers Agency Offices

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 23383/11-15, to outline his proposals for Rivers Agency offices in (i) Greater Belfast Area; (ii) Lisburn; (iii) Craigavon; (iv) Omagh; (v) Coleraine; and (vi) Fermanagh.

(AQW 24690/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I recently announced at the Balmoral Show that Rivers Agency Headquarters at Hydebank will relocate to the Loughry Campus at Cookstown. This does not impact any other existing Rivers Agency offices.

Answers to Written Questions

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether, in answers to written questions, she gives an answer that would be consistent if the same question was asked under a Freedom of Information request.

(AQW 24796/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Under the Freedom of Information Act the Department is only required to provide information already held in recorded form. It does not have to create new information. However, in responding to Assembly Questions, the Department may create new information.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

GAA Facilities' Rates

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she has any plans to raise the issue of GAA facilities' rates with the Executive.

(AQW 20700/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): Following the call by the Assembly for the Minister for Finance and Personnel to examine the rates relief afforded to sports clubs, I was asked by the Minister for Finance and Personnel to engage with the sports sector with a view to establishing if any case exists for an extension of the current discretionary rates relief of 80% for some sports clubs to 100%.

My Department is currently considering a paper recently received from the NI Sports Forum, the recognised representative body for all voluntary sports organisations in the north, including the GAA. My officials are currently engaging with the Department of Finance and Personnel on this paper.

I understand that the GAA liaised with the Sports Forum to ensure that its view was included in the paper currently under consideration. My Department has also engaged directly with the GAA on the issue of rates relief.

If I consider there is a case for an extension of discretionary relief, I will indicate this to DFP. In view of potential considerations the Minister for Finance and Personnel will give to the wider implications of rates relief for sports clubs, I will, in the first instance, be dealing with him.

Sports Institute Northern Ireland: Lottery and Exchequer Funding

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how much (a) Lottery; and (b) Exchequer funding has been granted to the Sports Institute Northern Ireland over the last three years; (ii) what conflict of interest processes are in place for SportNI granting lottery funds to the Sports Institute; (iii) what processes are in place for SportNI to determine whether capital funding should come from Lottery or Exchequer funds; and (iv) how SportNI ensures that lottery funding for projects is distinct and additional to Government funds.

(AQW 21665/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) Over the last three year period 2010 – 2013 a total of £6.741m has been granted to the Sports Institute for Northern Ireland (SINI). This grant has been exclusively funded by Lottery over this period.
- (ii) Conflicts or potential conflicts of interest in respect to distribution of Lottery funds are ultimately managed and controlled under the National Lottery Act 1993. Under Section 27(2) of the National Lottery Act the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport can make an Order preventing a Lottery Distributor, such as SportNI, from making an award to a body which it owns or controls, or over which it has significant influence. However, the Secretary of State has discretion, under the Act, to decide not to make an Order if it is considered that the circumstances so warrant. Prior to taking any decision to grant aid SINI through Lottery funds, SportNI, through DCAL, obtained a waiver in 2009 from the Secretary of State to enable it to Lottery fund the Institute for a 5 year period up to and including 2014. As part of its application for a waiver, SportNI undertook to ensure objectivity and independence in considering the award of a Lottery grant by appointing independent consultants to appraise the SINI Lottery bid on its behalf. SportNI also provided assurance that any bid would also go to the SportNI Board for consideration and via DCAL for independent quality review. Having considered the various issues and factors set out in SportNI's application for a waiver in this case - including representations in relation to the independence and rigour with which awards would be managed - the Secretary of State decided not use his Section 27 powers to prohibit the payment of Lottery monies to SINI.
- (iii) In line with the additionality principle of Lottery Funding, SportNI considers the availability of all alternative forms of funding (primarily exchequer) within the business cases for all new capital programmes. SportNI also ensures within the business cases that funding proposals for capital programmes comply with the principles and directions of the National Lottery etc. Act 1993.
- (iv) As referred to above, SportNI ensures that all programmes and projects comply with Lottery Directions at business case stage prior to budgets being approved and business plan objectives being set. Following the business case decision, SportNI ensures that the distinction between Lottery and Exchequer funding is maintained as follows:
 - a funding of programmes/projects set out within annual business plans are approved by the SportNI Board and DCAL;
 - b Letters of Offer on projects explicitly state funding source (either Lottery or Exchequer); and
 - c Separate reporting of the annual Lottery Accounts.

World Police and Fire Games 2013: Full Capacity of Competitors and Spectators

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline how she will achieve full capacity of competitors and spectators at the World Police and Fire Games 2013.

(AQW 23435/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The World Police and Fire Games Company continues to implement a targeted marketing and communications strategy with robust actions to maximise registrations and visitor and spectator numbers and has recruited additional marketing staff to support this focused approach.

This strategy contains a wide range of actions specifically designed to encourage registrations; both from local competitors and from across the world.

Athletes can continue to register until the start of the Games on 1 August and the Company will be making every effort to secure as many competitors and spectators as possible for what will be the friendliest Games ever.

World Police and Fire Games 2013: Full Capacity of Competitors and Spectators

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the financial implications of not achieving full capacity of competitors and spectators at the World Police and Fire Games 2013. **(AQW 23436/11-15)**

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Business Case estimates that the total visitor spend of the Games will be between £16.3 and £21.4m. If the target athlete and visitor numbers are not realised the total spend figure is likely to be at the lower end of this estimate.

However there will be significant wider benefits and legacy aspects to the Games - for example; in improved community understanding of the role of the Services, the development of a pool of 3,500 volunteers and the international promotion of the North of Ireland as a location which has the capacity and expertise to host major sporting events.

Zebra Mussels Funding

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how much funding was set aside by the Department to deal with zebra mussels; (ii) how much of this money went unspent; and (iii) how this money was reallocated. **(AQW 23503/11-15)**

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department does not have any dedicated fund to deal with zebra mussels.

In the past year my Department has worked in partnership with NIEA and a range of other organisations to promote the Check, Clean, Dry bio-security campaign, which aims to raise awareness to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, including zebra mussels.

Dignity at Work Cases

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many Dignity at Work cases have been lodged in her Department in each of the last five years, broken down by (i) core department; and (ii) non-departmental public body; and how many of these cases have been successfully resolved. **(AQW 23558/11-15)**

Ms Ní Chuilín: The information requested is detailed in the table below.

DCAL Core	Cases Lodged	Cases Resolved	Cases Still Outstanding
1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009	0	0	N/A
1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010	1	1	0
1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011	1	1	0
1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012	2	2	0
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	1	0	1
1 April 2013 – 28 May 2013	0	0	1

DCAL's NDPB's /ALB's	Cases Lodged	Cases Resolved	Cases Still Outstanding
1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009	0	0	N/A
1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010	0	0	N/A
1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011	1	0	1
1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012	3	3	0
1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	1	1	0
1 April 2013 – 28 May 2013	0	0	N/A

Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the current membership of the Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum and when the individuals were appointed.

(AQW 23598/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The list below details the current membership of the Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum and when each individual was appointed. Robert Murtland– appointed December 2009

Michael Crilly	appointed December 2009
Allan Kilgore	appointed December 2009
Jack Tisdall	appointed December 2009
Gary W Houston	appointed December 2009
Robert J Haughey	appointed December 2009
Patrick Close	appointed December 2009
Francis G Conlon	appointed December 2009
Aidan Hannon	appointed October 2012
Seymour Sweeney	appointed October 2012
Hugh Edward J Montgomery	appointed December 2009
Maurice Parkinson	appointed May 2013
David Laughlin	appointed December 2009
John McWilliams	appointed July 2010
Paul Johnston	appointed January 2011
Dermot Curran	appointed December 2009
Mark P Horton	appointed December 2009

There are currently two vacant positions.

Netball Funding

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the funding that is available to help netball players representing Northern Ireland at international competitions with the cost of travel.

(AQW 23616/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI, an arms length body of my Department, is the primary funder for sport in the north of Ireland. Sport NI's Athlete Investment Programme (AIP) provides assistance to athletes, including netball players representing the north of Ireland, with the cost of travel to international competitions. My Department has approved the funding for the 2013/14 AIP and Sport NI will be contacting applicants, including the Governing Body for netball, Netball NI, to advise on the outcome of their application. Athletes, including netball players, may also be able to source assistance with travel costs through either the Mary Peters Trust or their local authorities.

Baliffs Employed to Patrol Rivers

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many bailiffs are employed to patrol rivers.

(AQW 23662/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department currently employs 11 Fisheries Protection Officers dedicated to fisheries protection and enforcement duties at all water bodies across the DCAL jurisdiction. Another 11 DCAL Inland Fisheries staff and managers are also warranted under the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966 and, when required, participate in fisheries protection and enforcement duties.

There are also currently 228 Private Water Bailiffs warranted to carry out such duties on specified waters controlled by angling clubs.

First World War: Then and Now Grant

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether the First World War: Then and Now grant will operate in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 23678/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The First World War: Then and Now programme is run by the Heritage Lottery Fund which does not fall within the remit of my Department. Heritage Lottery Fund has advised that the programme is currently open for applications from 2013 to 2018. The programme is available in Britain and in the north of Ireland.

Amateur Boxing Strategy: Boxing Clubs in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail which boxing clubs in the North Down constituency will benefit from the Amateur Boxing Strategy.

(AQW 23719/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: As a result of an expression of interest exercise for the Boxing Investment Programme, two amateur boxing clubs from North Down have been identified as meeting the agreed eligibility criteria to receive equipment. These clubs are:

- Abbey ABC
- North Down ABC

Furthermore, an independent technical team is due to be appointed in July which will visit individual boxing clubs to assess the need for capital works and facility repairs. This may include clubs from North Down.

Grants in Funding Programmes: Equity Clause

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the rationale, content and outworking of an equity clause which is a standard condition for grants in funding programmes.

(AQW 23736/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: All funding from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) is administered in accordance with statutory obligations and relevant public policy. DCAL and its arms length body, Sport

NI, will continue to promote the need for equality and the desirability of good relations in the context of celebrating and sustaining the north of Ireland's cultural, sporting and historical diversity. To that end, Sport NI funding programmes contain the following clauses: -

Capital Awards

'The Applicant must operate an equal opportunities policy during and following completion of the Project and no-one shall be denied the right to equal access to any goods, facilities, services and/or employment opportunities attaching to the Project on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religious belief, political opinion, marital status, age, or having or not having dependants; in addition, the recipient shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the facilities and premises assisted by this grant shall be run in an inclusive manner which will both aspire to and promote good relations'.

Revenue Awards

'The Applicant must operate an equal opportunities policy during and following completion of the Project and no-one shall be denied the right to equal access to any goods, facilities, services and/or employment opportunities attaching to the Project on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religious belief, political opinion, marital status, age, or having or not having dependants; in addition, the recipient shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the opportunities and programmes assisted by this grant shall be run in an inclusive manner which will both aspire to and promote good relations'.

As with all DCAL approved policies, this clause will be kept under review.

Grants in Funding Programmes: Equity Clause

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether an equity clause, as a standard condition for grants in funding programmes, precludes organisations, which have grounds or trophies named after terrorists, from funding.

(AQW 23737/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The equity clause contained in all offers of capital and revenue support from Sport NI, applies to all organisations seeking assistance. As with all DCAL policies, this clause will be kept under review.

I am not aware of any sports organisations which have grounds or trophies named after any deceased person whom all sections of the community recognise as having been a terrorist.

Legislation on Catch and Release

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she intends to bring forward legislation on catch and release.

(AQW 23759/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Draft legislation has been prepared that will form the basis of a consultation document and this is currently under consideration by the Department.

Following consideration of consultation responses legislation will be progressed in line with procedural guidelines.

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Training Courses

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 20657/11-15, to detail the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy training courses that have been provided, which were deemed to be specific in nature, and particular to the business of her Department, and how many staff attended.

(AQW 23904/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The table below sets out business specific training provided by CIPFA to DCAL staff in each of the last 3 financial years.

Financial Year	CIPFA Course Title	Number of Staff
10/11	Conducting Verification Visits	3
	Perfect Proof Reading	1
	Resource Budgeting	1
11/12	Capital Accounting	3
	Essential Skills for Board Members	2
	Fraud Awareness for Grant Funders	3
	Resource Budgeting through Estimates to Accounts	12
12/13	Capital Accounting	2
	Essential Skills for Board Members	3
	Resource Budgeting through Estimates to Accounts	4
Total		34

Indigenous Fish Stocks in Lough Neagh

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she has met with the Lough Neagh Dollaghan Trust or received any research it has completed on indigenous fish stocks in the Lough.
(AQW 23969/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My officials in Inland Fisheries Group met with representatives of the Lough Neagh Dollaghan Trust on 7 March. I understand that this was a very positive meeting and during the discussions the Trust referred to research being undertaken at Queens University on the genetic population structure of the Lough Neagh trout. Officials were presented with a summary of this study.

My officials also attended a public meeting organised by the Trust on the 23 April at the Old Antrim Courthouse and they will attend a follow up meeting planned for the 19 June.

World Police and Fire Games 2013: Marketing Budget

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the marketing budget provided by her Department for the World Police and Fire Games 2013.
(AQW 24008/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The total World Police and Fire Games budget for delivery of the games in August 2013 is £13,813,145.

The NI Executive, through DCAL, is providing up to £6.88m. The balance comes from sponsorship and fees charged to athletes for entering the Games.

The cash budget allocated to marketing totals £384,462.

Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure who is the new member appointed to the Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum.

(AQW 24069/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The new member appointed to the Salmon and Inland Fisheries Forum on 18 May 2013 is Mr Maurice G Parkinson, who represents fishery owners.

SportNI: Netball Northern Ireland

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 23615/11-15, for a detailed breakdown of the funding.

(AQW 24105/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Over the last two financial years, my Department through Sport NI, has provided total funding of £303,409 to Netball NI, the governing body for netball in the north of Ireland. A detailed breakdown of the funding is as follows: -

Financial Year	Project	Amount	Fund
2011/12	Development of Athletes in the Open Squad and U21 Squad	£18,000	Exchequer
2011/12	Assist in development of netball in north of Ireland	£9,524	Exchequer
2011/12	Investing in Performance Sport – Governing Body funding – Year 3	£122,128	Exchequer
2012/13	Development of Open Squad	£30,000	Lottery
2012/13	Investing in Performance Sport – Governing Body funding – Year 4	£123,757	Exchequer

Discharge of Treated Sewage Waste

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail any reports or studies carried out by her Department on the impact by the discharge of treated sewage waste in to river courses has on wildlife and the angling estate.

(AQW 24124/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has a statutory function to administer the Water (NI) Order 1999 in relation to the conservation of water resources and the cleanliness of water. Reports or studies on the impact of all pollution incidents are the responsibility of the NIEA.

My Department works closely with NIEA on pollution incidents and on post-pollution fisheries reinstatement measures.

Effective Employer's Pension Contribution to Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 20705/11-15, to confirm that the answer given refers to the percentage of employer contributions to the pension funds of existing employees and not amounts being paid to those presently in receipt of pensions.

(AQW 24132/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The position of the North/South Bodies in regards to their answers to AQW 20705/11-15 is as follows:-

- 1 The Ulster-Scots Agency's has no pensioners on their payroll and therefore their effective employer's contribution to existing employees for the 2012 calendar year was zero.
- 2 Foras na Gaeilge does not make employer contributions to the pension fund of existing employees.
- 3 Waterways Ireland does not make employer contributions to the pension fund of existing employees.

Music Industry Strategy for Northern Ireland

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to the targets set in the Music Industry Strategy for Northern Ireland, how many music businesses have been established since 2011.

(AQW 24160/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Music Industry Strategy outlined priority areas such as innovation, internationalisation, business skills and talent development to increase the economic impact of the sector. Achieving the targets in the strategy will be dependent on investment made both by Government here and its partners and by the industry itself.

At the centre of the strategy is a new Music Business Support Programme (MBSP), funded by DCAL and Invest NI, offering advisory and support services for music related business, start-ups or individuals interested in career opportunities. This will act as a catalyst to encourage entrepreneurship and business development.

A competitive tendering process was launched following a full economic appraisal of the MBSP proposal and selection of the organisation to deliver the MBSP is currently being finalised. The programme plans to run over 2013-2016.

The number of music businesses established since 2011 cannot be determined as many such start-ups will be sole traders with levels of turnover outside of current measurement methodologies. However, in terms of targets directly attributable to the MBSP, delivery of this initiative will enable tracking of supported start-ups and expects to result in a minimum of 27 music businesses being created or attracted to the region.

DCAL and Invest NI will work with the MBSP delivery organisation to build further partnerships across the private and public sectors to extend the reach of available support, particularly around events, marketing, business support and skills development

Cycling Clubs in the East Antrim

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cycling clubs in the East Antrim area that have applied for funding from her Department and its arm's-length bodies.

(AQW 24181/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Within the last ten years, only one cycling club from the East Antrim area has applied for funding from my Department and its arms-length bodies. This club was Kings Moss Cycling Club, who applied for funding in 2010 through the Sport NI Awards for Sport Programme; however, their application was unsuccessful.

Improvements at Windsor Park, Ravenhill and Casement Park

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what is the expected timeline for improvements at (a) Windsor Park, (b) Ravenhill and (c) Casement Park in light of an expected judicial review of the project funding.

(AQW 24206/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department, in conjunction with the Governing Bodies, are working towards the following:

- construction work at Ravenhill to be completed by September 2014;
- construction works at Windsor Park to be completed by June 2015; and
- construction works at Casement Park to be completed by September 2015.

South Antrim Constituency: Funding

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding has been allocated by her Department to the South Antrim constituency, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24230/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The total amount of funding allocated by the Department to the South Antrim constituency in the last five years is summarised in the tables below, divided between resource and capital:

	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000
Resource	70	120	90	180	136
Capital	620	679	124	491	10
Total	690	799	214	671	146

Detailed breakdowns by project are provided in Annex A

I should point out that if there was any doubt as to whether the South Antrim constituency benefited from the grant, then that grant has been excluded from the answer. For example, if an organisation situated in the South Antrim constituency spent the funding further afield, it has been excluded from the answer.

ANNEX A

RESOURCE - SOUTH ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY

ALB/Branch	Organisation/Project	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000	
NIMC	Sentry Hill House				5						
Sport Northern Ireland	Antrim Borough Special Olympics Club			3							
Sport Northern Ireland	Kickhams Creggan GAC			8							
Sport Northern Ireland	Newtownabbey Borough Council			1							
Sport Northern Ireland	Carmoney Football Development Centre								2		
Sport Northern Ireland	Antrim Sports Advisory Association - Coach Smart								3		
Sport Northern Ireland	Breckenhill Ltd - Adventure Activities Accreditation								1		
Ulster Scots Agency	Sixmilewater Cultural Society		4								
Ulster Scots Agency	Ulster Scots Cultural Development Trust		6	3					6		3
Ulster Scots Agency	Ballydonagh Pipe Band		4						3		
Ulster Scots Agency	Burnside US Society		1	1							
Ulster Scots Agency	Dungonnell Ulster Scots & Cultural Society		2								
Ulster Scots Agency	Burnside Accoridon Band		2	2					4		2
Ulster Scots Agency	South Antrim U-S Network			3					14		7

ALB/Branch	Organisation/Project	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000	
Ulster Scots Agency	Ballyrobert Drumming Club					4		2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Castlegore Flute Band					3				1	
Ulster Scots Agency	Doagh Fife & Lambeg Club					2		2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Milltown Rural Development					4					
Ulster Scots Agency	Muckamore Cultural Music Society					3		2		2	
Ulster Scots Agency	Muckamore Ulster Scots					2				2	
Ulster Scots Agency	Randalstown Cultural					2					
Ulster Scots Agency	Sir Henry Inglesby's Fife & Drum Corps					3		2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Randalstown District LOL 22							10			
Ulster Scots Agency	Inter Estate Partnership							2		2	
Ulster Scots Agency	Ballycraigy Auld Boys Muscial Association							2		2	
Ulster Scots Agency	Caddy & District Community Group							2		2	
Ulster Scots Agency	Kellswater Flute Band							1			
Ulster Scots Agency	McNeillstown Pipe Band							2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Milltown Accoridon Band							2		1	
Ulster Scots Agency	Randalstown Cultural Awareness Association							2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Randalstown Sons of Ulster Flute Band							2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Steeple Cultural & Heritage Association							2			
Ulster Scots Agency	Steeple Veterans Flute Band							2		2	

ALB/Branch	Organisation/Project	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000	
Ulster Scots Agency	Ulster Scots Cultural & Historical Society								1		
Ulster Scots Agency	Bruce's True Blues Accordion Band								2		
Ulster Scots Agency	Burnside Ulster Scots Society										5
Ulster Scots Agency	Kids Kabin										3
Ulster Scots Agency	Steeple Defenders Flute Band										2
Ulster Scots Agency	MPDA										2
Ulster Scots Agency	Ulster-Scots Culture Dev Trust										3
Foras Na Gaeilge	Crumlin Vocational Education Committee					4					
Foras Na Gaeilge	Crumlin VEC					4			4		
Foras Na Gaeilge	Cairde Ghleann Darach					4					8
Foras Na Gaeilge	Croí Éanna					1			60		55
Foras Na Gaeilge	Gaelscoil Éanna										4
Foras Na Gaeilge	Cumann Óige Chroí Éanna										3
Northern Ireland Events	Antrim Girls Golf Funding	12									
Northern Ireland Events	Motocross	15									
Northern Ireland Events	Great Game Fairs			10							
Northern Ireland Events	ULster Grand Prix			65							

ALB/Branch	Organisation/Project	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
DCAL	Community Festivals Fund	12	12	13	14	14
NI Screen	NEELB	12	12	12	12	8
ACNI	Major Sinclair Memorial Pipe Band				4	
ACNI	Randalstown Sons of Ulster				4	
ACNI	Staffordstown Accordion Band				5	
ACNI	Steeple Defenders Flute Band				5	
ACNI	Steeple Veterans Flute Band					5
		70	120	90	180	136

CAPITAL - SOUTH ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY

ALB/Branch	Organisation/Project	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Inland Waterways	Antrim BC - Sixmilewater Seating				3	
Inland Waterways	Antrim BC - Sixmilewater Trim Trail				8	
Sport Northern Ireland	Newtownabbey Borough Council	147				
Sport Northern Ireland	Antrim Borough Council	160				
Sport Northern Ireland	Ballyclare RFC	68				
Sport Northern Ireland	Tir na nOg GAC	245				
Sport Northern Ireland	St Comgall's GAC		225			
Sport Northern Ireland	Templepatrick Cricket Club		84			
Sport Northern Ireland	Muckamore Cricket & Tennis Club		124			
Sport Northern Ireland	Antrim Sports Advisory Association		7			
Sport Northern Ireland	Templepatrick Cricket Club		7			
Sport Northern Ireland	Mossley Hockey Club			5		

ALB/Branch	Organisation/Project	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Sport Northern Ireland	Randalstown RFC			29		
Sport Northern Ireland	Academy Cricket Club			30		
Sport Northern Ireland	Ballyclare Comrades FC		232	60		
Sport Northern Ireland	Burnside Ulster Scots Society				245	
Sport Northern Ireland	Crumlin United FC				233	
Sport Northern Ireland	St James GAC				2	
Sport Northern Ireland	Glengormley Amateur Boxing Association					10
		620	679	124	491	10

Walled City Marathon

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether her Department would support, and provide resources for, the return of the Walled City Marathon as an annual event.

(AQW 24272/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Primary responsibility for providing support and funding to events, including sporting events such as the Walled City Marathon, transferred in 2010 to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI).

Having said that, my Department has approved a one year pilot Sports Events Funding Programme which will be launched by Sport NI in the near future. The Walled City Marathon organisers may wish to register with Sport NI to receive further information about this Programme when it is launched. I have asked my officials for an evaluation of the events success in 2013, and will consider the matter fully in due course.

World Police and Fire Games 2013: Competitor Numbers

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action her Department is taking to ensure that the lower than expected number of competitors in the World Police and Fire Games will not negatively impact on the event.

(AQW 24303/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The WPFGB Company is continuing to implement a targeted marketing and communications strategy with robust actions to maximise registrations and visitor numbers and continues to market and promote the Games both within the north of Ireland and across the world.

The quality of the Games will not be impacted by the reduced forecast. The plans for the Games delivery are at an advanced stage and it is planned that all sports at all venues will take place. Currently there are over 60 different countries from across the globe that will have representation at the Games.

This will be the largest multi-sport event that the north of Ireland has hosted and will deliver significant economic and tourism benefits alongside the significant social inclusion and legacy benefits that are planned.

The Games remain a compelling means to showcase both Belfast and the north of Ireland.

Current or Planned Legislation

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to list the current or planned legislation that her Department will bring to the Assembly before the end of the current term.

(AQW 24311/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I intend to bring forward an Irish Language Bill before the end of the Assembly's mandate in 2016.

Creative Industries Sector

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the impact the creative industries sector has on the wider economy.

(AQO 4395/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The creative industries are recognised across the globe as key drivers of sustainable economic regeneration and job creation. This part of Ireland has had major recent success particularly in areas such as film and television production.

However, increasingly the wider sustainable economic and social impact of the sector is also being recognised. The creativity and specialism within the creative industries supports the wider economy by supplying other sectors with creative inputs that increase innovation and productivity. The Executive's

Economic Strategy has highlighted creativity and design as important features of a well-developed knowledge economy and innovation system.

Creativity will also play a crucial role in stimulating new partnerships and solutions to other government challenges in health, education, the environment, and in promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion.

As Government lead on the creative industries, my Department will stimulate cross-departmental collaboration, as well as partnership with industry, academia and the community and voluntary sectors, to grow our creative industries and to support a more creative economy and a more inclusive agenda of social innovation.

World Police and Fire Games 2013: Events

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether any events scheduled as part of the World Police and Fire Games 2013 have been cancelled as a result of an insufficient number of competitors.

(AQW 24428/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Two sports, flag football and water polo were cancelled at an early stage due to a lack of competitor interest. These were replaced by dodgeball.

No other events have been cancelled. However, as is normal in the planning of any major sports competition, the provisional schedule has been reviewed and tightened.

There will be 56 sports held at 41 venues across the North of Ireland. It is anticipated that 2013 World Police and Fire Games Limited will continue to receive competitor entries right up to the day the Games begin on 1st August, which has occurred at previous Games.

Cycling Clubs in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cycling clubs in North Down that have applied for funding from her Department, and its arm's length bodies, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24474/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: No cycling clubs in North Down have applied for funding from my Department or Sport NI in the last three years.

World Police and Fire Games 2013: Translators

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to the World Police and Fire Games 2013, whether host sports organisations provide translators, and to detail the assistance she is providing to meet the cost of the number of translators needed and the languages covered.

(AQW 24498/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: There are currently 64 different countries with competitors registered for the Games from every part of the world. As part of the recruitment of volunteers for the Games, those with multi lingual capabilities were encouraged to apply and a significant number did so. Where required these volunteers will provide assistance where necessary.

2013 World Police and Fire Games Limited have also had a number of meetings with the NI Consulates Forum and they are ready to provide assistance and support if required.

Department of Education

Southern Education and Library Board Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education why some staff in the Southern Education and Library Board have not received increments this year.

(AQW 24314/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): Under the Executive's Public Sector Pay Policy, pay remits for all staff in public bodies, including Education and Library Boards, are required to be completed and submitted to the Department of Finance and Personnel for approval.

In regards of incremental progression for these staff from April 2013, my department is working to progress this matter within the requirements of the Executive's Public Sector Pay Policy.

Christ the Redeemer Primary School, Lagmore

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Education, given the population growth in the Lagmore area, what plans has he to permit a temporary variation in the admissions number at Christ the Redeemer Primary School in the short term; and whether he will give due consideration to the school's development proposal.

(AQW 24398/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department has considered a number of requests from Christ the Redeemer Primary School for a temporary increase of its admissions number for the September 2013 intake covering a total of 15 applicants. These were not approved as there are several other maintained primary schools within reasonable travelling distance which still have places available. All of these children have been offered places in alternative schools selected by their parents.

The Development Proposal to increase the capacity of the school to cater for a total of 700 pupils with an associated intake of 100 was carefully considered following public consultation, but was not approved. My decision was announced on 1 May.

Closed Gymnasium and Changing Facilities in Schools

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Education to list the schools in which the gymnasium and changing facilities are closed because of health and safety issues; and what arrangements have been made to replace these facilities.

(AQW 24522/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department has sought information from the Education and Library Boards, however, I have been advised that the Boards who have responsibility for maintenance in controlled and catholic maintained schools have no record of gymnasium and changing facilities being closed due to Health and Safety issues.

The Department, has, however, a number of applications associated with sports provision, across the non controlled schools estate currently under consideration due to a number of issues including Health and Safety.

If the member's question relates to a specific school could he provide further information, to enable the question to be answered in full.

Service Level Agreement

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 16101/11-15, for an update on this situation.

(AQW 24633/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The report on the review of the DE Early Years Fund has now been finalised. I plan to review this funding and its delivery to ensure that it aligns with DE's current aims and objectives. In considering the way forward for the Early Years Fund I will take account of the recommendations in the review as well as DE's wider priorities and the overall budgetary position.

Process and Procedures for Building New Schools

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the current process and procedures for the building of new schools.

(AQW 24634/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Major capital investment in schools, as with all large scale public sector investment, is subject to strict established policies and procedures. All capital building projects must adhere to planning and environmental laws and regulations. Adherence to these can be resource and time intensive, it is essential to ensure best value for the public purse. However I believe a balance has to be set to ensure timely delivery of new schools with associated improvement to the education estate. An additional benefit of the school build programme is securing and creating additional jobs in the construction industry.

Within this framework the Department aims to ensure work is taken forward in an effective and efficient manner and deal with any unforeseen matters as and when they arise.

Regional Training Unit: Funding

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how much funding will be allocated to the Regional Training Unit to roll out the Health and Wellbeing teaching materials.

(AQW 24643/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Regional Training Unit has not made a bid to the Department for funding to support a roll out of the Health and Wellbeing teaching material. Any bid, once received would be considered within the context of my Department's Strategic priorities and available resources.

De La Salle College: STEM Networking Event

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what follow up occurred with the 120 pupils and key business organisations that attended the STEM networking event in De La Salle College.

(AQW 24659/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In February 2012, Business in the Community (BITC) organised and hosted a STEM Speed Networking event in De La Salle College which is assumed to be the event that you refer to.

BITC have advised that the event was designed to help inspire local school children from Corpus Christi College, De La Salle College, St Rose's Dominican College, Newtownabbey Community High School, Belfast Model School for Girls & Ashfield Boys, on the career options and opportunities that studying STEM can offer. The event aimed to encourage pupils to pursue careers in STEM sectors and demonstrate how the related knowledge and skills can be transferred into the world of work.

Following the event, BITC evaluated feedback from 143 pupils and for each evaluation question at least 99 students responded. 99% of students found the event to be 'Good – Excellent' and would recommend it to other pupils/schools. Over 90% believed they had learned something new about Science, Technology and Engineering in the workplace and almost 80% learned something new about Maths in the workplace. 97% felt that they saw STEM in a more positive way due to this event and understood why businesses employ people with STEM qualifications. 86% said they would now consider a career that needed STEM qualifications.

BITC advise that pupils attending the event were in Year 9 at the time and have just completed Year 10, making their subject selections for the forthcoming academic year. BITC plan to follow up with the schools involved in September to ascertain any increase in pupils' selection of STEM subjects and to see if this can be attributed to this event.

STEM Works Portal

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to outline the success of the STEM works portal that was set up by the Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment; and what follow up has occurred with people who have used the portal.

(AQW 24661/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The STEMworks web site was developed by Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to support learning and teaching at Key Stage 3 of STEM related subjects including Science, Technology and Design, Mathematics, Home Economics and Employability. Ten schools were recruited to deliver STEM Futures (the main section of the portal) resources in school using a model of Innovation to address the recommendations of the STEM Review.

During April 2012 to March 2013 there were 5354 visits to the STEM works portal. Since April 2013 to 26 June there have been almost 2000 visits to the website. CCEA have also advised that:

- 100+ businesses have registered with the online Directory offering support to schools.
- A Case Study of how one school used a resource within the site was used at system-wide assessment training and received very positive feedback.
- A workshop at the recent Association for Science Education Conference was well attended by teachers and received positive feedback.
- There has been a query from another country asking if they could use the materials as they were seen to be very useful.

With regards to follow up actions, CCEA have taken the following steps to ensure continued support for STEM works:

- A communication strategy has been delivered to ensure all schools were made aware of developments, features and benefits of the site.
- A STEM Den event has been held for schools who participated in the Innovation project to showcase their work to a wider educational/industry audience. The event has been captured on film and published on the site to share with all schools.
- Two video case studies on the 'what?' and 'how?' of STEM Futures were developed and published to support schools with implementation.
- A STEM Heroes publication has been sent to all primary and post primary schools to highlight how schools used the original STEM Heroes comic to stimulate enquiry based, hand-on, practical learning in school through the use of emerging technologies.
- Printed copies of learning and teaching resources (previously only available online) have been issued to all schools.
- Assessment tasks for the three cross-curricular skills were developed from naturally occurring opportunities within the resources and published online to support teachers.
- Resources were extended to support Geography's contribution to the STEM agenda from a Renewables perspective.

Revised Entitlement Framework Funding Formula

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how successful his Department's revised Entitlement Framework funding formula has been in delivering an appropriate range of STEM courses.

(AQW 24663/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The purpose of the Entitlement Framework funding formula is to contribute to the costs associated with the expansion of the curricular offer by schools for their pupils to meet the requirement of the entitlement framework. The funding formula specifically supports the collaborative delivery of applied courses which has improved access to and provided greater freedom for pupils to explore the range of STEM-related subjects available.

The purpose of the Entitlement Framework is to put pupils, their needs, interests and aspirations first. It is designed to provide greater breadth and balance in the range of courses offered to young people at 14 and above, and ensuring they have access to a minimum number of applied courses. This increased choice is being supported with improved careers education, information, advice and guidance, again with a particular focus on STEM-related career opportunities.

Schools have access to up to date labour market intelligence which should form part of their curricular planning, responding to the demands of a fast moving globalised economy including STEM sectors.

Sentinus Programmes and Sentinels Young Innovators Events

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how many of the 58,500 students who participated in the Sentinus programmes and Sentinels Young Innovators events in 2010/11 have gone on to (i) complete STEM courses; and (ii) take up employment in those areas.

(AQW 24664/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department provides annual core funding to Sentinus to provide a portfolio of STEM enhancement and enrichment programmes from Key Stage 2 through to Post 16 to promote the attractiveness of STEM careers.

Information on the number of students participating in these programmes who go on to complete STEM courses and subsequently take up employment in STEM sectors is not held by my Department.

However, the Department currently measures the impact of its STEM programme on promoting STEM subjects by comparing the uptake on the number of examination entries for STEM subjects. Statistics support the view that actions taken to date to promote STEM within our schools has been successful with an increase in both GCSE and A-Level STEM examination entries as a percentage of all examination entries. The following table illustrates the increase.

	2004/05	2010/11*
GCSE STEM entries as a percentage of all examination entries	33.9%	37%
A-Level STEM entries as a percentage of all examination entries	37%	40.4%

* Data for the 2011/12 academic year is not available

Smart Gear Event

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what follow up has occurred with the pupils who attended the Smart Gear event in 2011-12; and what was learnt from the event.

(AQW 24666/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In response to commitments contained in the STEM Strategy 'Success Through STEM' which was approved by the Executive in March 2011, DE approved funding in 2011/12 to deliver a Key Stage 2 STEM engagement programme. Some 1,233 pupils from 51 primary schools, their class teachers and 57 training teachers from three teacher training colleges (St. Mary's, Stranmillis and UU Coleraine) participated in the 2011/12 'Smart Gear' programme.

The main aims of the programme were to: address a gap in Key Stage 2 pupils science learning through practical engagement; excite and enthuse pupils about science to stimulate pupils to consider studying STEM subjects at Key Stage 4 and beyond; target schools which did not have a strong track record of engagement in STEM enhancement and enrichment activity; support science Continuous Professional Development for existing primary teachers; support the professional development of training teachers from the three teacher training colleges; and provide a legacy whereby programme resources were retained within participating primary schools for future use by existing class teachers in delivery of the revised curriculum.

The evaluation at the conclusion of the programme highlighted that the aims of the programme were achieved with a very significant positive and beneficial impact on pupils, their class teachers and

participating trainee teachers. In relation to pupils specifically, there was unanimous agreement that they would like to be involved in the project again, they enjoyed participating in the project and were aware of what they gained in terms of knowledge and skills.

Learning points from the delivery of the 2011/12 programme were incorporated into the 2012/13 programme, for example, twilight in-service training sessions are now delivered to encourage more thorough engagement by existing class teachers.

Appeals Against the Refusal of Admission to a School

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many appeals against the refusal of admission to a school have been heard in (i) North Down; and (ii) Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and how many of these appeals were successful.

(AQW 24692/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have provided the information requested in the following tables for academic years 2008/09 to 2012/13.

1. PRIMARY SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS APPEALS

School year	Appeals heard (i) North Down	Appeals upheld (i) North Down	Appeals heard (ii) N Ireland	Appeals upheld (ii) N Ireland
2008/09	0	0	24	2
2009/10	1	0	25	7
2010/11	0	0	24	4
2011/12	10	4	55	10
2012/13	15	4	105	26

2. POST- PRIMARY SCHOOLS ADMISSIONS APPEALS

School year	Appeals heard (i) North Down	Appeals upheld (i) North Down	Appeals heard (ii) N Ireland	Appeals upheld (ii) N Ireland
2008/09	27	2	413	126
2009/10	9	3	299	98
2010/11	20	3	335	78
2011/12	13	3	220	51
2012/13	2	0	191	53

Link between Poor Eyesight and Educational Underachievement

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education whether he is aware of any link between poor eyesight and educational underachievement.

(AQW 24728/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: While my Department has not carried out any specific detailed research into a link between poor eyesight and educational underachievement it remains committed to raising levels of attainment for all pupils, including those with a visual impairment (VI). I was therefore pleased to note the endorsement of the support being offered to pupils with a VI in the Education and Training Inspectorate's "Report of an Evaluation of Provision for Pupils with a Visual Impairment in Mainstream Schools in Northern Ireland", published in 2012, which found provision for VI in mainstream schools to

be very good. The report also found that the Education and Library Board's (ELBs) provided a very good standard of support to those with a VI.

Each child with a VI has unique needs and teachers of children with a VI will provide tailored advice to meet the pupil's individual learning needs so that the curriculum can be fully accessed.

Where a visual impairment prevents a child from fully accessing the curriculum, ELBs will address this through the statutory assessment and statementing process.

Teachers: Unsatisfactory Performance

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education how many teachers have been removed from post due to unsatisfactory performance in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 24748/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- i It is not possible to provide the information requested broken down by academic years as the small numbers involved would require a high level of suppression to prevent identification of an individual, in line with the confidentiality principle of the Statistics Authority's Code of Practice on Official Statistics.
- ii. A total of 62 teachers have received further training from Curriculum Advisory and Support Service or other agencies due to unsatisfactory performance issues in the last ten years.
- iii. I welcome the Committee's report, and I shall be giving close attention to their conclusions and recommendations. A Memorandum of Response from DFP will be prepared in line with normal practice. The Committee's focus on these issues is of great value.
- iv. Following on-going intense negotiations between Trade Unions and Management Side, new procedures were produced – a Procedure for Supporting Effective Leadership in Schools for School Principals and a Procedure for Supporting Effective Teaching in Schools for Teachers and Vice-Principals. Appendix 1 of this document refers to Termination of Employment of Principal/Teacher on the Grounds of Capability/Performance. These procedures came into effect from 6 June 2013.

Teachers: Unsatisfactory Performance

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education how many teachers have received further training from Curriculum Advisory and Support Service or other agencies due to unsatisfactory performance issues in the last ten years.

(AQW 24749/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- v It is not possible to provide the information requested broken down by academic years as the small numbers involved would require a high level of suppression to prevent identification of an individual, in line with the confidentiality principle of the Statistics Authority's Code of Practice on Official Statistics.
- vi. A total of 62 teachers have received further training from Curriculum Advisory and Support Service or other agencies due to unsatisfactory performance issues in the last ten years.
- vii. I welcome the Committee's report, and I shall be giving close attention to their conclusions and recommendations. A Memorandum of Response from DFP will be prepared in line with normal practice. The Committee's focus on these issues is of great value.
- viii. Following on-going intense negotiations between Trade Unions and Management Side, new procedures were produced – a Procedure for Supporting Effective Leadership in Schools for School Principals and a Procedure for Supporting Effective Teaching in Schools for Teachers and Vice-Principals. Appendix 1 of this document refers to Termination of Employment of Principal/

Teacher on the Grounds of Capability/Performance. These procedures came into effect from 6 June 2013.

Improving Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Schools

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education whether he has taken account of Recommendation 10 of the Public Accounts Committee's Report on Improving Literacy and Numeracy Achievement in Schools; and what provision exists to allow schools to remove unsatisfactory teachers.

(AQW 24750/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- ix. It is not possible to provide the information requested broken down by academic years as the small numbers involved would require a high level of suppression to prevent identification of an individual, in line with the confidentiality principle of the Statistics Authority's Code of Practice on Official Statistics.
- x. A total of 62 teachers have received further training from Curriculum Advisory and Support Service or other agencies due to unsatisfactory performance issues in the last ten years.
- xi. I welcome the Committee's report, and I shall be giving close attention to their conclusions and recommendations. A Memorandum of Response from DFP will be prepared in line with normal practice. The Committee's focus on these issues is of great value.
- xii. Following on-going intense negotiations between Trade Unions and Management Side, new procedures were produced – a Procedure for Supporting Effective Leadership in Schools for School Principals and a Procedure for Supporting Effective Teaching in Schools for Teachers and Vice-Principals. Appendix 1 of this document refers to Termination of Employment of Principal/Teacher on the Grounds of Capability/Performance. These procedures came into effect from 6 June 2013.

Removal of Unsatisfactory Teachers

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education whether he has had discussions with teachers' unions on the issue of the removal of unsatisfactory teachers.

(AQW 24751/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

- xiii. It is not possible to provide the information requested broken down by academic years as the small numbers involved would require a high level of suppression to prevent identification of an individual, in line with the confidentiality principle of the Statistics Authority's Code of Practice on Official Statistics.
- xiv. A total of 62 teachers have received further training from Curriculum Advisory and Support Service or other agencies due to unsatisfactory performance issues in the last ten years.
- xv. I welcome the Committee's report, and I shall be giving close attention to their conclusions and recommendations. A Memorandum of Response from DFP will be prepared in line with normal practice. The Committee's focus on these issues is of great value.
- xvi. Following on-going intense negotiations between Trade Unions and Management Side, new procedures were produced – a Procedure for Supporting Effective Leadership in Schools for School Principals and a Procedure for Supporting Effective Teaching in Schools for Teachers and Vice-Principals. Appendix 1 of this document refers to Termination of Employment of Principal/Teacher on the Grounds of Capability/Performance. These procedures came into effect from 6 June 2013.

Teachers who have Taught Unsatisfactory or Inadequate Lessons

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education whether the Education and Training Inspectorate releases the names of teachers, who have taught unsatisfactory or inadequate lessons in front of Inspectors, to Principals and Boards of Governors.

(AQW 24752/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A teacher's work is evaluated as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Where their work is evaluated as unsatisfactory it will not be on the basis of one lesson only. In such a case, the principal and Board of Governors will be informed at the oral feedback that the work of a teacher has been evaluated as unsatisfactory. The written notice of unsatisfactory practice, sent to the teacher, will be copied to the principal, the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Employing Authority.

Education Other Than At School Programme

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Education how many children have been transferred from mainstream secondary education to the Education Other Than At School programme over the last three years, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 24768/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of children transferred to Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) from mainstream secondary education in the Belfast and North Eastern Education and Library Boards is as set out in Table 1 below:

Year	BELB	NEELB
2010/2011	123	179
2011/2012	141	157
2012/2013	146	201

The figures indicated relate to new pupils transferred to an EOTAS setting in each year and include group provision and home tuition. The Boards are unable to break this down to constituency level.

The Western, Southern and South Eastern Education and Library Boards are only in a position to provide the total number of pupils in EOTAS provision in each year. The centrally held data does not currently include a breakdown of new pupils transferred to EOTAS from a mainstream school in each year. This detailed information is held by each EOTAS setting and these are now closed for the summer period.

The total number of children in EOTAS settings in each of these Board areas is as set out in Table 2 below:

Year	Board Area		
	SELB	WELB	SEELB
2010/11	166	205	184
2011/12	134	172	161
2012/13	135	125	201

Pupils Attendance: Less than 85 Percent

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils who have a school attendance rate of less than 85 percent, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 24779/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information requested is provided in the table below.

Number of enrolments with less than 85% attendance by Parliamentary Constituency, 2011/12

Parliamentary Constituency	Primary	Post-primary	Special	Total
Belfast East	412	687	64	1163
Belfast North	599	935	96	1630
Belfast South	416	632	64	1112
Belfast West	662	841	154	1657
East Antrim	299	631	38	968
East Derry	272	605	31	908
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	388	691	22	1101
Foyle	575	960	35	1570
Lagan Valley	308	541	59	908
Mid-Ulster	366	643	21	1030
Newry and Armagh	448	650	37	1135
North Antrim	304	661	41	1006
North Down	256	520	35	811
South Antrim	396	699	37	1132
South Down	371	679	30	1080
Strangford	293	549	49	891
Upper Bann	520	882	35	1437
West Tyrone	294	653	33	980
Total	7179	12459	881	20519

Notes:

- 1 The figures include enrolments in Years 1-7 in primary school; Years 8-12 in post-primary school and all enrolments in special schools.
- 2 The data refer to the number of pupil enrolments rather than the number of pupils. A pupil can move schools during the year and will therefore have an attendance record at more than one school.
- 3 The figures refer to the Constituency in which the pupil lives. Postcode was not available for 151 primary school enrolments; 210 post-primary enrolments and 14 enrolments in special schools. As a result, these have not been included in the analysis.

Delivering Social Change Programme

Mr Sheehan asked the Minister of Education which primary and post-primary schools in west Belfast will be receiving additional teachers as part of the Delivering Social Change programme; and how many additional posts each of these schools will have.

(AQW 24818/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The tables below detail the primary and post-primary schools in the West Belfast constituency eligible to participate in the Delivering Social Change Signature Project for improving Literacy and Numeracy. The table includes the number of additional posts allocated to each school.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN WEST BELFAST ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE

Primary School	Number of Additional Teachers Allocated
Blackmountain PS	0.5
Gaelscoil an Lonnáin	0.2
Gaelscoil na Bhfál* ¹	0.5
Gaelscoil na Móna	0.2 (Irish only) 0.2 (English and maths)
Harmony PS	1.0
Holy Trinity PS	1.0
Malvern PS	0.5
Scoil na Fuisseoige, Twinbrook* ¹	0.2
Springfield PS	0.2
St Aidan's Christian Brothers' PS St Bernadette's PS* ¹	Allocation to be confirmed* ²
St Clare's PS	1.0
St John the Baptist PS* ¹	1.0
St Joseph's PS (Slate Street)	1.0
St Kevin's PS,	1.0
St Kieran's PS, Poleglass	1.0
St Luke's PS, Twinbrook	0.5
St Mark's PS, Twinbrook	1.0
St Mary's PS (Divis Street)	0.5
St Oliver Plunkett PS* ¹	1.0
St Paul's PS	1.0
St Peter's PS* ¹	1.0
The Good Shepherd PS, Dunmurry	1.0

1. School added following the announcement of the expansion of the project at 25 June 2013.
2. St Aidan's Christian Brothers' PS and St Bernadette's PS are to amalgamate with effect from 1 September 2013. The agreed allocation to the new amalgamated school has yet to be confirmed.

POST- PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN WEST BELFAST ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE

Post-primary School	Number of Additional Teachers Allocated
Christian Brothers Secondary	1.0
Coláiste Feirste	1.0
Corpus Christi College	1.0
De La Salle College	2.0

Post-primary School	Number of Additional Teachers Allocated
St Colm's High School	1.0
St Genevieve's High School	2.0
St Louise's Comp College	2.0
St Rose's High School	1.0

Integrated Primary and Post-Primary Schools

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education how many integrated (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools have members of the clergy on their Board of Governors, broken down by (a) Protestant; and (ii) Roman Catholic clergy.

(AQW 24855/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not hold information about the numbers of integrated schools that have Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy as members on their Boards of Governors. This information will be requested from the education and library boards in respect of controlled integrated schools and directly from grant maintained integrated schools. As most schools are now closed, I will write to you again with the information after schools reopen in September.

Pupils who are Blind or have Partial Sight

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Education how many pupils who (i) are blind; or (ii) have partial sight achieved five or more GCSEs including English and Maths, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24862/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The answer is contained in the table below.

Number of blind or partially sighted school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs A*-C (inc. equivalents) including GCSE English and maths 2010 to 2012

	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Blind	Partial Sight	Blind	Partial Sight	Blind	Partial Sight
Number of school leavers achieving 5 or more GCSEs grades A*-C including English and maths	0	11	0	19	0	14
Total Number of school leavers	0	22	*	35	*	31

Source: School Leavers Survey

*denotes a figure less than 5

Data excludes special and independent schools

Pupils who are Deaf or have Partial Hearing

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Education how many pupils who (i) are deaf; or (ii) have partial hearing achieved five or more GCSEs including English and Maths, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24863/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The answer is contained in the table below.

Number of school leavers with hearing difficulties achieving five or more GCSEs A*-C (inc. equivalents) including GCSE English and maths 2010 to 2012

	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Deaf	Partial Hearing	Deaf	Partial Hearing	Deaf	Partial Hearing
Number of school leavers achieving five or more GCSEs grades A*-C including English and maths	7	17	5	29	5	17
Total Number of school leavers	12	45	16	70	10	39

Source: School Leavers Survey

Data excludes special and independent schools

Pupils who are Deaf or have Partial Hearing

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Education how many pupils who (i) are deaf; or (ii) have partial hearing achieved two or more A-Levels, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24865/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The answer is contained in the table below.

Number of school leavers with hearing difficulties achieving two or more A Levels A*-E (or equivalent) 2010 to 2012

	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12	
	Deaf	Partial Hearing	Deaf	Partial Hearing	Deaf	Partial Hearing
Number of school leavers achieving 2 or more A-Levels A*-E	7	13	*	29	*	13
Total Number of school leavers	12	45	16	70	10	39

Source: School Leavers Survey

*denotes a figure less than 5

Data excludes special and independent schools

Primary Schools in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education which primary schools in North Down use proximity to the school as a criterion for selecting pupils.

(AQW 24942/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Details of the admissions criteria which individual schools choose to adopt are available in booklets published by Education and Library Boards on their websites. For primary schools in North Down these can be viewed at:

http://www.seelb.org.uk/schools/Procedures_12_13/PDFs/Primary/2012/ArdsN.Down.pdf

Department for Employment and Learning

Access to Work: Travel Costs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether assistance for travel costs under Access to Work is available to people with disabilities who attend resource centres.

(AQW 24195/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): The Access to Work (NI) programme, which is administered by the Department's Disability Employment Service, is an employment focussed programme, designed to help people with disabilities who are moving into economic employment or who are in work and are experiencing problems due to their disability. By its very nature, it is also designed to assist employers who may not be able to afford the supports or adjustments required to accommodate a disabled employee.

The programme is currently supporting more than 630 people with a range of disabilities and is helping these individuals to enter into or remain in employment.

The Resource Centres referred to in your correspondence come under the auspices of the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety and are operated by the five Health and Social Care Trusts. They are used by people who have become either mentally or physically disabled.

The key purpose of these Resource Centres is to provide a supportive and empowering environment to help the individuals overcome and remove barriers to social inclusion. Whilst employment may well be an eventual goal for some of the clients, the primary focus is on maximising a person's independence and their potential as citizens.

As such, whilst these individuals do not qualify for assistance under the Access to Work (NI) programme, the Health and Social Care Trusts do provide transport for people with disabilities to and from their respective Resource Centres.

Wider Horizons

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of (i) the impact of Wider Horizons and its work with 18-28 year olds; and (ii) the continued work of the program in relation to assisting young people not in education, employment or training.

(AQW 24308/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Wider Horizons Programme has had a significant impact on the majority of those participants over the 25 years that it has been operational. In particular, elements such as mutual understanding and peace and reconciliation have had a major impact on the lives and development of young people from both the Protestant and Catholic sections of the community in Northern Ireland and young people from the border counties and Inner City Dublin.

I understand that it is the intention of the Board of the Fund to carry out a final evaluation of the Wider Horizons Programme based on previous evaluations and I will certainly be interested in the outcome of this to consider what elements might potentially be integrated within our Department or any other Department's future policy development given the closure of the Programme by the International Fund for Ireland in December 2013.

In addition to the activities undertaken through the Wider Horizons programme, my Department provides a range of initiatives under the Executive's 'Pathways to Success' strategy to assist young people not in education, employment or training.

Funding of £9.2 million will be made available until March 2015 for the Collaboration and Innovation Fund, to help over 5,500 young people improve their employability prospects. The eighteen projects awarded funding under this programme commenced activity in December 2012 and to date have engaged with over 650 unemployed young people. DEL also funds the Local Employment Intermediary

Service (LEMIS) and the Community Family Support Programme (CFSP) pilot to help young people with diverse needs get into education, employment and training.

The Pathways for Young People Allowance was introduced to ensure there are effective incentives in place for eligible young people to participate in projects which re-engage them with learning and training programmes. Since its introduction, more than £40,664 has been paid to young people.

In addition, the Community Based Access Programme pilot commences in September 2013 and will enable 16 to 18 year olds to increase their essential skills qualifications and progress into further education or government funded training.

Economically Inactive People in Dungannon

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the number of people aged (a) 18-24; and (b) over 25 in the Dungannon district that fall into the category of being economically inactive; and (ii) the initiatives that his Department is undertaking to address this issue.

(AQW 24421/11-15)

Dr Farry: It is not possible to provide robust estimates of the number of 18-24 year olds who are economically inactive in the Dungannon District Council area due to sample size constraints in the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The LFS indicated that there were an estimated 9,000 persons aged 25 or over who are economically inactive in the Dungannon District Council for the period January – March 2013.

My Department has a wide range of initiatives in place to help all economically inactive people in the Dungannon area find work.

The Employment Service offers Pathways to Work for people who are economically inactive due to ill health or disability. A range of back to work support is available including the Condition Management Programme and Return to Work Credit.

Steps to Work (StW) is my Department's main adult return to work programme and is available to anyone aged 18 years old or over (16 in the case of lone parents) who is unemployed or economically inactive, irrespective of whether or not they are in receipt of benefit. The programme has no upper age limit.

As part of the measures announced by The Northern Ireland Executive's Economy and Jobs Initiative my Department has introduced Step Ahead 50+ within the programme.

This temporary employment strand provides eligible participants aged 50 and over who have been out of work and in receipt of benefit for 12 months or more with the opportunity to avail of a fixed term job lasting up to 26 weeks in the Community and Voluntary Sector.

My Department's Disability Employment Service provides programmes and services to help people with disabilities to progress towards and move into employment. These include programmes such as Work Connect, Workable, Access to Work, Work Connect and the Job Introduction Scheme. All of this specialist disability provision can be accessed via the local Jobs and Benefits Office in Dungannon.

In addition, my Department provides financial assistance to Parkanaur College which provides employability training and vocational qualifications for young people with disabilities.

My Department recently introduced several new initiatives through the 'Pathways to Success' strategy to assist all young people including those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), in the Dungannon District area and throughout Northern Ireland.

The Collaboration and Innovation Fund is designed to help those who are not in employment, education or training to improve their employability prospects. Over £9 million will be provided to eighteen organisations from the community, voluntary and educational sectors to enable them to assist 5,500 unemployed young people from December 2012 to March 2015.

In the Dungannon District area, three organisations are supported by the fund:

- South West College Connections project aims to assist 300 young people with general and specific employability barriers in the Dungannon, Coalisland, Omagh and Enniskillen areas. The project will provide early interventions such as intensive transition point provision, assessment of need, mentoring, signposting and employability workshops;
- The Appleby Trust Print Room project will deliver a specialist two year pathway to employment programme for unemployed young people with Aspergers Syndrome within the Southern Health and Social Care Trust; and
- The Training for Women Network Gateway to Progression Project provides a tailored programme of one-to-one support and group activities to engage and support young women who face a range of employability issues.

Young people residing in the Dungannon district who have a common employability barrier, such as the homeless, ex-offenders/ex-prisoners, people with a history of drug/alcohol misuse and care leavers can access the Local Employment Intermediary Service, on an outreach basis. Network Personnel based in Cookstown deliver the outreach service in the Dungannon area under the name of Source.

Wider Horizons Project

Mr McElduff asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the success of the Wider Horizons project and if the withdrawal of core funding by the International Fund for Ireland provides a threat to the provision of essential training programmes for young people who are unemployed.

(AQW 24499/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Wider Horizons Programme has had a significant impact on the majority of those participants over the 25 years that it has been operational. In particular, elements such as mutual understanding and peace and reconciliation have had a major impact on the lives and development of young people from both the Protestant and Catholic sections of the community in Northern Ireland and young people from the border counties and Inner City Dublin.

I understand that it is the intention of the Board of the Fund to carry out a final evaluation of the Wider Horizons Programme based on previous evaluations and I will certainly be interested in the outcome of this to consider what elements might potentially be integrated within our Department or any other Department's future policy development given the closure of the Programme by the International Fund for Ireland in December 2013.

The withdrawal of core funding by the International Fund for Ireland will, however, provide no threat to the provision of essential training programmes for young people who are unemployed.

Wider Horizons Project

Mr McElduff asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether his Department will intervene to ensure that the Wider Horizons project is appropriately resourced to continue its work of providing skills and training programmes for people aged 18 to 30 who are unemployed.

(AQW 24501/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Wider Horizons Programme is a programme of the International Fund for Ireland (IFI) and the decision to proceed with closure in December 2013 is entirely one for the Fund itself to make within the context of its own resources and policy decisions.

Executive-Led Review of Business Red Tape

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether the recent announcement of an Executive-led review of business red tape as part of the economic package of measures will operate alongside the current Review of Employment Law.

(AQW 24529/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department's review of employment law has been included as a commitment in the Executive's Economic Strategy which was published in March 2012. The review seeks to improve the regulatory environment, by ensuring an effective employment law framework which will stimulate business confidence, while maintaining the rights of individual employees.

The Reducing Business Red Tape review, announced as part of the Economic Pact on 14 June, will build upon this and other regulatory reforms already being taken forward across the Executive. The details of this review have yet to be finalised.

The employment law review is being taken forward on the basis of Better Regulation principles, in a way which could readily contribute to any wider Executive-led review which has a focus on regulatory improvement and making it easier to do business in Northern Ireland.

Southern Regional College: New Build in Craigavon

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the proposal by the Southern Regional College for a new build in Craigavon, and further to his recent statement, why proposals for a new build in Banbridge have been dropped.

(AQW 24665/11-15)

Dr Farry: The development of Further Education accommodation in Armagh, Banbridge, Lurgan and Portadown is the subject of an Outline Business Case, currently being developed by the Southern Regional College, I am advised this will be submitted to my Department by 5 July 2013.

Initial indications are that the business case will identify a preferred option which will propose: a new build on the current site in Armagh; a new build on the current site in Banbridge; and a new build, on a single Craigavon site, to replace the Lurgan and Portadown campuses. The planned redevelopment of the Banbridge facility has not been dropped.

Given the quantum of works coming forward it is likely that a phased approach will be required and this will be considered as part of the business case assessment and approval process, taking into account available funding. I expect this to be concluded by Autumn 2013.

Youth Employment Scheme

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people have availed of the Youth Employment Scheme from September 2012 to date, in (i) Antrim; (ii) Ballymena; (iii) Magherafelt; and (iv) Ballymoney council areas.

(AQW 24697/11-15)

Dr Farry: Addressing youth unemployment in all areas of Northern Ireland remains a priority.

In the areas serviced by Jobs & Benefits offices located in Antrim, Ballymena, Magherafelt and Ballymoney a total of 114 young people have availed of a placement under the Youth Employment Scheme, 48 of these having secured subsidised employment. The numbers availing, broken down by individual office area is as follows: Antrim – 23, Ballymena – 31, Magherafelt – 25 and Ballymoney – 35.

In the same area a total of 200 employer agreements have been signed and 268 opportunities made available since I launched the Youth Employment Scheme in July 2012.

My Department is actively working with employers to source as many opportunities as possible across Northern Ireland. I have been encouraged by the response of employers so far (more than 1400 have signed up to the scheme) and I expect many more to come forward to offer opportunities for young people in the coming months.

The focus of the Youth Employment Scheme is on early intervention for young people aged 18 to 24 with the specific aim of helping this group gain work experience, develop additional skills and achieve recognised relevant qualifications. This scheme is specifically designed to help those young people claiming Jobseekers Allowance and who are almost ready to move into employment.

My Department recognises the need to re-skill and up-skill young people to prepare them to take advantage of the jobs that will be created when the economy begins to grow again. This approach is in line with the Executive's Economic Strategy to rebuild and rebalance the economy.

I appreciate your interest in the Youth Employment Scheme and would ask you to encourage employers and young people in your constituency to become involved.

Crèche Facility Building at Magee Campus

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning if his Department has granted permission for the University of Ulster to change the use of the crèche facility building at Magee campus, given that EU funding was involved in its construction.

(AQW 24740/11-15)

Dr Farry: The decision on the operation of a crèche facility at the Magee campus of the University of Ulster is a matter for the University. However should the University make any changes to the use of the building in which the crèche currently operates, the Department will adhere to the clauses within the original funding letter of offer. My Department has received a request from the University of Ulster which is being carefully examined before any response.

Review of Apprenticeships

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the review of apprenticeships and including the time frame for the report.

(AQW 24743/11-15)

Dr Farry: The review of apprenticeships, which I announced on the 11 February, is progressing well. To date, this includes:

- the establishment of an expert panel, to help inform the work of the review;
- an examination of underlying evidence base and a review of key literature pertaining to apprenticeships;
- study visits to Switzerland, Germany, Denmark and the Basque Country;
- visits to England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland; and
- on-going engagement with a number of key stakeholders, including: businesses, Sector Skills Councils, providers and young people.

The next key stage of the review will be the call for submissions, which will launch during the summer, followed thereafter by a series of stakeholder fora, for employers, providers and other interested parties, in early September. The review's findings will be reported in the autumn.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

G8 Summit: Impact of Trade in Enniskillen

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the impact on trade in Enniskillen as a result of the G8 Summit.

(AQW 24478/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): It is important to note that the G8 Summit has and will bring benefits to Northern Ireland, rather than to just one part of it. Northern Ireland was shown to a global audience as a positive place to live, work, visit, study, invest and do business.

While statistics are not available to determine the immediate impact on trade in Enniskillen as a result of the G8, the wider economic benefits of the G8 for Enniskillen and for Northern Ireland as a whole,

are currently being assessed, a report on this assessment will be published toward the end of this year.

There are short term benefits of hosting the G8 both in the weeks leading up to the event and during the event itself. Expenditure by delegates, by international media organisations, by visitors from other events related to the G8, provide economic benefits particularly for those involved in accommodation, event management, catering and transport related activities. In addition, there are also significant benefits from the additional public expenditure directed towards running and servicing the event.

Over the longer term, the media coverage has provided a platform for further economic benefits from tourism and investment brought about by Enniskillen and Northern Ireland's increased international profile. The investment conference, due to take place this autumn and attended by the Prime Minister, provides just one example of this and it is important that we take full advantage of this opportunity.

Start-Up Loans Scheme

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) when the Start-up Loans scheme will be available; (ii) how it will work alongside existing access to finance initiatives; and (iii) how she intends to market the scheme.

(AQW 24582/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) I welcome the Start-up Loans Scheme as another potential source of finance for business start-ups here. It is already available to Northern Ireland applicants via the Start-up Loans UK website (www.startuploans.co.uk).
- (ii) The Start-up Loans Scheme will need to complement the existing Invest NI Access to Finance initiatives. Currently there is potential for the scheme to overlap with elements of the Northern Ireland Small Business Loan Fund (SBLF) which was launched in February 2013. Start up businesses can apply for loans from the SBLF for up to £15,000. Successful applicants will also be provided with mentoring. It will be important that there is clarity around this potential overlap between the two funds and we will be liaising with BIS in this regard.
- (iii) The scheme is operated by delivery partners on behalf of Start-Up Loans UK. Start-Up Loans UK, and its delivery partners, market the scheme through various routes including web and social media. It is anticipated that there will be similar signposting of the scheme, including a formal launch, to raise the profile of the scheme with interested parties in Northern Ireland.

Research and Development Projects

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the £20 million investment plan for Research and Development projects, with a particular focus on aerospace, as announced in the recent package of economic measures.

(AQW 24584/11-15)

Mrs Foster: It is recognised within Northern Ireland and at Westminster, that aerospace is one of Northern Ireland's strategically important sectors. It is a sector that contributes significantly towards overall UK aerospace capability, which is the largest in Europe.

Subject to meeting value for money criteria and necessary approvals, including clearance under State Aid rules from the European Commission, the Northern Ireland Executive and Government at Westminster will provide a total of £20 million to Bombardier Aerospace to enhance its engine nacelles design, development and manufacturing capability and to help secure the future of this technology in the UK; and to secure UK workshare on future aircraft programmes. As the R&D grant is still in negotiation and appropriate approvals for support still need to be sought, it is inappropriate to provide further detail at this stage.

Enterprise Zones

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the new way forward for Enterprise Zones announced during the recent package of economic measures.

(AQW 24586/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The approach currently being adopted in other GB regions in terms of Enterprise Zones relates to issues such as rating, simplified planning and broadband, much of which are already devolved here. The Northern Ireland Executive has already taken action to enhance Northern Ireland's telecommunications infrastructure, reform the planning system and introduce non-domestic rating policies which support business growth across the whole of Northern Ireland.

The Enhanced Capital Allowances (ECA) element is of interest and we will wish to give consideration to the potential benefits of this offering and how it might be taken forward. This will be done in conjunction with the Finance Minister.

Credit Unions

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment if she is aware that from 31 May 2013 some banks have imposed charges to Credit Unions which were previously exempt, and if so, to outline reasons for these charges.

(AQW 24602/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I am not aware of the banks charging policies for credit union accounts. The choice of bank and banking service is a commercial decision for the management of each individual credit union to be taken in light of business needs and market competition.

Wind Energy Companies or Turbine Providers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many people are employed directly through wind energy companies or turbine providers; and what is the projected employment by 2020.

(AQW 24605/11-15)

Mrs Foster: It is estimated that around 1,300 people are working in Northern Ireland in the wind energy sector. This number is derived from industry estimates and includes a range of sub-sectors such as consultancy, construction, engineering and service industries that are involved in the wind energy market.

This level of employment is expected to rise steadily and by 2020 it is estimated that over 2,000 people will be involved in the sector due to the increased activity in the sector associated with the installation of additional 750MW of onshore wind farms currently in planning, the development of the 600MW Northern Ireland offshore wind farm off the Co Down coast and the increased development of offshore wind farms in the Irish Sea region.

Wind Farms and Single Wind Turbines

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much has been expended on (i) subsidies for wind farms and single wind turbines; and (ii) shutting down turbines; and what impact wind energy had on the 18 per cent increase in electricity charges.

(AQW 24607/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) The Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) is currently the main mechanism for incentivising renewables deployment including onshore wind. Under this mechanism the subsidy awarded to wind power in Northern Ireland in 2011-12 was approximately £47million. The total subsidy awarded to wind power across the UK in the same period was £865million.

- (ii) My Department does not hold details of payments in relation to compensation for wind turbines being shut down. The payments are a commercial matter between the Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) and the generator.
- (iii) The Utility Regulator has attributed the rise in electricity costs almost entirely to increases in wholesale gas prices.

Companies in the Foyle Constituency

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 21910/11-15, to detail (i) the companies in the Foyle constituency area that were included in the £5.16m financial assistance in 2012/13; and (ii) the amount of financial assistance awarded to each company.

(AQW 24615/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The answer to the question has been provided on the basis of those businesses in the Foyle constituency that were offered at least £5,000 in 2012-13. For presentational purposes smaller offers have not been included. The table provides (i) a list of these businesses; and (ii) the amount of financial assistance offered to each.

BUSINESSES OFFERED AT LEAST £5,000 BY INVEST NI IN FOYLE CONSTITUENCY AREA (2012-13)

Name	Assistance Offered £
Allstate Northern Ireland Ltd	1,795,500
Maydown Precision Engineering Ltd	478,719
All Pipe Engineering Ltd	195,130
Diamond Corrugated Cases Ltd	164,253
8over8 Ltd	103,125
Fleming Agri-Products Ltd	98,849
MetaCompliance Ltd	97,000
Du Pont (U.K.) Industrial Ltd	94,344
City of Derry Hotel Ltd	79,097
Rural Generation Ltd	78,400
Cromer Enterprises Ltd	76,061
Bubblebum Holdings Ltd	67,991
Claims UnLtd Ltd	58,920
Qubizm Ltd	53,988
Global Equipment Spares Ltd	53,118
General Engineering Maintenance Services Ltd	50,175
Learning Pool Ltd	48,696
Nu Print Technologies Ltd	44,635
Omega Mechanical Services Ltd	44,000
Mechanical Installation & Maintenance (N.I.) Ltd	42,477
North West Independent Testing Services	41,360
Lucid Interactive Ltd	38,104

Name	Assistance Offered £
Eyespyfx Ltd	37,175
Carella Laminate Systems Ltd.	32,972
Canavan Associates Ltd	32,614
James Doherty (Meats) Ltd	31,809
Gartford Ltd	31,191
Eglinton (Timber Products) Ltd	31,140
Troll Inc Ltd	29,723
Hunter Apparel Solutions Ltd	29,600
Independent Fertilisers Ltd	28,275
NBS Engineering	27,800
IP Logic Ltd	26,968
Chocolate Clothing	26,418
360 Production Ltd	25,000
Howling Bansee Brewing Company	24,635
Loyalty Living Ltd	24,131
Dawn McLaughlin & Co	23,419
Beech Hill House Hotel Ltd	22,083
Black Market Games Ltd	21,930
Wafer Enterprises Ltd	20,065
MPA Recruitment Ltd	19,900
Canadian Clean	19,328
Poplar Design Ltd	18,800
Flite Software (N.I.) Ltd	18,474
A & E Pots Ltd	18,000
Ecoscreen Ltd	17,388
Oak Grove Cabins Ltd	15,344
One Stop Data Ltd	13,738
Jarstar Ltd	12,825
Ardmore (Co. Derry) Pre-Cast Concrete Ltd	9,296
Entertainment Ideas Online Ltd	8,420
Ebrington (NI) Ltd	8,330
Halo Pet Products Ltd	8,000
RoCo	8,000
North Atlantic RIB Marine Ltd	6,425

Name	Assistance Offered £
Lynch's Foodstores Ltd	6,226
Seagate Technology (Ireland)	5,520
Alador Ltd	5,000
Alaris Consulting Ltd	5,000
Bang on the Door Ltd	5,000
Budget Energy Ltd	5,000
Rogers Opex Consulting Ltd	5,000
Rowena Millar	5,000
Total	4,574,904

Note: Some offers have not been included due to data protection regulations.

An additional 157 business were offered lower levels of support totalling of £0.23million.

200 New Jobs in the Foyle Constituency

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 21911/11-15, to detail (i) the companies that promoted the 200 new jobs in the Foyle constituency in 2012/13; and (ii) the number of jobs per company.

(AQW 24617/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The 200 new jobs promoted in the Foyle Constituency in 2012/13 are by Allstate NI. The jobs will be created over a 3 year period. Achieving this figure will be dependent on the availability of skills in the area.

Royal Portrush Golf Club

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the progress that has been made on staging the (i) Irish Open, in 2015 and beyond; and (ii) Open Championship, at Royal Portrush Golf Club.

(AQW 24730/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department, through the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB), is committed to identifying opportunities for Northern Ireland to host major events and considering the huge success of the Irish Open in 2012, we have been following up on that success by trying to secure future tournaments and as such NITB are currently developing a Golf Strategy for Northern Ireland.

A number of meetings and discussions have taken place in terms of major golf events, these are extremely sensitive in nature therefore I am unable to provide any further information at this stage. However, I would assure you that we will continue to work hard to fulfill the major ambition to attract events, such as The Open, and will seek every available opportunity to sustain and grow the worldwide reputation of Northern Ireland as the home of great events.

Fibre Broadband

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of people that are using fibre broadband.

(AQW 24765/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Department does not hold this information.

Department of the Environment

Compliance Improvement and Review Team

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 20928/11-15, to provide the (i) reference numbers; (ii) locations; and (iii) descriptions of the minerals applications reviewed by the Compliance Improvement and Review Team.

(AQW 22037/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): The information requested is associated with an ongoing audit of minerals applications files by the Compliance, Improvement and Review Team (CIRT), which is currently at draft report stage for management comment.

I would refer the member to AQW 22040/11-15 in relation to publication.

Shadow Council Elections

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment, given the delays in the publication of the Local Government Reorganisation Bill, the Regulations for the establishment of Statutory Transition Committees and the Commissioner's report on the District Electoral Areas, what assurances he can give that elections to shadow councils will be held in June 2014; and what provision he has made in the event of a delay in the elections in his programme for Local Government Reform.

(AQW 22599/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I actively manage the reform process, whatever my misgivings about certain elements. Based on the work to date, my conversations with other agencies and persons, the elections to the Shadow Councils will be on the 22 May 2014, the date of the European Elections. I have made clear to all the imperative of this date.

To achieve this requires any DEA inquiries to be completed and reported on before the end of the year; the Local Government Bill to be passed; the relevant NI and London regulations passed and the Chief Electoral Office to make preparations for 22 May 2014. All of this is deliverable and I, and others, work on this basis.

To this end, I have spoken to the Secretary of State, the District Electoral Areas Commissioner and the Chief Electoral Officer to stress the importance of delivering elections to the new councils on the same day as the European elections in May 2014.

The Commissioner's provisional recommendations are currently being consulted upon, with a closing date of 27 June. The Northern Ireland Office has provided an up-to date timetable for the District Electoral Areas Review. The timetable indicates that public hearings will be held in September and that the Final Report will be published in December 2013.

I am confident that there is sufficient time for the relevant legislation to be made and for the next set of local government elections to be organised for mid-2014. Therefore, I do not envisage the need for Statutory Transition Committees to be given an extended role and enhanced powers.

Statutory Transition Committees

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment, given the delay in the legislation and the publication of the District Electoral Areas Commissioner's report, what provision he has made for an extended role for Statutory Transition Committees; and what additional powers they will be given.

(AQW 22600/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I actively manage the reform process, whatever my misgivings about certain elements. Based on the work to date, my conversations with other agencies and persons, the elections to the Shadow Councils will be on the 22 May 2014, the date of the European Elections. I have made clear to all the imperative of this date.

To achieve this requires any DEA inquiries to be completed and reported on before the end of the year; the Local Government Bill to be passed; the relevant NI and London regulations passed and the Chief Electoral Office to make preparations for 22 May 2014. All of this is deliverable and I, and others, work on this basis.

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I am confident that there is sufficient time for the relevant legislation to be made and for the next set of local government elections to be organised for mid-2014. Therefore, I do not envisage the need for Statutory Transition Committees to be given an extended role and enhanced powers.

Planning History of Retained Prison Buildings on the Maze Site

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the (i) planning history of the retained prison buildings on the Maze site; and (ii) current permitted uses, in planning terms, of these buildings.
(AQW 22872/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Maze site was in active use as a prison from 1971 - 2000, upon which the use ceased. The site was cleared following the closure of the prison with the exception of a number of buildings within an existing compound which were retained. Five of the buildings within that compound were listed by NIEA in 2005.

I am advised by my officials that planning permission would be required for any operational development to the retained buildings, which would include extensions or external alterations, or where it is considered that a material change of the use of the buildings was taking place. Listed Building Consent would also be required where alterations or extensions to the retained listed buildings would alter their character as buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

In April 2013 planning permission and listed building consent were granted for minor works to the listed and retained buildings for disabled access, installation of combined heat and power system in the laundry building and elevational changes to the visitor building.

Recent UNESCO Comments on the Runkerry Resort

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the recent UNESCO comments on the Runkerry Resort, and the impact on the Giant's Causeway.
(AQW 23601/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have made it clear that our wonderful heritage can be protected and developed. The two are not irreconcilable. I believe that the Runkerry decision demonstrates this, a decision which is also lawful given the failure on all grounds of challenge of the National Trust Judicial Review. The Runkerry decision was right in law, right in terms of protecting heritage and positive development, right given the need to build infrastructure at the great asset of the North Coast, right given economic need and worklessness and right in growing tourist numbers, and tourist jobs.

There are still a few who fail to acknowledge and accept all of this. It is clear that the big majority of people do and agree with the Runkerry decision.

I have noted the IUCN report to UNESCO. The IUCN has claimed this is an independent report prepared by their mission expert following my invitation to provide me with a report on the conservation of the World Heritage site. Therefore over the last two months I and my Department have asked on several occasions for copy of the original report forwarded to the IUCN by their mission expert who visited

the Giants Causeway in February of this year. We have also asked for confirmation of whether other individuals or organisations contributed to drafting or inputting material to their report document. However every time we have asked we have been stonewalled by the IUCN. This is stonewalling the NI Government.

I welcome being held to account for my actions and decisions. I have had my views and decisions subjected to scrutiny by my Executive colleagues, by the Assembly, by the Environment Committee, by other elected representatives and by the Courts. However the IUCN refuse to provide me with a report from the expert I invited UNESCO to send here and they refuse to say who contributed to the document IUCN eventually sent to UNESCO. Accountability is an essential element of good Government and public confidence in our system of government. However IUCN, in this case, appear not to accept the need for accountability and continue to refuse to give me and my Department information that we are entitled to see and indeed which should be in the public domain. Consequently, while I have high regard for UNESCO, I have to question how IUCN have conducted themselves and why they continue to refuse to be held to account.

Enforcement Actions taken against Businesses in Rural Areas of Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment how many enforcement actions have been taken against businesses in rural areas of Upper Bann in each of the last three years; and to detail the nature of the actions taken.

(AQW 23768/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department will investigate all alleged breaches of planning control and has a general discretion to take enforcement action when it regards it as expedient to do so, having regard to the provisions of the development plan and any other material considerations.

Information held by the Department on Enforcement cases does not capture the constituency area or whether the breach is in relation to a business. Information held by the Department on enforcement is by Local Government District only and the data held is not robust enough to easily identify rural areas.

However Tables 1 and 2 below provide details of enforcement activities in the Craigavon and Banbridge Local Government Districts in the last three years.

TABLE 1 ENFORCEMENT CASES OPENED BY LGD BETWEEN 2010/11 AND Q3 OF 2012/131

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 (Q1-Q3)
Banbridge	150	86	75
Craigavon	145	87	55
Total	295	173	130

Notes:

- 1 Enforcement cases for Q3 2012/13 is our latest published information.

TABLE 2: ENFORCEMENT CASES CLOSED BY LGD AND CLOSURE REASON BETWEEN 2010/11 AND Q3 OF 2012/131

		2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 (Q1-Q3)
Banbridge	Remedied Resolved	75	12	23
	Planning Permission Granted	24	17	18
	Not Expedient	35	23	13
	No Breach	39	20	15
	Immune from Enforcement Action	8	4	4
	Appeal Allowed/Notice Quashed	1	1	0
	Total	182	77	73
Craigavon	Remedied Resolved	53	19	13
	Planning Permission Granted	29	21	25
	Not Expedient	48	30	8
	No Breach	61	28	16
	Immune from Enforcement Action	12	4	8
	Appeal Allowed/Notice Quashed	2	1	0
	Total	205	103	70
Grand Total	387	180	143	

Notes:

- 1 Enforcement cases for Q3 2012/13 is our latest published information.

Average Time Taken to Process a Planning Application

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of the Environment what is the average time taken to process a planning application through to completion; and what is the average time taken in each planning office.
(AQW 23816/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am fully aware of the need for a speedy planning process to support the economy. I have implemented a number of initiatives to improve performance and have set challenging targets every year up until the transfer of planning powers to councils in 2015.

As a result of these initiatives Quarter 3 (Q3) statistics for 2012/13 indicate that planning processing times have improved across all categories of development with intermediate and minor processing times exceeding the target. The Q3 statistics indicate that performance has substantially improved in 2012/13 when compared to 2011/12 - overall average processing time to end of Q3 of 2012/13 was 17.8 weeks compared to 21.2 weeks for 2011/12. Initial management information statistics indicate that the number of applications in the system over 12 months has also substantially decreased when compared to the previous year which has impacted on the processing times for the major applications.

Tables 1 and 2 below detail the average (Median) time taken in each planning office to process applications through to completion broken down by category of application.

TABLE 1 - THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS THAT WERE DECIDED IN 2011/12, WITH AVERAGE (MEDIAN) PROCESSING TIME IN WEEKS1 PER LGD AND GROUPED PER PLANNING OFFICE

		2011/12									
		Major		Intermediate		Minor		Total			
		No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1		
Belfast		369	29.4	290	19.0	572	18.6	1,231	21.2		
Total		369	29.4	290	19.0	572	18.6	1,231	21.2		
Downpatrick		162	36.1	238	29.6	194	16.4	594	25.8		
Castlereagh		74	28.2	81	22.0	191	16.0	346	18.5		
Lisburn		201	39.8	275	34.8	243	24.8	719	30.4		
North Down		92	18.1	148	16.7	253	11.6	493	14.0		
Total		529	33.8	742	28.6	881	16.0	2,152	23.2		
Northern		54	25.3	132	18.4	61	10.4	247	17.4		
Coleraine		138	19.0	201	13.6	152	7.2	491	11.6		
Derry		150	31.2	256	21.8	190	12.8	596	18.7		
Limavady		82	42.0	159	23.6	69	16.6	310	24.6		
Moyle		56	33.4	103	22.6	41	9.8	200	21.0		
Strabane		126	21.4	166	10.6	86	7.8	378	11.3		
Total		606	27.4	1,017	17.2	599	10.4	2,222	16.0		

		2011/12							
		Major		Intermediate		Minor		Total	
		No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1
South Antrim	Antrim	141	11.0	228	8.6	120	5.6	489	8.0
	Ballymena	161	28.6	289	15.0	105	8.2	555	15.0
	Carrickfergus	53	25.6	69	12.6	55	8.0	177	12.6
	Larne	69	27.8	109	23.2	70	17.2	248	21.5
	Newtownabbey	104	25.5	132	21.3	148	17.8	384	19.6
	Total	528	23.4	827	15.9	498	11.5	1,853	15.8
Southern	Armagh	168	40.6	481	36.4	140	22.4	789	33.6
	Banbridge	108	31.0	232	23.6	106	16.4	446	23.1
	Craigavon	166	33.6	272	29.9	135	14.2	573	26.4
	Down	199	38.0	341	35.2	196	32.3	736	34.4
	Newry And Mourne	283	40.8	694	45.0	222	22.1	1,199	38.2
	Total	924	35.6	2,020	35.2	799	22.8	3,743	32.2
Strategic Planning	All Districts	233	43.8	36	31.2	3	29.4	272	41.6
	Total	233	43.8	36	31.2	3	29.4	272	41.6

2011/12									
	Major		Intermediate		Minor		Total		
	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	No. Of Apps	Ave Proc time (wks)1	
Western	95	22.2	258	19.6	70	13.1	423	18.8	
	166	20.6	388	10.5	113	6.8	667	10.8	
	234	16.3	447	10.0	160	6.4	841	10.4	
Magherafelt	116	22.2	240	15.4	100	10.0	456	15.1	
Omagh	170	26.0	369	20.8	110	9.8	649	19.8	
Total	781	21.6	1,702	14.2	553	8.8	3,036	14.0	
Total	3,970	30.4	6,634	22.4	3,905	14.8	14,509	21.2	

Notes:

- 1 The time taken to process a decision is calculated from the date on which an application is deemed valid to the date on which the decision is issued. The median is used for the average processing time.

TABLE 2 - THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS THAT WERE DECIDED IN 2012/13 (Q1-Q3)1, WITH AVERAGE (MEDIAN) PROCESSING TIME IN WEEKS2 PER LGD AND GROUPED PER PLANNING OFFICE

	Major		Intermediate		Minor		Total		
	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	
Belfast	330	27.3	226	19.2	470	14.7	1,026	18.2	
Total	330	27.3	226	19.2	470	14.7	1,026	18.2	
Downpatrick	110	20.8	214	30.5	139	14.8	463	21.0	
Castlereagh	50	32.2	71	20.2	96	13.7	217	17.0	

	Major		Intermediate		Minor		Total	
	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)2
	155	38.2	323	34.8	179	15.6	657	29.2
	67	19.2	87	21.6	117	13.4	271	18.0
	382	27.0	695	29.8	531	14.6	1,608	22.0
Northern	47	25.2	76	17.4	36	9.1	159	15.4
	115	17.4	148	15.7	104	7.2	367	13.2
	124	32.9	185	14.8	133	11.2	442	15.4
	50	24.5	114	13.8	37	10.6	201	13.6
	39	41.8	76	19.6	41	11.8	156	20.4
	70	15.7	118	14.3	64	7.0	252	11.2
	445	24.0	717	15.8	415	9.0	1,577	14.4
South Antrim	73	11.0	132	8.7	71	5.8	276	7.6
	96	19.8	165	13.2	103	10.0	364	12.1
	38	17.4	36	11.2	42	10.2	116	11.2
	62	20.9	97	15.8	43	11.8	202	15.0
	88	27.9	86	17.8	105	14.8	279	17.8
	357	19.4	516	13.2	364	10.4	1,237	13.0

	Major		Intermediate		Minor		Total	
	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)/2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)/2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)/2	No. of apps	Ave Proc time (wks)/2
Southern	114	37.8	239	27.0	70	15.0	423	25.6
	90	25.8	151	15.0	74	10.2	315	15.0
	115	20.0	178	16.8	89	13.4	382	15.9
	131	40.4	283	28.4	133	19.0	547	27.6
	202	45.5	474	28.1	131	17.0	807	27.6
Total	652	33.3	1,325	24.0	497	15.0	2,474	22.8
Strategic Planning	182	68.5	42	36.4	0	.	224	64.7
	182	68.5	42	36.4	0	.	224	64.7
Western	109	25.6	123	15.8	61	9.8	293	15.2
	139	13.2	189	9.0	84	6.5	412	8.6
	219	15.0	239	9.4	91	5.6	549	10.4
	90	17.5	188	15.7	59	11.4	337	15.0
	158	24.7	188	13.9	85	9.4	431	14.4
Total	715	17.8	927	12.4	380	8.4	2,022	12.8
Total	3,063	25.8	4,448	18.7	2,657	12.0	10,168	17.8

Notes:

- 1 2012/13 Q3 is our most recent published information and these figures are provisional.
- 2 The time taken to process a decision is calculated from the date on which an application is deemed valid to the date on which the decision is issued. The median is used for the average processing time

Wind Farms and Wind Turbines

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment whether he would investigate the health issues in relation to wind farms and wind turbines raised by the Hanning-Evans article in the British Medical Journal on 10 March 2012, with a view to wind farm regulation.

(AQW 23826/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 'Renewable Energy' states that renewable energy development will be permitted provided the proposal will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on, inter alia, public safety or human health.

Where matters of public health are raised in relation to a proposal for wind energy development, or where an assessment of scientific research in this area is required, it is my Department's practice to consult with the Public Health Agency (PHA) which possesses the relevant expertise in this area.

The PHA has previously advised my Department that the British Medical Journal article by Hanning/Evans which you cite is an opinion piece and, although it does consider earlier research, it does not necessarily do so in a systematic manner.

In light of this the PHA advise that it should not be regarded as evidence of new scientific research in this area and does not alter the existing advice of the PHA which is that, in general, provided established guidance and best practice in relation to placement of wind turbines and mitigation measures is undertaken, there is minimal to no risk to the health of the population associated with such facilities.

Wind Turbine Industry: Public Consultation Exercises

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment what weight his Department gives to public consultation exercises conducted by the wind turbine industry when forming policy or guidance.

(AQW 23930/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department encourages wind energy developers to undertake public consultation with communities likely to be affected by wind energy proposals, however no weight is attached to such consultation by the industry when formulating policy or guidance.

When developing any planning policy or guidance the Department will seek the views of all relevant stakeholders and publish draft proposals for a 12 week period of public consultation. The Department will consider all representations received before publishing the policy or guidance in final form.

Wind Energy Industry: Regulation and Monitoring

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment how he will regulate and monitor the wind energy industry; and whether he will bring forward new legislation for regulation, given that the current ETSU-97 Guidelines are out of date and not fit for purpose in the context of the rapid rate of technological development within the industry.

(AQW 23972/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In common with the approach adopted in Britain my Department's Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 'Renewable Energy' recommends use of the 'Assessment and Rating of Noise from Wind Farms' (ETSU-R-97) methodology in the assessment and rating of noise from wind energy developments.

At the direction of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in England, the ETSU-R-97 standard was recently the subject of a review by the Institute of Acoustics (IoA). Following the review the IoA published a Good Practice Guide aimed at ensuring the consistent application of the methodology.

I am satisfied that the ETSU-R-97 standard provides a reasonable degree of protection to wind farm neighbours, without placing unreasonable restrictions on wind farm development that is essential to

meeting our renewable energy targets. I therefore do not intend to bring forward further legislation or policy to replace or supersede the recommended use of the ETSU-R-97 standard.

Council Staff

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of people employed in councils in each year since 2007, broken down by grade.

(AQW 23993/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The information you have requested has been provided by the individual councils. 23 of the 26 council responses were able to be amalgamated, and are included in the table attached at Annex A; however, due to variances in grading systems, the 3 remaining council responses from Lisburn City Council, Derry City Council and North Down Borough Council are attached individually at Annexes B, C and D, respectively.

North Down Borough Council was unable to provide a breakdown of grades for the 2007 – 2010 years, as it transferred to another grading system in 2011.

ANNEX A

23 COUNCIL EMPLOYEE NUMBERS BROKEN DOWN BY GRADE

Grade	31 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008	31 Mar 2009	31 Mar 2010	31 Mar 2011	31 Mar 2012	31 Mar 2013
Chief Executive	20	19	21	20	22	22	22
CO/Director	115	110	113	111	102	97	95
PO 12-13	7	7	6	5	8	9	13
PO 11	6	6	8	10	10	7	6
PO 10	7	13	15	13	17	19	23
PO 9	22	22	20	25	20	18	23
PO 8	14	22	23	26	26	33	34
PO 7	73	87	92	96	99	92	93
PO 6	95	84	84	94	87	84	93
PO 5	85	97	105	106	103	102	104
PO 4	190	198	235	230	236	249	257
PO 3	194	220	207	209	213	203	202
PO 2	179	174	211	214	218	223	224
PO 1	362	369	397	401	442	434	428
PO Range	37	40	48	52	49	48	50
SO 2	343	401	372	395	371	378	418
S01	450	425	460	467	477	481	509
Scale 6	475	469	546	565	604	607	618
Scale 5	486	548	652	648	625	628	641
Scale 4	751	874	931	1077	1125	1169	1204
Scale 3	1461	1841	1959	2045	2086	2065	2039

Grade	31 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008	31 Mar 2009	31 Mar 2010	31 Mar 2011	31 Mar 2012	31 Mar 2013
Scale 2	836	1320	1314	1454	1459	1470	1467
Scale 1	957	1043	1064	1052	1000	996	1011
Other	2210	1170	1022	646	729	711	725

ANNEX B**LISBURN CITY COUNCIL EMPLOYEE NUMBER BROKEN DOWN BY GRADE**

Grade	31 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008	31 Mar 2009	31 Mar 2010	31 Mar 2011	31 Mar 2012	31 Mar 2013
Chief Executive	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Director	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
Assistant Director	13	14	13	13	13	14	13
Middle Management	24	24	27	33	32	33	32
Junior Management	79	83	80	91	89	83	90
Scale 5/6	16	20	20	39	37	40	50
Scale 6	5	5	5	1	1	1	1
Scale 5	25	23	21	8	7	8	10
Scale 4/5	7	11	14	20	16	22	28
Scale 3/5	14	16	20	42	41	42	39
Scale 3/4	19	22	22	39	39	46	38
Scale 4	22	20	16	3	1	1	1
Scale 3	50	45	34	11	9	9	20
Scale 2/3	46	52	71	128	116	95	108
Scale 1/3	54	78	77	69	60	60	62
Scale 1/2	40	37	24	12	8	8	10
Scale 2	82	74	44	9	8	7	5
Scale 1	141	162	146	165	162	157	171
Craftsmen	14	13	13	15	15	15	13

ANNEX C**DERRY CITY COUNCIL EMPLOYEE NUMBER BROKEN DOWN BY GRADE**

GRADE	31 Mar 2007	31 Mar 2008	31 Mar 2009	31 Mar 2010	31 Mar 2011	31 Mar 2012	31 Mar 2013
Chief Executive	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Deputy Chief Executive	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Strategic Director	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Heads of Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Chief Officer	6	6	6	6	6	3	3
Deputy Chief Officer	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Senior Assistant Chief Officer	10	8	9	10	9	9	7
Junior Assistant Chief Officer	9	16	13	11	10	10	6
Instructor	11	6	9	11	15	5	7
Scale Point 38-46	43	37	40	42	35	33	41
Scale Point 29-37	83	88	96	100	92	89	99
Scale Point 22-28	47	51	51	47	45	41	44
Scale Point 14-25	24	30	31	32	27	30	28
Scale Point 14-21	15	13	17	20	22	21	23
Scale Point 4-17	48	49	46	50	35	34	38
Scale Point 8	15	13	10	12	11	12	14
Scale Point 7	16	18	16	20	22	21	23
Scale Point 6	144	148	158	164	168	174	165
Scale Point 5	25	24	22	25	26	27	30
Scale Point 4	74	86	99	85	64	64	63
Other - Craft, fitter, mechanic, electrician, etc	16	18	16	17	15	15	15
17 year olds	13	0	1	15	3	3	3
16 year olds	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
Airport Fire Staff	26	27	25	19	0	0	0
Airport Maintenance Staff	1	1	1	1	0	0	0
Pensioners	2	2	2	2	2	2	1

ANNEX D**NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL EMPLOYEE NUMBER BROKEN DOWN BY GRADE**

Scales from 1 April 2007	31 Mar 2008	31 Mar 2009	31 Mar 2010	31 Mar 2011	31 Mar 2012	31 Mar 2013
Chief Executive				1	1	1
Chief Officer / PO15				1	1	1
PO 13				1	3	3
PO 12				3	1	1
PO 7						
PO 6				5	7	7
PO 5				9	8	8
PO 4				3	5	5
PO 3				2		
PO 2				7	12	11
PO 1				30	26	24
SO 2				8	8	7
SO 1				5	12	13
Salary Scale 6				51	45	41
Salary Scale 5				26	26	18
Salary Scale 4				65	77	66
Salary Scale 3				142	126	98
Salary Scale 2				23	26	31
Salary Scale 1c				17	29	20
Salary Scale 1b				50	22	35
SCP14					8	1
SCP13						1
SCP11				47	37	16
SCP10				1		
SCP 6				7		23
SCP 4				4	4	4

Dog Control Orders

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment which councils have the new Dog Control Orders in place.

(AQW 24000/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Clean Neighbourhoods legislation provides for a range of offences which may be prescribed in a local council Dog Control Order.

The Department issued guidance on such Dog Control Orders with effect from 1 April 2012 which makes clear that district councils may make Dog Control Orders, provided that they are satisfied that an Order is justified, and they have followed the necessary procedures.

The Department has contacted all 26 Councils and obtained the following information. (2 Councils did not respond to the Department's request for information).

DOG CONTROL ORDERS CURRENTLY IN PLACE

Name of Council	No. of Dog Control Orders	Date Order came into Operation	Title of Order
Ards	2	1/04/2013	The Fouling of Land By Dogs Ards Borough Order 2013 The Dogs Exclusion (Londonderry Park, Children's Play Area and Sports Pitches) Order 2013
Belfast	2	1/10/2012 1/04/2013	The Fouling of Land by Dogs (Belfast City Council) Order 2012 The Dogs (Specified Maximum) (Belfast) Order 2012
Down	3	1/06/2013	The Fouling of Land by Dogs (Down District) Order 2012 The Dogs on Leads Newcastle (Down District) Order 2012 The Dogs on Leads Newcastle Seashore (Down District) Order 2012
Larne	5	1/04/2013	The Fouling of Lands by Dogs (Larne Borough Council) Order 2013 The Dogs on Lead by Direction (Larne Borough Council) Order 2013 The Dogs Exclusion (Children's Play Parks and Playing Fields Larne Borough Council) Order 2013 The Dogs on Leads (Cemeteries Larne Borough Council) Order 2013 The Dogs on Leads (Carnlough, Ballygally and Browns Bay Beaches, Larne Borough Council) Order 2013
Newtownabbey	3	1/02/2013	The Fouling of Land by Dogs (Newtownabbey Borough Council) Order 2012 The Dogs Exclusion (Newtownabbey Borough Council (Children's Play Parks and Recreation Grounds)) Order 2012 The Dogs on Leads by Direction (Newtownabbey Borough Council) Order 2012

Name of Council	No. of Dog Control Orders	Date Order came into Operation	Title of Order
North Down	5	1/05/2013	<p>The North Down Borough Council (Fouling of Land by Dogs) (General) Order 2013</p> <p>The North Down Borough Council Dog Exclusion (Playgrounds) Order 2013</p> <p>The North Down Borough Council Dogs on Leads by Direction (Parks and Playing Fields) Order 2013</p> <p>The North Down Borough Council Dogs on Leads (Promenades and Gardens) Order 2013</p> <p>The North Down Borough Council Dogs on Leads (Beaches) Order 2013</p>

In addition to Orders already made Antrim and Strabane Councils have proposed Dog Control Order consultation exercises in progress while Belfast and Newtownabbey are currently consulting on proposals for additional Orders. Ards Council indicated that it has agreed to a further Dog Control Order coming into operation on 1.08.2013 excluding dogs from children's play areas.

Other Councils have indicated they are monitoring their public spaces and recreational areas to determine whether a specific Dog Control Order should be implemented or pointed to an intention to introduce Orders in the near future.

Single Use Disposable Dental Instruments

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has made any assessment of the environmental impact of an increased use of single use disposable dental instruments.
(AQW 24022/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The primary purpose of the hierarchy is to minimise adverse environmental effects from waste and to increase resource efficiency in waste management and policy.

As laid down in Article 4 of the Waste Framework Directive (WFD), the new waste hierarchy is a priority order for waste management to be applied as follows:

- Prevention including reuse;
- Preparing for re-use;
- Recycling;
- Other recovery, e.g. energy recovery; and
- Disposal.

The WFD allows that specific waste streams may depart from the waste hierarchy where this is justified by a life cycle assessment.

The fundamental objective of the life cycle approach, or life cycle thinking, is to be aware of, and to take into account the overall impacts (environmental, economic and social) that a product or service will have throughout its whole life i.e. "from cradle to grave". The aim of such an approach is to make decisions more transparent and from a sound basis.

DHSSPSNI is responsible for policy on dental issues in Northern Ireland. Dentists have been advised of certain circumstances where single use instruments are only to be used, such as for endodontic reamers and files, due to health considerations in the context of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. In this case the waste hierarchy is not being followed due to the consideration of health issues.

Planning Permissions for Wind Turbines

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the conditions attached to planning permissions for wind turbines are complied with.

(AQW 24040/11-15)

Mr Attwood: DoE Planning is responsible for planning control in Northern Ireland. This responsibility includes the determination of planning applications and taking whatever action considered necessary for the enforcement of planning control.

The Department adopts a proportionate approach to enforcement and compliance and as the majority of development proposals are built and operated in accordance with the conditions attached to the planning approval the Department does not routinely monitor all developments. However case officers do regularly identify developments which require proactive monitoring involving restrictive conditions such as noise limitations on wind turbine developments.

In such circumstances the Department will take reasonable steps through effective monitoring and liaison with the relevant Environmental Health Department to ensure that conditions are complied with.

Environmental Health Department officials and other consultees will also regularly alert DoE Planning of concerns in relation to the implementation of a

permission granted, including compliance with conditions and the Department will take appropriate action and may serve a breach of condition notice. Failure to secure compliance with the notice is an offence and anyone found guilty of such an offence may be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1000.

Beaches with Blue Flag Status

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment, given that fewer beaches have been awarded Blue Flag status this season, what action he is taking to improve the standard of beaches.

(AQW 24119/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Foundation for Environmental Education, who run the International Blue Flag Programme, have adopted new, more stringent water quality criteria. These do not become law in the UK until 2015. Judged against the previous standards, the results would have been better, even as good as the best ever 20 previous years.

Five of our beaches lost Blue Flag between 2012 and 2013. Four of these (Downhill, Castlerock, Portrush East Strand and Cranfield Bay) were as a direct result of the new standards. There was no deterioration in water quality at these sites, with all achieving the guideline standards of the current EC Directive. Only Crawfordsburn lost its Blue Flag as a result of a slight deterioration in water quality compared to 2011. Although the Crawfordsburn River experienced some agricultural pollution problems the bathing water did still achieve the mandatory standard of the EC Directive. All five of these bathing waters are still accepted by the EC as perfectly safe for bathing, from a water quality point of view.

I have been taking forward many actions to improve the standard of beaches within the Action Plan of the Good Beach Summits. These include:

- 1 Completion of planned improvements to sewerage infrastructure at Ballyholme and Newcastle bathing waters;
- 2 Pollution source apportionment studies for bathing waters 'at risk';
- 3 Improved location information and monitoring of Combined Sewer Overflows;
- 4 Improved beach information and safety language;
- 5 Development of a Marine Litter Strategy;
- 6 Introduce a single-use carrier bag levy, to help reduce littering;

- 7 Greater publicity around enforcement, especially around littering;
- 8 Increased participation in beach award schemes;
- 9 Better beach information through the publication of Bathing Water;
10. Profiles and the launch of a dedicated web site www.BeachNI.com

Discovery of Waste at the Mobuoy Area of Londonderry

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment, following the recent discovery of waste at the Mobuoy area of Londonderry, when it will be possible to establish an estimated cost of the clean up; and who will be responsible for paying for the clean up.

(AQW 24150/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The investigation into both the extent of the waste deposits and their likely environmental impacts is ongoing. My priorities are to ensure the investigation is of a standard that will result in a strong legal outcome in relation to the criminal activities that have occurred. The course of this will be relevant in the determination of who will be responsible for dealing with the aftermath of this illegality. As far as possible I want to make sure that the guilty pay for their actions and that the public purse of Northern Ireland does not suffer as a result.

It is therefore not proper to begin to speculate about the identity of those who will be legally responsible – or about the methods that may need to be used to clean up. Clearly, I have tasked the Department to assess this matter, in the event that those responsible fail to live up to their legal responsibilities and notices served. At present I am ensuring that the water quality in the River Faughan is consistently under assessment and am keeping under consideration the response of those who have been served with Statutory Notices requiring leachate to be removed from the areas of illegal waste and disposed of legally.

I wish to make it very clear – any short term and longer term risks are being identified and responses put in place or will be put in place. I view this matter as a critical incident of the highest threshold – it is being managed in this way.

Discharge of Treated Sewage Waste

Mr Swann asked the Minister of the Environment what impact the discharge of treated sewage waste into local river courses has on the tourism potential of local angling.

(AQW 24173/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Since April 1 2007, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency has been responsible for regulating discharges from Northern Ireland Water Limited (NIWI) Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW). Permissions (known as a Consent) have been issued to over 1100 WWTWs, 30 water treatment works and 300 sewer systems.

The conditions of each Consent are drawn up to ensure that the treated effluent can be absorbed by the receiving waterway without affecting the quality of the aquatic environment, or breaching national or European standards.

There has been a sustained improvement in the compliance of discharges from wastewater treatment works, with compliance having increased from 82% in 2005 to 92% in 2012. This has been achieved though the significant investment in our sewerage infrastructure supported by the Executive of approximately £1billion since 2007. This investment is to set continue between 2015 and 2021, with £990 million being spent on upgrading the sewerage infrastructure in Northern Ireland. This will help provide further protection to our waterways and Northern Ireland's Fisheries.

The increase in compliance has also been underpinned by NIEA using relevant enforcement. Northern Ireland Water has been convicted in court in respect of 48 water pollution offences under the Water (NI) Order 1999, with fines levied totalling £77,400. During that period 38 Enforcement Notices and 250 Warning Letters have also been issued for water pollution offences.

I am advised that the Department of Trade, Enterprise and Investment, through the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, and in conjunction with Sport NI, has commissioned a Strategic Review of Angling in Northern Ireland.

The review will explore the constraints and opportunities in developing angling for both visitors and the home-based angling community and will make recommendations on how Northern Ireland can offer a coherent angling experience for visitors.

Sport NI is leading this review and a steering group has been established to ensure all bodies with a responsibility for angling have input into the review. This includes the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure, the Loughs Agency, and the three recognised governing bodies, the Ulster Angling Federation, the Irish Association of Sea Anglers and the Ulster Coarse Fishing Federation.

There has been wide-ranging consultation and the results of this review will highlight the best opportunities for angling tourism at an international, national and local level and any major barriers which are restricting the development of our angling tourism.

Wind Turbine Planning Applications

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the criteria used to make a decision on a planning application for a wind turbine.

(AQW 24190/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department assesses development proposals against all planning policies and other material considerations that are relevant to it.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 – Renewable Energy sets out the main policy considerations that the Department will take into account in assessing proposals for renewable energy and heat generating facilities.

Policy RE 1 – Renewable Energy Development is the most relevant policy used to determine wind turbine applications. Development will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated that the proposal, and any associated buildings and infrastructure, will not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on:

- (a) public safety, human health, or residential amenity;
- (b) visual amenity and landscape character;
- (c) biodiversity, nature conservation or built heritage interests;
- (d) local natural resources, such as air quality or water quality; and
- (e) public access to the countryside.

In addition, applications for wind energy development will also be required to demonstrate that all of the following that the development will not have an unacceptable impact on visual amenity or landscape character through:

- (i) the number, scale, size and siting of turbines;
- (ii) that the development has taken into consideration the cumulative impact of existing wind turbines, those which have permissions and those that are currently the subject of valid but undetermined applications;
- (iii) that the development will not create a significant risk of landslide or bog burst;
- (iv) that no part of the development will give rise to unacceptable electromagnetic interference to communications installations; radar or air traffic control systems; emergency services communications; or other telecommunication systems;
- (v) that no part of the development will have an unacceptable impact on roads, rail or aviation safety;

- (vi) that the development will not cause significant harm to the safety or amenity of any sensitive receptors¹ (including future occupants of committed developments) arising from noise; shadow flicker; ice throw; and reflected light; and
- (vii) that above-ground redundant plant (including turbines), buildings and associated infrastructure shall be removed and the site restored to an agreed standard appropriate to its location.

The publication 'Best Practice Guidance to Planning Policy Statement 18' and the supplementary planning guidance 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes' will also be taken into account in assessing all wind turbine proposals.

Rathlin Island Gorse Fire: Bird Populations and Habitats

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what impact the recent gorse fire had on bird populations and habitats on Rathlin Island.

(AQW 24191/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Officials in the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) visited Rathlin Island on 10 June 2013 to assess the impact of the recent gorse fire on designated environmental sites.

These investigations are ongoing but an initial assessment has confirmed that part of the fire occurred in an area which lies within the Rathlin Island Coast Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), the Rathlin Island Special Protection Area and the Rathlin Island Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The fire however is thought to have affected less than 0.4% of the ASSI. The area affected is deemed to contain or have the potential to contain Maritime cliff and slope (ASSI features)/Vegetation sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts (SAC feature). The area impacted by the fire would equate to less than 0.7% of the feature area. It is considered that the area where the fire occurred had been dominated by gorse, bracken and bramble and that these species were not an important component of the designation feature. The most recent condition assessment showed this feature as a whole to be in favourable condition and NIEA officials consider that the fire would not alter this.

There are no recent records of qualifying bird species of the designated sites, such as seabirds or raptors, using the area where the fire occurred. NIEA officials do not expect any impacts on these birds or on the earth science features of the ASSI.

Local Council Staff

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what is the full time equivalent of staff employed in each local council.

(AQW 24193/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The attached table represents the most up to date information held by my Department in respect of your request. The information has been extracted from individual 2011/12 council accounts, all of which have been certified, with the exception of those of Craigavon Borough Council where that process has not been finalised.

NUMBER OF COUNCIL EMPLOYEES – FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS 2011/2012

Council	2011/2012 FTE
Antrim	269
Ards	389
Armagh	292
Ballymena	295
Ballymoney	116

Council	2011/2012 FTE
Banbridge	237
Belfast	2,323
Carrickfergus	191
Castlereagh	354
Coleraine	306
Cookstown	209
Craigavon	*521
Derry	555
Down	338
Dungannon	257
Fermanagh	299
Larne	184
Limavady	156
Lisburn	519
Magherafelt	154
Moyle	109
Newry & Mourne	420
Newtownabbey	348
North Down	396
Omagh	282
Strabane	187
Total	9,706

* Uncertified

Cumulative Effects of Wind Turbines

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment what guidelines his Department uses when considering the cumulative effects of wind turbines.

(AQW 24199/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 – ‘Renewable Energy’ sets out the main policy considerations that the Department will take into account in assessing proposals for renewable energy and heat generating facilities.

Policy RE 1 – Renewable Energy Developments of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 – Renewable Energy is the most relevant policy used in determining wind turbine applications. In line with this policy, development that generates energy from renewable resources will be permitted provided the proposal does not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on various matters including visual amenity and landscape character. There is also a policy requirement for applications for wind energy developments to demonstrate that the development has taken into consideration the cumulative impact of existing

wind turbines, those which have permissions and those that are currently the subject of valid but undetermined applications.

The publication 'Best Practice Guidance to Planning Policy Statement 18' and the supplementary planning guidance 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes' will also be taken into account in assessing all wind turbine proposals.

The Best Practice Guidance document provides background information on the various renewable energy technologies. Guidance contained within this document on matters such as Cumulative Landscape and Visual impacts is designed to contribute to the development management process.

The supplementary planning guidance 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes' highlights key issues of cumulative impact that will need to be considered as wind energy development in Northern Ireland expands.

Consideration of the cumulative impact of developments is therefore an important material consideration and must always form part of any assessment. The outcome of this assessment will differ depending on the nature of each application, in particular, the location of each proposal in the landscape and its ability to absorb a number of turbines.

Habitats Regulations

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment when he will amend the Habitats Regulations to comply with the Court of Justice of the European Union decision in Case 256/11 (Sweetman v An Bord Pleanála); and when he will designate the remaining Priority Habitats.

(AQW 24247/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The court judgement in question concerned the interpretation of Article 6 of the Habitats Directive as applied to a decision by the Irish Planning Board to give approval to a road scheme. It did not concern any legal lacuna in the relevant Irish transposing legislation. The Department does not consider that there are any legislative implications arising from this case, therefore amending regulations are not required.

The Department has designated 57 Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in line with the requirements of the Directive, 40 of which host priority habitats identified in the Directive. The Department considers the suite of SACs in Northern Ireland to be complete.

Effect of Wind Farms on Rural Areas

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration has been given to the effect that wind farms have on rural areas; and what plans he has to protect the environment, specifically Landscape Character Areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

(AQW 24275/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department's Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 18 'Renewable Energy' acknowledges the potential impacts of renewable energy development on rural areas. The principal objective of the PPS is to facilitate the siting of renewable energy generating facilities within the natural environment whilst ensuring adequate protection of the Region's natural and cultural heritage features. The policy requires that such developments should not result in unacceptable adverse impact on a range of material planning factors, including visual amenity, landscape character, biodiversity and nature conservation.

While PPS 18 does not rule out wind farm development within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs); Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI's) or Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), it is a key policy objective to ensure that the environmental, landscape, visual and amenity impacts associated with such development are adequately addressed for these areas; and that appropriate protection is afforded to the Region's built, natural and cultural heritage features.

The Best Practice Guidance (BPG) that accompanies PPS 18 recommends a cautious approach in relation to those landscapes which are of designated significant value, such as AONB's, and their wider settings. The BPG advises that in these locations it may be difficult to accommodate wind turbines without detriment to the Region's cultural and natural heritage assets.

Where appropriate the Natural Heritage Directorate (NH) of NIEA provides advice to DOE on wind farm developments which may impact upon Northern Ireland's landscapes, including AONBs, ASSIs or SACs. The advice provided by NH assists with the appropriate location, siting, layout and design of wind farm developments in landscape and visual terms.

In addition, the Supplementary Planning Guidance document 'Wind Energy Development in Northern Ireland's Landscapes, published by NIEA, provides broad, strategic guidance in relation to the visual and landscape impacts of wind energy development within Landscape Character Areas and is to be taken into account in assessing all wind energy proposals

Furthermore, where wind farm developments are located in a "sensitive area" including AONBs, ASSIs and SACs, an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required if the development is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

PPS 18 should be read together with the relevant contents of other planning policy publications. I will soon be bringing forward an updated Planning Policy Statement 2 'Natural Heritage' which sets out the Departments policies for the conservation, protection and enhancement of the our natural heritage, including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

Proposed Wind Farms or Single Turbines

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department will inform residents, within a five kilometre radius of any proposed wind farm or single turbine, in writing through the Planning Service, as opposed to the current Neighbour Notification criteria, which differs in terms of scale and impact.

(AQW 24277/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Neighbour notification is undertaken by the Department as a matter of good practice. Its purpose is to advise those who are most likely to be affected by a development proposal. As such it is established procedure to notify only the occupants of buildings that abut a planning application site and are within 90m of that site.

In addition to this scheme, planning applications are also advertised in a newspaper in circulation in the locality within which the application site is situated. All applications are also available to view on the PlanningNI website.

While, I believe the existing neighbour notification and publicity arrangements for planning applications are broadly adequate, the new Planning Bill, which I will bring before the Assembly for Consideration on 24 June, contains provisions to allow for revised publicity measures to be brought forward by way of future subordinate legislation. Such future legislation would itself be subject to public consultation and Assembly scrutiny.

Single Carrier Bag Levy

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of percentage reduction in the number of carrier bags given out at checkouts since the introduction of the single carrier bag levy.

(AQW 24283/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As my Department will not validate the first set of levy returns from retailers until the end of July 2013, no validated estimate of the percentage reduction in the number of single use carrier bags dispensed at checkouts since the introduction of the single use carrier bag levy is available.

However some retailers, both small and large, have anecdotally reported reductions in excess of 75%.

Increase in the Sale of Plastic Bags

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment to outline any estimates in the percentage increase in the sale of plastic bags such as bin liners or nappy bags that have been reported by retailers since the introduction of the single carrier bag levy.

(AQW 24284/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Officials from the Carrier Bag Levy Team have been working in partnership with both small and large retailers across the country to ensure compliance. To date, they have not been presented with firm or particular evidence to suggest an increase in sales of bin liners or nappy bags.

While an increase in the purchase of these substitute products is anticipated, modelling completed prior to the introduction of the levy suggests that the very substantial reduction in single use carrier bags, anticipated as a result of the levy, will produce a net environmental benefit.

Single Use Carrier Bag Levy: Environmental Policy

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment whether the single carrier bag levy is an environmental policy; and why there are no exceptions for biodegradable bags.

(AQW 24285/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The levy is first and foremost an environmental initiative. It aims to achieve real and sustained benefits to our natural environment - including reduced carbon emissions, reduced air and water pollution and reduced litter in public spaces. My objective - as stated in the Executive's Programme for Government - is to achieve a reduction of at least 80% in the use of single use carrier bags in Northern Ireland.

It is only the residual consumption of bags that will raise any revenue. The Department will use this to fund a mix of new and existing environmental programmes particularly those that deliver social and economic benefits. Again this clearly demonstrates that the levy is an environmental initiative.

I have consistently stated that I want to avoid the unnecessary use of carrier bags – regardless of the materials from which they are made. It is for this reason that biodegradable bags are presently subject to the levy. Even bags which are capable of rapid degradation have an environmental impact through their production, transport and disposal. The speed at which a bag degrades will depend on both the precise composition of the bag and on the environmental conditions to which it is exposed.

Moreover, an exemption for certain biodegradable bags could generate a major switch from other bags towards those that would qualify for this exemption. There would be no incentive for consumers to reduce the number of bags that they use – and a greater likelihood that bags would be discarded irresponsibly.

Finally it is worth noting that in both Wales and Ireland, biodegradable bags are subject to charging arrangements. However, as with all exemptions, I will keep the position under review, as I appreciate the argument though it has not prevailed in my thinking.

Single Use Carrier Bag Levy: Increase in Cost

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment what increases in the cost of a single use carrier bag are planned for each of the next five years.

(AQW 24286/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Subject to the Assembly's approval, the Carrier Bag Levy is set to increase to 10 pence from April 2014. It was always my intention that the levy would be set at 10 pence to maximise its overall environmental and economic benefits. The initial 5 pence levy, introduced on 8 April 2013, provided consumers with a period of time to adapt their shopping behaviour to the new charging arrangements.

Whilst I currently have no plans to increase the levy beyond 10 pence, a review of the Carrier Bag Levy Project will be undertaken in 2015. This review will include consideration of the amount of the levy in the context of the number of bags dispensed in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Future increases in the levy may be required to maintain its real value, once inflation is taken into account. However, any assessment will be dependent on an analysis of the data emerging from retailer returns to the Carrier Bag Levy Team and any increase in the levy would require further legislation and Assembly approval.

Current or Planned Legislation

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to list the current or planned legislation that his Department will bring to the Assembly before the end of the current term.

(AQW 24296/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The details of the seven further Bills that I propose to introduce to the Assembly before the end of March 2015 are contained in the attached table.

Additionally, the Marine Bill completed its legislative passage in May and the Planning Bill has completed consideration stage. At the beginning of June, I also introduced the Carrier Bag Bill to the Assembly, which will extend the Carrier Bag Levy to certain reusable bags as well as single use carrier bags.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT PROPOSED BILLS UP TO MARCH 2015

No	Bill	Purpose
1.	Local Government Bill	To provide for the reorganisation of local government; new governance arrangements for councils; a new ethical standards regime; the introduction of community planning powers and the power of well-being; and an updated service delivery and performance improvement regime.
2.	Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill No 1	To introduce a package of measures to tackle drink driving, reform the learner and restricted driver schemes and introduce Graduated Driver Licensing.
3.	Waste Recycling Bill	To allow for the introduction of a statutory recycling rate for local authority collected municipal waste.
4.	National Park Bill	To allow for the identification, designation and management of national parks (to be determined).
5. 5.	The Climate Change Bill	To introduce statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland.
6.	The Environmental Better Regulation Bill	To reduce the environmental regulatory burden on business and enhance protection of the environment.
7.	Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill No 2	To introduce mutual recognition of penalty points for motoring offences between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Clean Beaches

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of the Environment what action his Department is taking to ensure that beaches remain clean, particularly after busy summer weekends.

(AQW 24307/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am aware of the extent of littering on some beaches during the recent spell of good weather. Despite increasing efforts to reduce the littering problem by, for example, the issuing of on the spot fines, education and awareness campaigns, successful and well supported local community clean-up events and stronger Clean Neighbourhoods laws there are still people who continue to litter, spoiling the appearance of our local beauty spots and tourist attractions.

It is left to District Councils to clean up the mess left by the litterers on our beaches and in our towns, cities and countryside, at huge expense to local ratepayers. Yet it is so easy for people to bring their litter home with them in a bag after spending a day at the beach or to put their litter in a bin, yet a sizeable number of people do not take this extra small step. This is in spite of the fact that it is illegal to litter and Councils can impose on the spot fines of up to £80 for littering offences.

Councils are issuing fines for the offence of littering. In the last complete financial year District Councils issued over 3,700 fines for littering offences. I will continue to assess levels of anti-litter enforcement activity by District Councils across Northern Ireland and would expect Councils to target specific litter problem areas in their respective districts as part of their enforcement strategies.

You specifically asked about ensuring that beaches remain clean and I have indicated above that it is left to District Councils to clean up the mess. District Councils have a statutory duty, as respects relevant land for which they are responsible, to ensure that the land is, so far as is practicable, kept clear of litter.

The Department has issued a Code of Practice on Litter to provide Councils with practical guidance on the discharge of the litter clearing duty, including specific guidance on beaches. The Code makes clear that amenity beaches should, as a minimum standard, generally be kept clear of all types of litter during the traditional bathing season from 1 May to 30 September inclusive. The Code states that it is expected that during this time of the year, beaches be subject to a frequent monitoring routine and be cleansed to as practicable a standard as possible.

I fully recognise the importance of a clean and healthy coastline and I have convened a series of Beach Summits, the purpose and outcome of which is to address beach issues such as litter, water quality, signage, information, awards etc. all of which demonstrates a firm DOE commitment to beach management and coastal development.

Also, the Department is about to publish the Northern Ireland Marine Litter Strategy which is a co-ordinated response to the problem of litter on our coastline. Concerted action against those who continue to drop litter on our coastline, through education, awareness-raising and volunteering programs, along with promoting a strong system of enforcement, are key strands within the Strategy.

A change in public attitudes and behaviour towards the appropriate disposal of litter is essential to ensure beaches remain clean and litter free. A number of measures provided for within the Strategy will increase awareness of the undesirable social, economic and environmental consequences of marine litter. Existing measures include the Eco-schools and Young Reporters on the Environment programmes which are administered on behalf of the Department by Tidy NI. Also included is the Beachni.com website which launched in 2012. It provides information on our beaches including guidance on how users can minimise the social and environmental impact on beaches by encouraging visitors to not drop their litter but to bring it home with them and to clean up after their dogs.

Additional measures being brought forward under the Strategy include the development of a marine specific Rubbish Monster book and data capture measures which will be funded by Marine Division DOE.

The strategic direction provided by the Strategy will ensure that the problem is addressed at a Northern Ireland level. The Department is working closely with partners in the public, private and voluntary and community organisations to co-ordinate delivery of the Strategy and to provide support and guidance to stakeholders. It is important to highlight that partnership working is required to ensure the problem of marine litter is addressed.

The need to tackle the litter problem in Northern Ireland is ongoing. Action is being taken, new stronger Clean Neighbourhoods laws have been brought into operation, enforcement activity is increasing and the matter is constantly under review. In addition, a new Northern Ireland Marine Litter Strategy will shortly be published. I am determined to ensure that we continue to do all that we can to deal with this unsightly problem and to make Northern Ireland a cleaner and more attractive place for all of its citizens and visitors.

I am also writing specifically to the National Trust given the recent publicity around Portstewart Beach, seeking reassurances on their management of the beach and litter on the beach.

Carrier Bag Levy: Stock Loss

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will commission a report on the stock loss within major food retail outlets one year after the introduction of the carrier bag levy, as happened in the Irish Republic.

(AQW 24319/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Carrier Bag Levy Team has been working in partnership with a broad range of food retail outlets across the country in an education and awareness capacity. The Department has not been presented with any evidence of stock loss and does not currently plan to commission a specific report on this issue. However, the legislation requires the Department to undertake periodic reviews of the levy. It is not possible or appropriate to stipulate the precise remit of any such future review at this point in time.

Carrier Bag Levy: Drop in Sales

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment whether there are any indications of a drop in sales in retail food outlets since the introduction of the carrier bag levy.

(AQW 24320/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Carrier Bag Levy Team has been working in partnership with a broad range of food retail outlets across the country in an education and awareness capacity. To date my Department has not been made aware of any drop in sales in retail food outlets since the introduction of the levy. Such information will not be routinely provided to the Department by retailers in their quarterly returns.

Carrier Bag Levy: Revenue Generated

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment how much revenue has been generated by the carrier bag levy to date.

(AQW 24321/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As the receipts from the Carrier Bag Levy are collected on a quarterly basis, the first payments from retailers to the Department are not due until July 2013.

The Department anticipates quarterly receipts of around £425,000 in 2013/14 and will publish the actual receipts when this information becomes available.

Cost to Administer the Carrier Bag Levy

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment how much it has cost to administer the carrier bag levy to date.

(AQW 24322/11-15)

Mr Attwood: A budget of £533,000 has been allocated for the administration of the Carrier Bag Levy for 2013/14. £77,137 of this budget was spent between the introduction of the levy and 18 June 2013.

Carrier Bag Levy: Drop in Pollution Levels

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment whether there have been any indicators of a drop in pollution levels from plastic bags since the introduction of the carrier bag levy.

(AQW 24323/11-15)

Mr Attwood: It is too early to provide any information on this or on any of the other potential impacts of the carrier bag levy. Details will only start to become available from July 2013 onwards, when retailers are required to make their first quarterly returns to the Department.

It will be much later in the year before we have sufficient statistical evidence from which to draw meaningful conclusions on the impact of the levy. Indeed I would suggest that the full impact will only be realised when, subject to Assembly approval, charging is extended to low cost reusable bags.

That said, anecdotal evidence suggests a very significant reduction in carrier bag usage since the introduction of the levy. This leads me to believe that the Programme for Government target of an 80% reduction may be within our reach.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to publish the final version of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan within this calendar year.

(AQW 24344/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Work is ongoing and at an advanced stage in relation to the content of BMAP I always work towards creating certainty and avoiding doubt and that is the case for BMAP. I hope that the content of BMAP will be finalised shortly, the required processes completed quickly in relation to general compliance with RDS 2035, following which I will publish.

Carrier Bag Levy

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the environmental programmes and activities that will benefit from the revenue raised by the carrier bag levy.

(AQW 24375/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I intend to use the net revenue generated from the Carrier Bag Levy to support communities, businesses, voluntary organisations, charities and schools in the delivery of local environmental programmes, particularly those that deliver social and economic benefits. These include:

- The creation of a new River Restoration Fund to allow local communities, angling groups and voluntary environmental organisations to run small projects which will improve local river water quality and ecological status and thereby contribute to implementing the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive;
- The creation of a new Sustainability Innovation Fund to support community groups, business and others who need financial support to implement initiatives which have the potential for innovation which can generate transformational environmental change;
- Increased grants from the Community Challenge Fund to deliver a range of practical, local environmental projects through a broad range of not-for-profit groups including; voluntary and community groups, schools, charities and environmental trusts;
- Increased grants from the Natural Heritage Fund to encourage the conservation and enhancement of key elements of the environment and its wildlife and provide facilities which help as wide a range of people as possible to enjoy and appreciate our natural heritage; and
- Increased grants available from the Rethink Waste Fund to promote waste prevention, reuse and recycling.

The first Carrier Bag Levy returns from retailers are due in July 2013. Once this information is received and collated, the Department will be able to conduct a full assessment of the total net revenue for 2013/14 and allocate funding to programmes and projects on the basis of this estimate.

Driver and Vehicle Agency Detection Cameras: Untaxed Vehicles

Mr Givan asked the Minister of the Environment how many untaxed vehicles were detected by the Driver and Vehicle Agency detection cameras, in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) Parliamentary constituency; and (ii) council area.

(AQW 24394/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Agency is able to provide a breakdown of the overall total number of Automatic Number Plate Reader (ANPR) camera detections in each of the last three years. The details of which are set out in the table below:

Period	Volume
01 June 2012 – 31 May 2013	16,312
01 June 2011 – 31 May 2012	16,957
01 June 2010 – 31 May 2011	14,967
Total	48,236

Note: Figures were sourced from DVA information systems and are not validated DOE/DVA Official Statistics.

However, the records of such detections are stored against individual registration marks and places of detection are not stored in a way that would facilitate the breakdown of the relevant figures by parliamentary constituency or council area.

Statutory Transition Committee between Lisburn and Castlereagh Councils

Mr Givan asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will receive an all-party delegation from Lisburn City Council to discuss the formation of the Statutory Transition Committee between Lisburn and Castlereagh Councils. [R]

(AQW 24404/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have received a number of requests from Lisburn City Council to receive an all party delegation to discuss the formation of the Castlereagh and Lisburn Statutory Transition Committee.

Lisburn City Council has an issue with the equal representation of Councillors on the Statutory Transition Committee from the constituent councils. In my view, equal representation is the most sensible approach for the purposes of conducting business between the two merging Councils in the run up to the appointment of the new Council in shadow form in mid 2014. I have already made this clear in my letter of 28 February 2013 to the Chief Executive of Lisburn City Council.

There are examples of smaller Councils merging with larger Councils where the equal representation issue has been embraced, conscious of the fact that the majority of significant decisions will take place in the shadow period by the newly elected Council members.

It must be appreciated that there is a significant amount of preparatory work to be undertaken by Statutory Transition Committees in the next 12 months for the incoming councils. It is important that the work of all the Committees is tackled on the grounds of equal representation. I have already clarified this point in the draft Local Government (Statutory Transition Committees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013, which were laid in the Assembly on 17 June 2013.

It sends out a negative message that the two Councils can not resolve this issue themselves. I would suggest the Councils try again to work this out.

Chief Executive Positions in the New Councils

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of his announcement on 14 June 2013 about the open competition for the Chief Executive positions in the new councils, what assurances he can give that Statutory Transition Committees and shadow councils will have powers to make the appointments of the Chief Executives and that they will be able to do so in accordance with local requirements and circumstances.

(AQW 24418/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The draft Local Government (Statutory Transition Committees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013, which were laid in the Assembly on 17 June 2013, will empower Statutory Transition Committees to appoint a chief executive to each new council district. The Regulations are subject to the draft affirmative Assembly procedure and are due to be debated in plenary and voted upon before summer recess.

Appointments to the office of chief executive must be on merit, based on fair and open competition within best practice guidelines and robust recruitment procedures. Members of each local Statutory Transition Committee will be fully involved in the appointment process, thereby ensuring local requirements and local circumstances are met.

As appointments are made during the statutory transition phase, the new councils, operating in shadow form, will have no role in the appointment of chief executives. The Department will be issuing Statutory Transition Committees with guidance on the appointment of staff to a new council.

Chief Executives of Councils

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment, given the interests of existing council Chief Executives in positions in the new councils, whether Chief Executives, who are involved in the reform structures or as members of quangos and arm's-length bodies such as the Local Government Staff Commission, will have to declare any interests and remove themselves from discussions where interests are declared.

(AQW 24419/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Following my announcement on Friday 14 June 2013 to recruit chief executive designate by open competition to facilitate the change management process of the local government reform programme, there has been significant interest in the process to facilitate this.

As a matter of course, it will be necessary for those current chief executive post holders who are considering applying for the new roles, or indeed anyone else who is considering applying, to declare an interest and advise the department or its, relevant arm's length body or quango of this, to ensure that no impropriety could be inferred.

It is imperative that the entire process is equitable, fair, and transparent to ensure that the best candidates are appointed on the merit basis to the 11 new council by Statutory Transition Committees.

Transfer of Water Quality Inspection Employees

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the transfer of water quality inspection employees from district councils to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

(AQW 24420/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department of Environment recognise the importance of completing the transfer of staff from the District Councils to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. These members of Council staff form a very experienced resource that are often the only interface that members of the public will have with NIEA in their role as the front line response to pollution and proactive engagement with industry on pollution prevention.

Work is continuing to address the Human Resource and financial related matters associated with the proposed transfer. As part of this I have arranged to meet with the Chairperson of the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland to discuss the future status of the staff if they were to transfer.

I have made clear to the CSC how I believe this issue should be resolved.

Noise Monitoring of Wind Farms and Wind Turbines

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment whether (i) noise monitoring of wind farms and wind turbines will be carried out by accredited acousticians who are independent of the wind industry and are approved by the complainants; and (ii) the surveys will be conducted in a manner which will avoid any deliberate manipulation of turbine operation to reduce the acoustic emissions during testing; and whether he will make all the results, including raw data and associated sound files, available to the affected parties.

(AQW 24437/11-15)

Mr Attwood: DOE Planning is responsible for planning control in Northern Ireland. This responsibility includes the determination of applications and taking whatever action is considered necessary for the enforcement of planning control.

In dealing with any complaint in relation to unauthorised development or non-compliance with the details of a planning approval in respect of noise being generated by wind farms/wind turbines the Department will consult with Environmental Health to provide expert advice.

The alleged offender, in order to demonstrate compliance with the detail of the planning approval, may be required to submit a noise survey which would measure and report the noise impact from the wind turbine at the complainants address. DOE Planning will consult with Environmental Health for their assessment of the report and to establish if a breach of planning control has occurred.

It is not for the Department to stipulate what company is employed to carry out noise monitoring/ noise reports. However, Environmental Health may provide advice as to the topics to be covered within the noise report and the relevant noise standards against which the impact of the wind farm/turbine should be assessed.

Conditions relating to noise generated by wind farms/wind turbines require that within a stipulated timescale from when a wind turbine operator is notified of a reasonable complaint that they shall undertake to carry out a noise survey which shall measure and report the noise impact. Consultation with Environmental Health, as experts, includes identification of any short-comings within the noise report.

Any request for the release of information submitted in support of an enforcement case is considered on a case by case basis under Environmental Information Regulations 2004. A noise survey and report submitted in order to discharge a condition of planning approval is available for viewing on the Planning Portal and, by appointment in the local area planning office.

Additional Resources to Protect and Clean Beaches

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what additional resources are provided over the summer period to protect and clean beaches.

(AQW 24462/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The majority of our most popular beaches are managed by District Councils. Exceptions are Portstewart Strand, which is managed by the National Trust, and Crawfordsburn & Helen's Bay beaches, which are within Crawfordsburn Country Park and are managed by NIEA, on behalf of DOE.

At minor beaches, District Councils also provide litter bins and co-ordinate collection arrangements with volunteer groups. At our most popular beaches, Beach Management Plans and Beach Safety Plans are in place.

In practice, major beaches have litter inspection and cleaning on a daily basis during the summer months with appropriate extra provision at weekends or other predicted busy periods. All of this will be detailed within the Beach Management Plan. For example, at Crawfordsburn & Helen's Bay, the usual litter collection bins are serviced more frequently at weekends and extra skips are brought in at public holidays. Additional support staff are on call should numbers escalate in exceptional weather. These are typical of the arrangements at our most popular beaches.

Beach Safety Plans provide for risk assessments to be carried out and safety measures including signage, life belts and life guards. They also identify liaison arrangements with other agencies including the PSNI, the emergency services, other local councils and, if appropriate, NIR.

District Councils are under a legal duty to ensure that land for which they are responsible is, so far as is practicable, kept clear of litter. The Litter (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 provides councils with practical guidance on the discharge of this litter clearing duty, including specific guidance on beaches. Amenity beaches should, as a minimum standard, generally be kept clear of all types of litter during the traditional bathing season from 1 May to 30 September inclusive.

In addition, I chair quarterly meetings of the Good Beach Summit, which brings together beach operators and others with an interest in the management of our beaches. We are implementing an action plan under the headings of:

- Improving Water Quality;
- Improving Beach Cleanliness, Facilities, Management & Signage;
- Keeping the Public & Media Better Informed and
- Supporting the Coastal Economy.

The next summit is scheduled for 7 August.

I have also written to the National Trust and Coleraine Borough Council given the recent issued about Portstewart Beach.

Assembly Questions that Raise Environmental Concerns

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment why Assembly Questions that raise environmental concerns over his Department's handling of mineral extraction cases are taking so long to be answered.

(AQW 24476/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Applications for mineral extraction often raise complex issues which require a considerable amount of work to provide answers to Assembly Questions. I give careful consideration to the information provided and will provide answers when I have fully interrogated all relevant matters. I have impressed on officials the importance of providing timely responses, despite the complexity of the information required.

Illegal Landfilling

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether the illegal landfill at Mobouy Road, Derry has been allowed to take on any of the sites where his Department is dealing with retrospective planning applications to regularise unauthorised mineral extraction and where extraction has taken place over a number of years in the absence of planning permissions.

(AQW 24477/11-15)

Mr Attwood: During the processing of a number of planning applications for retrospective extraction of sand and gravel at Mobouy Road, Derry it came to the Department's attention that there had been unauthorised infilling at a number of the application sites.

Given that there was evidence of waste materials, included in the infilling, being deposited on a very large scale NIEA Environmental Crime Unit has been involved in extensive investigations. Strategic

Planning Division has not taken formal enforcement action in order to ensure the NIEA criminal investigation would not be prejudiced by attempting to take separate legal action. I believe this was the right course of action.

That said, I acknowledge the issues identified generally in the question. That is why I have previously asked senior management to assess the planning history around the relevant lands and have asked Mr Chris Mills - who has been appointed to consider in a robust and fearless manner any issues in relation to the waste side of the NIEA – to do likewise on the planning sector of DOE

Illegal Landfilling

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of whether the conditions for illegal landfilling on an large scale were created by ineffectual enforcement action against unauthorised mineral extraction at Mobouy Road, Derry.

(AQW 24485/11-15)

Mr Attwood: During the processing of a number of planning applications for retrospective extraction of sand and gravel at Mobouy Road, Derry it came to the Department's attention that there had been unauthorised infilling at a number of the application sites.

Given that there was evidence of waste materials, included in the infilling, being deposited on a very large scale NIEA Environmental Crime Unit has been involved in extensive investigations. Strategic Planning Division has not taken formal enforcement action in order to ensure the NIEA criminal investigation would not be prejudiced by attempting to take separate legal action. I believe this was the right course of action.

That said, I acknowledge the issues identified generally in the question. That is why I have previously asked senior management to assess the planning history around the relevant lands and have asked Mr Chris Mills - who has been appointed to consider in a robust and fearless manner any issues in relation to the waste side of the NIEA – to do likewise on the planning sector of DOE

Aarhus Convention

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment when he plans to fully implement the Aarhus Convention.

(AQW 24505/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The UK ratified the Aarhus Convention on 24 February 2005 and, in line with the Convention's procedures, became a full party to the Convention 90 days after that date, in May 2005.

The Convention is applied throughout Europe mostly by way of a number of EU Regulations or Directives, which are required to be transposed into domestic legislation by Member States. The most specific pieces of EU legislation which address the Aarhus Convention are the Environmental Information Directive (2003/4/EC), the Public Participation Directive (2003/35/EC) and the Industrial Emissions Directive (2010/75/EC).

The Environmental Information Directive was transposed on a UK-wide basis by way of the Environmental Information Regulations 2005, under which public authorities must make environmental information available to the public by electronic means which are easily accessible. All public authorities must also take reasonable steps to organize the environmental information they hold relevant to their functions with a view to the active and systematic dissemination of the information to the public. DOE and other government departments have achieved this by way of publication schemes which are available on the various departmental websites.

The Environmental Information Regulations also require any public authority that holds environmental information to make it available on request, as soon as possible and no later than 20 working days after the date of receipt of the request, unless there are specific circumstances which prevent a reply within the timescale or there are exceptions to disclosure as set out in Part 3 of the Regulations. There

is also a right of appeal for anyone who is not content with the information they receive, through the Information Commissioner.

The Public Participation Directive (PPD) has been transposed here in a number of ways. For example, in 2009, public participation requirements were inserted after Article 19 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997 and these changes ensure that all plans and programmes, such as the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy and NI Waste Prevention Programme, have undergone public participation activities and consultation during development. For example, as part of the process of revising the NI Waste Management Strategy, DOE has held focus group meetings with key stakeholders in keeping with PPD requirements.

Article 31 of the Waste Framework Directive specifically requires Member States to ensure that the obligations of the PPD are applied to waste issues and this was transposed by way of Articles 19A, 19B and 19C of the Waste and Contaminated Land (NI) Order 1997. So too, do Articles 24 and 25 of the Industrial Emissions Directive, which was transposed by way of the Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) Regulations (NI) 2013.

In summary, by placing documents and legislation on websites, by developing publications schemes and by making public registers readily available electronically, by responding to environmental queries in a timely and informative manner, by engaging in public participation activities in environmental decision making, such as carrying out consultation exercises and by providing access to justice and by ensuring that our environmental legislation fully reflects its requirements, the Department of the Environment continually strives to ensure compliance with the Aarhus Convention.

Flying the St George's Flag at Enniskillen Castle

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 11345/11-15, for an update on the equality screening of the practice of flying the St George's flag at Enniskillen Castle.
(AQW 24510/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As stated in my answer to AQW 11345/11-15, my officials did conduct an Equality Screening of the practice of flying the St George's flag at Enniskillen Castle under the Equality Scheme for the Department of the Environment drawn up in accordance with Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. This was published in August 2012 on my Department's website (see http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/information/equality_unit/policies_screened_out_-_july_to_september_2012).

The Equality Screening concluded that because 'opportunities exist for the attractiveness of the site to all visitors and staff to be discussed through mediums such as customer surveys, the Castle Management Committee and NIEA stakeholder forums, which have occurred as recently as 2010 and 2011,' and because 'the NIEA management team also operate a complaints procedure to deal with concerns or issues of the public and there has been no evidence over the years to suggest that the policy has an impact on any Section 75 group' ... 'the continuation of the custom and practice of flying the flag depicting the cross of St George from the Watergate at the Enniskillen Castle Complex does not present any quantifiable impacts on any Section 75 groups. Any concern over the flag detracting from the attractiveness to visitors from a nationalist or republican community is uncorroborated and unmeasurable'.

My departmental Equality Team reviewed the Equality Screening and concurred that it was not necessary to carry out a full Equality Impact Assessment.

I consider that if people believe there are grounds to justify any change to the practice of flying the St. George's Cross flag on the Watergate at the Castle, the historical associations of which are well explained in the Museum exhibitions, along with the Nationalist perspective of the Castle's history, that view should be explained.

For example, should Fermanagh District Council come out in support of the removal of the flag or propose its replacement, for example by the St Patrick's Cross, my decision could be reviewed.

MOT Test for HGV 2 Axle Vehicles: Rise in Cost

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the rationale behind the recent rise in the cost of an MOT test for HGV 2 axle vehicles.

(AQW 24511/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The increase in the goods vehicle test fee is to fund the compliance and enforcement activity following the implementation of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 2010.

The need for greater regulation of the goods vehicle industry, and higher levels of enforcement activity, has been called for by the industry for some years, and was a factor in the development of the Act. The industry has strongly supported the measures in the Act as important in levelling the competitive position in the industry, improving road safety, reducing the environmental impacts of goods vehicles and to tackle organised crime.

The fees related to the Act were consulted on between 5 December 2011 and 3 February 2012. There were 17 responses to the consultation, of which 14 were substantive. Of those responses, 10 supported the proposed fees, which match those levied in Britain. Those that did not, asked for a phasing of the fees, or considered that the increase charges could not be justified as the service levels here fell short of those in Britain.

In its response, the Department indicated that the compliance activity concerning goods vehicles has increased over recent years, and that further enforcement officers would be deployed following the commencement of the Goods Vehicles Act, with those additional staff funded through the compliance fee.

I am mindful of the current economic climate facing operators and this increase in fees will go some way towards creating a level playing field for compliant operators.

High Hedges Act Complaints

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many complaints have been lodged under the High Hedges Act since its introduction, broken down by council area.

(AQW 24519/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The High Hedges Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 became operational on 31 March 2012 and responsibility for its implementation transferred to District Councils from that date. As the High Hedges Act has only been operational for 15 months, an evaluation has not yet been undertaken. The Department does intend to review this legislation but only after sufficient time has been given to allow its full implementation and councils have had an opportunity to gain meaningful experience of using the Act. I have requested Councils to provide the information.

High Hedges Act Complaints

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many complaints lodged since the introduction of the High Hedges Act (i) were resolved by agreement between the parties involved; (ii) were dismissed; (iii) resulted in the owner being instructed to cut back the hedges or trees; and (iv) are ongoing.

(AQW 24520/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The High Hedges Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 became operational on 31 March 2012 and responsibility for its implementation transferred to District Councils from that date. As the High Hedges Act has only been operational for 15 months, an evaluation has not yet been undertaken. The Department does intend to review this legislation but only after sufficient time has been given to allow its full implementation and councils have had an opportunity to gain meaningful experience using the Act. I am writing to Councils to request the information.

Downpatrick Area Planning Office

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 22334/11-15, whether the Downpatrick Area Planning office used ariel photographs, maps and any other methods to ascertain that the structure was in place in from the dates claimed.

(AQW 24525/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As part of the enforcement investigation in relation to this structure, the Downpatrick Area Planning Office obtained aerial photographs of the site.

However, the date that the photographs were taken could not be firmly established and therefore they could not be relied upon as evidence in the consideration of the case.

Officials therefore proceeded to issue an Information Notice to obtain information in relation to the ownership, occupation and use of the building. The information and documentation received in response to the Notice were material considerations in the case. You will be aware that the giving of false information in response to an Information Notice is an offence punishable on summary conviction by a fine. The information received was therefore accepted as being reliable and factually correct.

Article 40 Planning Agreements

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of Article 40 Planning Agreements that have been made in each year since 2000; and the value of each of the Agreements.

(AQW 24539/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Article 40 provisions enable the Department to enter into planning agreements with any person who has an estate in land for the purpose of:-

- i Facilitating, or restricting the development or use of land in any specified way;
- ii. Requiring specified operation or activities to be carried out in, on under or over land;
- iii. Requiring the land to be used in any specified way (either indefinitely or for a period as may be specified); or
- iv. Requiring a sum or sums to be paid to the Department on a specified day or dates periodically.

The Department's database records Article 40 Agreements entered into from 2007/08. To extract records dating back to 2000 would require a manual search of all planning application files and would result in the diversion of staff from normal duties for an unreasonable period of time which would have an adverse impact on the Departments ability to provide the statutory public service for which it is obligated.

TABLE 1 BELOW SHOWS THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS INVOLVING ARTICLE 40 AGREEMENTS

Business Year	Number of Applications involving Article 40 Agreements
2007/08	15
2008/09	14
2009/10	9
2010/11	1
2011/12	3
2012/13	0
2013/14	4

There are no records of the Department receiving any costs in relation to Article 40 Agreements since 2007/08.

I believe that the opportunity for embedding community benefits in the planning system should be developed. That is why I recently convened a summit on the issue and plan a number of interventions to take this forward.

DDraft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether the proposed Bangor West Area of Townscape Character contained in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) is a material consideration in planning decisions in the area; and whether greater weight will be given to the project when the final BMAP is published.

(AQW 24543/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Assessment of any planning application will be made in respect of the proposed ATC designation, the nature of objections received in respect of it and the recommendations of the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC). It is currently a material consideration, the weight of which is dependent upon the nature and location of the planning application.

As the PAC has recommended that the designation be confirmed, subject to two minor boundary amendments, the ATC designation will likely be confirmed in the adopted Plan and as such would then be afforded greater significance as a material consideration.

Disposal of Asbestos

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of the Environment what provision exists for the disposal of asbestos.
(AQW 24549/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Currently there are no asbestos disposal facilities in Northern Ireland. There are three asbestos storage facilities in Antrim, Belfast and Crumlin that are permitted to store asbestos waste. These all have Waste Management Licences issued by my Department. Once a sufficient load of asbestos waste is accumulated, the waste is sent from these sites for disposal in Great Britain.

Wind Energy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment what is the evidence base used for determining the areas which will benefit from wind energy in proximity to specific turbines or wind farms; and whether the evidence is scientifically proven.

(AQW 24564/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The offer of community benefits is common practice by wind energy developers across these islands. These benefits may be financial or in-kind and are provided to the host community on a voluntary, goodwill basis. They are offered outside the planning system, however and they are not a requirement of planning policy.

Nevertheless, I strongly support the idea that more communities should derive meaningful, long-term benefits from major or regionally significant developments that take place in their area.

Earlier this month my Department facilitated a Summit on this issue. The Summit brought together a range of stakeholders and provided a useful opportunity to bring ideas and actions together on how the concept of community benefits can be ethically embedded in a more comprehensive way into the planning system.

I will continue to have discussions with stakeholders in this regard and can advise that I will shortly meet with the Northern Ireland Renewable Industry Group (NIRIG) to discuss a range of matters including NIRIG's 'Community Commitment' protocol on community benefit. This protocol currently advises that the communities with an interest in the wind farm will be identified through a process of engagement involving the developer and relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, officials from my Department are working alongside colleagues in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI) through a sub-group of the DETI Sustainable Energy Interdepartmental Working Group. This sub-group has appointed consultants to make recommendations on best practice for community benefit from renewable energy in Northern Ireland. The work of the consultants is at an advanced stage and a report detailing their findings will be issued in due course.

Court of Justice of the European Union: Case C – 545/12

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has taken note of the decision of the Court of Justice of the European Union in Case C – 545/12.

(AQW 24565/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department has noted the outcome of Case C-545/12 which refers to action proposed to be taken by the European Commission against Cyprus due to delays in the implementation of the 3rd Directive (2006/126/EC) on driver licences. I understand the action has been withdrawn recently.

In terms of progress here, the requirements of the 3rd Directive were fully implemented on 19 January 2013 and the European Commission notified accordingly. Work is currently underway to implement Directive 2012/36/EU (which amends the 3rd Directive) by 31 December 2013.

All-Island Study on Air Quality

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what is the timescale for the proposed all-island study on air quality.

(AQW 24595/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The proposed all island study on air quality is expected to be commissioned in summer 2013, and to report its findings by end 2013 / early 2014.

Relevant stakeholders who will be consulted will include representatives from the fuel industry, as well as those who are involved with enforcement of Smoke Control at local government level.

It is expected that a specialist independent air quality consultancy will carry out the all-island study. A project management group, consisting of DOE and DECLG officials, will commission the advertisement of invitations to submit Expressions of Interest, based on the agreed Terms of Reference for the research. The project management group will then assess the tenders received, and appoint the most suitable candidate to take forward the research.

The Terms of Reference are to be agreed between Ministers at the next meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council. Following agreement, the Terms of Reference will be made public.

The proposed study will be managed jointly by officials from DOE and DECLG.

All-Island Study on Air Quality

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what stakeholder groups and representative bodies will be consulted in the proposed all-island study on air quality.

(AQW 24596/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The proposed all island study on air quality is expected to be commissioned in summer 2013, and to report its findings by end 2013 / early 2014.

Relevant stakeholders who will be consulted will include representatives from the fuel industry, as well as those who are involved with enforcement of Smoke Control at local government level.

It is expected that a specialist independent air quality consultancy will carry out the all-island study. A project management group, consisting of DOE and DECLG officials, will commission the advertisement of invitations to submit Expressions of Interest, based on the agreed Terms of Reference for the

research. The project management group will then assess the tenders received, and appoint the most suitable candidate to take forward the research.

The Terms of Reference are to be agreed between Ministers at the next meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council. Following agreement, the Terms of Reference will be made public.

The proposed study will be managed jointly by officials from DOE and DECLG.

All-Island Study on Air Quality

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the composition of the group that will carry out the proposed all-island study into air quality; and who will appoint the group members.
(AQW 24600/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The proposed all island study on air quality is expected to be commissioned in summer 2013, and to report its findings by end 2013 / early 2014.

Relevant stakeholders who will be consulted will include representatives from the fuel industry, as well as those who are involved with enforcement of Smoke Control at local government level.

It is expected that a specialist independent air quality consultancy will carry out the all-island study. A project management group, consisting of DOE and DECLG officials, will commission the advertisement of invitations to submit Expressions of Interest, based on the agreed Terms of Reference for the research. The project management group will then assess the tenders received, and appoint the most suitable candidate to take forward the research.

The Terms of Reference are to be agreed between Ministers at the next meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council. Following agreement, the Terms of Reference will be made public.

The proposed study will be managed jointly by officials from DOE and DECLG.

All-Island Study on Air Quality

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what are the terms of reference for the proposed all-island air quality study.
(AQW 24601/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The proposed all island study on air quality is expected to be commissioned in summer 2013, and to report its findings by end 2013 / early 2014.

Relevant stakeholders who will be consulted will include representatives from the fuel industry, as well as those who are involved with enforcement of Smoke Control at local government level.

It is expected that a specialist independent air quality consultancy will carry out the all-island study. A project management group, consisting of DOE and DECLG officials, will commission the advertisement of invitations to submit Expressions of Interest, based on the agreed Terms of Reference for the research. The project management group will then assess the tenders received, and appoint the most suitable candidate to take forward the research.

The Terms of Reference are to be agreed between Ministers at the next meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council. Following agreement, the Terms of Reference will be made public.

The proposed study will be managed jointly by officials from DOE and DECLG.

All-Island Study on Air Quality

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment who will chair the proposed all-island study on air quality.
(AQW 24603/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The proposed all island study on air quality is expected to be commissioned in summer 2013, and to report its findings by end 2013 / early 2014.

Relevant stakeholders who will be consulted will include representatives from the fuel industry, as well as those who are involved with enforcement of Smoke Control at local government level.

It is expected that a specialist independent air quality consultancy will carry out the all-island study. A project management group, consisting of DOE and DECLG officials, will commission the advertisement of invitations to submit Expressions of Interest, based on the agreed Terms of Reference for the research. The project management group will then assess the tenders received, and appoint the most suitable candidate to take forward the research.

The Terms of Reference are to be agreed between Ministers at the next meeting of the North-South Ministerial Council. Following agreement, the Terms of Reference will be made public.

The proposed study will be managed jointly by officials from DOE and DECLG.

National Parks

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the progress made on establishing designated National Parks following his discussions with various interested groups and stakeholders.

(AQW 24620/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have repeatedly said that I am consulting and will continue to consult on where the DOE should go with the issue of national parks. A series of private meetings, with a wide range of people and organisations, is allowing me to hear the full range of views. At the heart of the issue is this: our heritage – built and natural – is a big part of the quality of our lives and has a role to play in relation to jobs and tourism going forward. I am doing this to identify how to positively develop the wonderful heritage assets that we have here.

The challenges that are emerging – of structural unemployment and other economic threats – need to be faced, and those who base their arguments on worst fears and exploit the concerns of others should reflect on their approach. All should join in my consultation and work out how to best proceed.

The challenge to me and to all MLAs is to ask ourselves – what more can we do to help people who are out of work into work, giving them jobs and dignity? National parks may be one way to do so, but not through a park with significant restrictions. I have made it clear that I am in favour of a national park that is tailored to our own unique circumstances, not one that is borrowed from elsewhere.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment whether he will consider upgrading some of our Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the status of National Parks by increasing the provision of resources and management.

(AQW 24622/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department continues to provide significant support for the provision of landscape management services in many areas including those that could be candidates for national parks, should that prove to be the case. Funding to sustain landscape management bodies is provided through the NIEA Natural Heritage Grant Programme. I recently announced that it had awarded over £4 million in financial support to enhance our natural environment. In these days of financial austerity this is a significant commitment on behalf of the Department towards the protection and development of our heritage. A substantial proportion of the funding will go to bodies with responsibility for the management of AONBs. These include the Mourne Heritage Trust and the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust who co-ordinate the implementation of AONB management plans and undertake projects in their areas. NIEA has awarded additional funding to the Mourne Heritage Trust to support the development of sustainable visitor access and matched funding for a Landscape Partnership Scheme funded by Heritage Lottery Fund.

NIEA also provides significant financial support to a number of other organisations that provide landscape management services including the Belfast Hills Partnership, the Lough Neagh Partnership,

Down District Council for the Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership and Castlereagh Borough Council for the Lagan Valley Regional Park.

Further project funding has been provided through partnerships with other funders such as the local authorities, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

I stand by my earlier comments that the critical issue is the need for a strategic shift in resources and policy to the advantage of our natural heritage. That is what is needed and that is where all should direct attention. Part of that strategic shift is PPS2 Natural Heritage which embeds heritage protection in our planning system.

I will look at every policy, resource and legislative opportunity to promote our heritage, including rural.

Reduce Packaging at Source

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment what measures he is taking to reduce packaging at source and to make industry physically or financially responsible for taking back its products and packaging.

(AQW 24640/11-15)

Mr Attwood: On 1st January this year, I introduced an amendment to the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 (the Regulations) setting ambitious targets for the recovery and recycling of packaging. The Regulations implement the EU Directive on Packaging and Packaging Waste (94/62/EC) (the Directive) which introduced statutory producer responsibility, based on the 'polluter pays' principle, into the management of packaging material. The Directive aims to minimise the impact of packaging waste on the environment by reducing the amount of packaging used, encouraging producers to reduce packaging through innovative design and by setting minimum targets for the recovery and recycling of the waste. In recognition of the potential to optimise packaging further and address public concern about excessive packaging, the Regulations will ensure that businesses take full responsibility for packaging and packaging waste produced as a result of their commercial activities. By 2017 the Regulations will ensure that an overall packaging recovery rate of 79% and an overall recycling rate of 72.7% is achieved, well above the Directives minimum recovery target of 60% and recycling target of 55%.

The Department is also working closely with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), an organisation funded by the Department, and in early May 2013 launched the Courtauld Commitment Phase 3 (CC3). CC3 is a voluntary agreement between WRAP, members of the British Retail Consortium, the Food and Drink Federation and manufacturing sectors that sets targets and aims, amongst other things, to improve packaging design and recyclability through the supply chain and promote packaging optimisation for all producers.

Installation of Hydro-Electric Schemes

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has any plans to introduce spacing restrictions on the installation of hydro-electric schemes on rivers and streams.

(AQW 24644/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) is the competent authority responsible for implementing the Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006. The Regulations give the Department powers to determine licence applications and enforce compliance with licence conditions through the inspection of abstraction and impounding activities within Northern Ireland (NI).

The aim of the Water Abstraction and Impoundment (Licensing) Regulations is to protect the water environment and to secure efficient and sustainable water use. These Regulations provide a consistent, environmental risk-based approach to the assessment and licensing of water abstraction and impoundment activities. The introduction of this legislation fulfilled Northern Ireland's obligation to the European Commission under the Habitats and Water Framework Directives and established a water resource management, assessment and licensing regime.

Applications for hydroelectric power proposals are assessed, in part, against the UK Technical Advisory Group Water Resource Guidance Standards (UK TAG) for Water Resources. Within the standards guidance is available on spacing and the limits for non consumptive abstractions planned for any waterbody. This technique takes account of the ecology of the waterbody as a whole and is used to assess the likely cumulative impacts of multiple applications within a single waterbody. These standards have been adopted in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Licensing and Regulation of Taxis

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of the Environment what impact the changes to licensing and regulation of taxis will have on small firms and sole traders.

(AQW 24646/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I recognise that there will be an impact on the industry, including sectors such as Belfast Public Hire (BPH) taxis and Belfast taxibuses, with the introduction of single tier licensing in 2014. Single tier licensing will mean that all taxis will be able to ply for hire in Belfast, therefore there may be encroachment on to the BPH and taxibus businesses. However, alongside the introduction of the single tier licensing, my Department will also be introducing a suite of regulations which will include provisions for a regulated maximum fare and taxi meter system which will make it mandatory for all taxis to adhere to regulated fare and meter requirements. This is currently only in place for BPH taxis and I believe that making it mandatory for all public hire taxis to have taxi meters from 2014, will help counteract the impact to those who work within the BPH and taxibus sectors.

Taxi vehicle regulations will also be implemented under the regulations, which will include a wheelchair accessibility specification to provide safeguards and assurances to the disabled public, and a separate licensing regime for contracted services such as limousines and wedding cars. The separation of contracted services from the rest of the industry will help to differentiate the different type of service offered from a standard taxi service, whilst ensuring that these services are regulated and safe for consumers to use. People providing contracted services will also not have to purchase a roof sign or taxi meter to pass a vehicle inspection test, hence creating savings for this particular sector.

My Department will be consulting over the summer on the proposal to introduce a driving test for new drivers and periodic training for all taxi drivers. Periodic training would mean that all taxi drivers would have the same training requirements to meet, regardless of whether they were part of a large taxi company or if they operated as a sole trader. They may also apply to become training providers and provide their training in-house to their own drivers. Sole traders can group together to arrange training and I would encourage them to do so.

The maximum fare regulations will set a maximum fare that takes account of these costs to taxi operators and drivers, and allow them to cover the costs in fares whilst providing an improved service to customers.

Other businesses indirectly affected by the introduction of the taxi reform programme will be shops, cafes, restaurants, bars and nightclubs. A regulated, safer and more fit for purpose taxi industry will enable the public to get a taxi when they need it without having to worry about the restrictions on different types of taxi, illegal taxis and poor customer service for able and disabled passengers. This is likely therefore to mean increased usage of taxis by customers, which may indirectly help the businesses listed benefit from more patronage as customers would find it easier and more appealing to travel.

My Department will continue to work closely with the taxi industry so that they can effectively respond to the reform of their industry. That is why I am putting together a programme to assist, for example, BPH sustain and develop their business model. It should also be noted that the Taxi Act is the will of the Assembly and that the Committee, at nearly all times, has been pressing me to speed up implementation of the legislation.

Judicial Review Cases

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of the Environment how many Judicial Review cases have been taken against his Department in each of the last three years; and to detail the cost to his Department of this litigation in each year.

(AQW 24654/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The table below provides details of the number of Judicial Review cases taken against the Department as well as the costs of Judicial Review cases over the three year period 2010/11 to 2012/13.

Business Area	2010/11		2011/12		2012/13	
	Number	Costs £'m	Number	Costs £'m	Number	Costs £'m
Department (excluding agencies)	10	1.38	7	0.73	15	0.49
Northern Ireland Environment Agency	-	-	1	0.02	-	-
Driver and Vehicle Agency	-	-	1	0.03	-	-
Total	10	1.38	9	0.78	15	0.49

PSNI and Driver and Vehicle Agency Personnel: Operated Joint Operations

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment (i) on how many occasions, in each of the last three years, have PSNI and Driver and Vehicle Agency personnel operated joint operations to detect defects in heavy commercial vehicles; (ii) how many defects were found; and (iii) what action was taken.

(AQW 24668/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) has primary responsibility for enforcing legal requirements governing the operation of goods vehicles within Northern Ireland and on occasions its officers work jointly with other agencies including PSNI.

The following table details the number of operations carried out by DVA jointly with PSNI in each of the last three years, the number of defects found and the action taken. These figures are not validated DVA/DOE Official Statistics.

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Number of Joint Roadside Operations	25	27	33
Number of Inspections	192	191	175
Number of Defects	216	196	158
Number of Operator Prosecution Files	44	47	13
Number of Driver Prosecution Files	24	40	28
Number of Fixed Penalty Tickets Issued	0*	32	63
Number of Prohibition Notices Issued	121	130	135

* DVA Enforcement Officers did not begin issuing Fixed Penalty Tickets until April 2011

Goods Vehicles Detected with Major Defects

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment how many goods vehicles, registered outside Ireland and Britain, have been detected with major defects in the last five years; and how many of these vehicles were detained.

(AQW 24669/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Records are only available for the period 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2013 and during this three year period there have been no goods vehicles, registered outside Ireland or Britain, detected with major defects by DVA Enforcement Officers.

Goods Vehicles: PSV Inspection

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment how many goods vehicles have failed the PSV inspection in the last five years, broken down by test centre.

(AQW 24672/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The number of Heavy Goods Vehicles that failed a vehicle inspection in the last five years (1 April 2008 to 31 March 2013), broken down by test centre is set out in the table below.

Test Centre	Number of Fails
Armagh	3,620
Ballymena	3,270
Balmoral	1,996
Coleraine	2,710
Cookstown	4,844
Craigavon	2,329
Downpatrick	1,640
Enniskillen	3,250
Larne	1,376
Lisburn	2,477
Mallusk	4,847
New Buildings	3,025
Newry	4,979
Newtownards	2,649
Omagh	2,291
Overall	45,303

Notes:

- 1 The above data Includes Full Tests, Retests, Partial Enforcement Acquittals, Full Enforcement Acquittals and Retests for Emissions Only.
- 2 The above data does not include Failed To Attends.
- 3 These are DVA/DOE Official Statistics.

Hanning/Evans Article

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 24104/11-15, despite the Hanning/Evans article being regarded as opinion, but in light of the authors' expertise, whether he will investigate if considerations should be given to this article.

(AQW 24683/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As I indicated in my previous response, where matters of public health are raised in relation to a proposal for wind energy development, or where an assessment of scientific research in this area is required, it is my Department's practice to consult with the Public Health Agency (PHA) which possesses the relevant expertise in this area

Officials from my Department have again sought advice from the PHA in respect of the Hanning / Evans article. The PHA have restated their position that it does not alter the previous advice of the PHA which is that, in general, provided established guidance and best practice in relation to placement of wind turbines and mitigation measures is undertaken, there is minimal to no risk to the health of the population associated with such facilities.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of the Environment why has the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan not been published, given that the public enquiry has been completed and passed to his Department.

(AQW 24720/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I took the unprecedented step of publishing draft BMAP in early 2012 when the full report was received from the PAC. I plan to publish BMAP when the relevant processes are concluded shortly, including following the issue of a certificate of general compliance with the RDS 2035. I should also confirm that I unambiguously stand by the advice I provided on the retail element of BMAP to the now aborted Sprucefield Inquiry.

Departmental Underspend

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of the Environment what was his departmental underspend in the last financial year.

(AQW 24753/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The table below sets out the 2012/13 provisional outturn position for the Department.

	Final Plan £k	Provisional Outturn £k	Underspend (-) /Overspend (+) £k	Underspend (-) /Overspend (+) %
Resource Expenditure	131,626	130,939	(687)	(0.5)
Capital Expenditure	7,558	7,522	(36)	(0.5)

These percentages are widely viewed as how I pressed the Department to achieve this outcome though I believe there is yet some more to achieve.

Illegal Landfill Site at Mobouy Road, Derry

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has vested, or intends to vest, any of the land comprising the illegal landfill site at Mobouy Road, Derry; and whether as a result, his Department has inherited, or risks inheriting, any public liability for the decontamination of this land.

(AQW 24787/11-15)

Mr Attwood: My Department has no plans to vest the lands comprising the illegal landfill site. I am committed to compelling the clean-up of the Mobuoy Road site and remain committed that this can be achieved through our use of stringent European legislation (including the Environmental Liability Directive) to compel the responsible parties to deal with the waste. This legislation has many components related to the land itself and the position is continually being assessed.

The Department will use all the legal powers at its disposal to the fullest extent to ensure that the site is cleaned up. Safeguarding local residents' health and well-being and ensuring the environment is restored, as far as possible, to its natural state is my number one priority. I hope that this legislation will see any alleged offenders made to pay for their actions.

Quarry and Aggregates Sites

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment to list the prohibition notices that were issued to quarry and aggregates sites in (i) 2011; and (ii) 2012 by the (a) Northern Ireland Environment Agency Water Management Unit; (b) Planning Service; and (c) Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate.

(AQW 24791/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Enforcing authorities can issue a range of statutory notices depending on the relevant legislation. These have different titles and may require some form of corrective action or may temporarily prohibit or suspend part of an operation. For completeness information on all relevant notices has been included.

The Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate regulates emissions to air from quarries where crushing and screening of minerals is carried out. There are currently 143 such installations permitted under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003.

In 2011 and 2012 IPRI issued the following Enforcement Notice to a quarry.

Installation	Operator	Notice Type	Date
PPC0064/08B	Navan Quarries	Enforcement	14/02/2012

Under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, the consent of the Department of the Environment is required to discharge trade or sewage effluent to a waterway or water contained in underground strata. This includes the discharge of effluent from domestic septic tanks.

The following Notices were issued by NIEA Water Management Unit (WMU) as the consent holders had exceeded the limits of their Water Order Consents on more than one occasion or by a quantity that was deemed to pose a significant risk of pollution, or both.

Consent Holder	Notice Type	Date Issued
G Ross & Son	Enforcement	28/02/2011
Joseph Barrett and Sons Ltd	Enforcement	05/08/2011
R Hogg & Sons Ltd	Enforcement	08/08/2011
Patrick Bradley Ltd	Enforcement	14/05/2012
Lisburn Envirocare	Enforcement	11/06/2012

Planning Division issued the following notices for reporting year April 2011-March 2012 and April to December 2012.

Reference	Operator/Owner	Type	Served
K/2010/0079CA	Seamus McAnenly	Breach of Conditions	11/05/2011
J/2006/0112CA	Riddles Bros Ltd	Breach of Conditions	30/11/2011
K/2010/0014CA	Patt Dobbs	Breach of Conditions	30/11/2011
K/2010/0065CA	John Loughran	Breach of Conditions	30/11/2011
J/2008/0081CA	Riddles Bros Ltd	Temporary Stop	21/12/2011
A/2012/0016CA	Trevor Mulhern	Temporary Stop	25/04/2012
E/2009/0071CA	Mr Seamus Hill	Enforcement	25/07/2012
E/2009/0071CA	Mr Seamus Hill	Stop	25/07/2012
C/2005/0115CA	Armoy Homes Ltd	Breach of Conditions	26/07/2012
J/2012/0008CA	Gregory Donnelly	Breach of Conditions	27/07/2012
K/2012/0017CA	Christopher McCoy	Breach of Conditions	27/07/2012
J/2012/0045CA	Tyrone Sand and Gravel	Temporary Stop	24/08/2012
L/2012/0106CA	Dean Public Works	Breach of Conditions	11/10/2012
K/2012/0094CA	Martin McCrystal	Temporary Stop	25/10/2012
A/2008/0094CA	Tony Harley and Sons	Enforcement	13/11/2012
J/2011/0005CA	Lindsay Woods	Enforcement	13/11/2012

Prosecutions taken against Quarry and Aggregates Sites

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of the Environment to list the prosecutions taken against quarry and aggregates sites in (i) 2011; and (ii) 2012 by the (a) Northern Ireland Environment Agency Water Management Unit; (b) Planning Service; and (c) Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate. **(AQW 24792/11-15)**

Mr Attwood: The Industrial Pollution and Radiochemical Inspectorate (IPRI) regulates emissions to air from quarries where crushing and screening of minerals is carried out. There are currently 143 such installations permitted under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003.

In 2011 and 2012 IPRI took no prosecutions against quarry or aggregate sites.

Under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999, the consent of the Department of the Environment is required to discharge trade or sewage effluent to a waterway or water contained in underground strata. This includes the discharge of effluent from domestic septic tanks.

The Northern Ireland Environment Agency Water Management Unit (WMU) administers a system of discharge consents which specify conditions relating to the quality and quantity of effluent that may be discharged. The conditions are formulated to ensure that the discharge can be sustained by the receiving waterway without damage to the aquatic environment and without breaching national or EU Directive standards.

The table below details the prosecutions for quarry and aggregates sites taken by WMU in 2011 and 2012.

Date of Incident	Defendant name	Date of Conviction	Fine
30/01/2009	Seamus McAnenly	14/01/2011	£12,500
28/06/2010	McGarrity Bros Limited	11/03/2011	£2,500
14/10/2008	W. & J. Taggart (Quarries) Ltd	16/06/2011	£3,000

Planning Division has taken the following prosecutions for reporting year April 2011 – March 2012 and April to December 2012.

Reference	Offender	Offence	Court Date
K/2010/0092CA	Seamus McAnenly	Submission Notice	09/11/2012
L/2009/0053CA	Gareth Timoney	Submission Notice	06/06/2012

Designation of National Parks

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether the proposals on the designation of National Parks has been formally abandoned.

(AQW 24807/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have repeatedly said that I am consulting and will continue to consult on where the DOE should go with the issue of national parks. A series of private meetings, with a wide range of people and organisations, is allowing me to hear the full range of views. At the heart of the issue is this: our heritage – built and natural – is a big part of the quality of our lives and has a role to play in relation to jobs and tourism going forward. I am doing this to identify how to positively develop the wonderful heritage assets that we have here.

The challenges that are emerging – of structural unemployment and other economic threats – need to be faced, and those who base their arguments on fear and exploit the concerns of others should reflect on their approach. All should join in my consultation and work out how to best proceed.

The challenge to me and to all MLAs is to ask ourselves – what more can we do to help people who are out of work into work, giving them jobs and dignity? National parks may be one way to do so, but not through a park with significant restrictions. I have made it clear that I am in favour of a national park that is tailored to our own unique circumstances, not one that is borrowed from elsewhere

Illegal Taxis

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to clamp down on illegal taxis; and the illegal use of taxis.

(AQW 24833/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Driver and Vehicle Agency has primary responsibility for the licensing and enforcement of taxis and taxi operators. The Agency has been proactive in targeting a wide range of illegal activity, including responding to complaints from the industry.

The Enforcement Section continues to use intelligence led enforcement to ensure that resources are directed at pursuing the illegal side of the industry and habitual and high risk offenders. There is an ongoing programme of overt and covert operations directed at detecting those who operator illegally. Where an offence is detected, officers will issue prohibition notices, fixed penalty notices or prepare a report with a view to prosecution.

Staffing levels across the Section have now been increased and there are currently 18 officers dedicated to PSV enforcement, allowing for greater focus on all forms of illegal activity in this area.

Since the introduction of taxi operator licensing on 1st September 2012, the Agency has taken progressive and measured enforcement steps to encourage operators to acquire the requisite licenses. The Agency is now in the final phase of its compliance strategy that will include taking prosecution action against anyone, who without reasonable excuse, is detected operating a taxi service without a licence. The maximum penalty that applies to anyone operating a taxi service without being affiliated to an operator, or holding an operator's license, is £5,000 upon conviction. In addition where an operator is detected using an unlicensed driver or vehicle a similar penalty applies.

Enforcement officers have also commenced a programme of compliance audits at taxi operator premises and during these visits enforcement notices can be issued, if necessary, specifying any remedial action to be taken to ensure compliance with operator licensing requirements. Results of these audits are communicated to the Licensing Section, along with the results of roadside encounters, for consideration in line with suspension and revocation policy.

My Department's taxi reform programme is ongoing and I am committed to implementing all elements of the Taxis Act (NI) 2008 in 2014.

Department of Finance and Personnel

European Funding

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list the groups, to which he referred as having a 'political voice' on 28 May 2013, that have applied for European funding.

(AQW 23809/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): I have defined what is meant by political voice. The Member can draw his own conclusions as to which groups fit this definition.

Interest Rate Swap Agreements

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has raised the issue of interest rate swap agreements with local banks; and what progress has been made on this issue.

(AQW 24109/11-15)

Mr Wilson: As you will be aware, in 2012 the then Financial Service Authority (FSA) found serious failings in the sale of Interest Rate Swap Agreements. Clearly this would have had a detrimental impact on those customers that bought a product that was either not appropriate to their needs or which may have come at a higher cost than necessary.

Since then the FSA has worked in conjunction with HM Treasury and the banks to develop an appropriate redress package for those customers that were mis-sold these products and I wrote to Andrew Bailey, then Managing Director of the FSA, on 11 January 2013 urging him to ensure that a scheme was finalised and implemented as quickly as possible.

The process for this has now been agreed and all of the banks involved, including those operating locally, have appointed independent reviewers, piloted the scheme and have commenced their full reviews of the sales of these products.

The principles of redress being applied in these reviews are detailed in the FSA's March 2013 'Interest Rate Hedging Products: Pilot Findings' report. This indicates in that in cases where had the sale complied with appropriate regulatory requirements the customer would not have purchased such a product, redress will be the exit from that product at no charge and a refund of all payments previously paid. Where it is deemed that the customer may have purchased a different product, then redress will involve the offer of such a product and a refund of any difference in the payments made in respect of the costs of each product.

I did not raise this matter separately with the banks as the FSA and the Treasury were responsible for taking forward discussions to resolve this matter.

Interest Rate Swap Agreements

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what communication he has had with the Financial Services Authority on interest rate swap agreements.

(AQW 24110/11-15)

Mr Wilson: As you will be aware, in 2012 the then Financial Service Authority (FSA) found serious failings in the sale of Interest Rate Swap Agreements. Clearly this would have had a detrimental impact on those customers that bought a product that was either not appropriate to their needs or which may have come at a higher cost than necessary.

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I did not raise this matter separately with the banks as the FSA and the Treasury were responsible for taking forward discussions to resolve this matter.

Interest Rate Swap Agreements

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the impact on bank customers of the problems surrounding interest rate swap agreements; and to detail any redress.

(AQW 24177/11-15)

Mr Wilson: As you will be aware, in 2012 the then Financial Service Authority (FSA) found serious failings in the sale of Interest Rate Swap Agreements. Clearly this would have had a detrimental impact on those customers that bought a product that was either not appropriate to their needs or which may have come at a higher cost than necessary.

Since then the FSA has worked in conjunction with HM Treasury and the banks to develop an appropriate redress package for those customers that were mis-sold these products and I wrote to Andrew Bailey, then Managing Director of the FSA, on 11 January 2013 urging him to ensure that a scheme was finalised and implemented as quickly as possible.

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involve the offer of such a product and a refund of any difference in the payments made in respect of the costs of each product.

I did not raise this matter separately with the banks as the FSA and the Treasury were responsible for taking forward discussions to resolve this matter.

Equal Pay

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he will lobby the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to introduce a scheme for financial assistance under the Financial Assistance Act (NI) 2009 to afford recompense to those civil servants disadvantaged financially by the outcome of the legal action concerning equal pay which was ruled upon by Judge Babington on 7 March 2013.

(AQW 24440/11-15)

Mr Wilson: As I have previously stated, no legal liability has been established upon which to base any rationale for such action. The Department of Justice (DOJ) is the sponsoring department of the PSNI and as such, any business case seeking approval to apply the terms of the equal pay settlement by the PSNI must be submitted through DOJ to the Department of Finance and Personnel for approval.

Barnett Consequentials

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what Barnett consequentials Northern Ireland received as a result of the London 2012 Olympics.

(AQW 24568/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Northern Ireland received a Barnett Consequential in respect of Olympic funding in 2011-12. The amounts received were £5.172 million Resource DEL and £0.192 million Capital DEL.

Barnett Formula

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in each of the last three years, on which UK wide projects he has made representations to the Treasury on the benefits which should flow to Northern Ireland under the Barnett formula.

(AQW 24571/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Barnett Formula ensures the Northern Ireland Executive receives a population-based proportion of changes in planned spending on comparable Government services in England, England and Wales or Great Britain as appropriate. The Barnett Formula does not provide for the allocation of resources to Northern Ireland for projects that cover all of the United Kingdom.

You should also note that the 2012 Olympics was a UK – wide initiative that I argued should generate a consequential for Northern Ireland. The Chief Secretary subsequently agreed to award Northern Ireland £5.4 million in 2011-12.

The Coastal Communities Fund operates on a UK-wide basis. I made representations to Treasury suggesting that it was my preference for this funding to be received by way of a routine Barnett consequential. Treasury rejected this proposal and advised the fund would operate on a UK-wide basis.

Package of Economic Measures

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what additional borrowing powers will be granted as a result of the recent announcement on a package of economic measures.

(AQW 24579/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Northern Ireland Executive was provided with a facility to borrow up to an additional £100 million of RRI borrowing power spread evenly across the 2014-15 and 2015-16 financial years.

My officials are currently discussing with their HM Treasury colleagues the technical aspects associated with these additional RRI borrowing powers. However, I am confident that we will be able to spend the £100 million of additional capital funding on projects that will prove beneficial to Northern Ireland.

Fiscal Powers

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what additional fiscal powers he intends to examine for potential devolution.

(AQW 24580/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Northern Ireland Executive recently agreed an Economic Pact with the UK Government titled 'Building a Prosperous and United Community'. This pact contains a commitment to examine the potential for devolving additional fiscal powers.

It is too early to say how this will be taken forward; however at this stage it is envisaged that this work will involve a consideration of the broad range of taxes and duties that might be devolved.

Sub-Contractors Retention Monies

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the problems experienced by sub-contractors in getting paid retention monies from main contractors who claim they haven't be paid, what actions are being taken to ensure sub-contractors receive monies within twelve months of completion of their work.

(AQW 24594/11-15)

Mr Wilson: I am committed to ensuring that subcontractors are protected and that they are paid promptly. Upon release of retention all subcontractors, that are due payment, must be paid in accordance with the timescales under the terms of their contracts.

Practices of 'pay when paid' are not permitted in government construction contracts. This was reinforced by the Construction Contracts (Amendment) Act 2011 which I introduced on 14 November 2012.

I also announced the introduction of Project Bank Accounts (PBAs) in January 2013. These will be implemented in construction contracts let by CPD which have a construction value in excess of £1 million and which contain a significant subcontracting element. A PBA is a bank account which holds the money in trust for the supply chain. PBAs can be used to make payment of retention to subcontractors. This will protect payment to them in the event that the main contractor becomes insolvent and will facilitate prompt payment upon release of retention.

Civil Partnerships

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to list the number of civil partnerships registered in each year since they were introduced, broken down by council area.

(AQW 24628/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The attached table details the number of civil partnerships registered in Northern Ireland by Health and Social Care Trust for the years 2005 to 2011.

Provisional figures for 2012 will be available in late July 2013.

Data are not published for all District Council Areas because of small numbers.

TABLE 1: CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS REGISTERED BY AREA OF REGISTRATION, 2005 - 2011

Registration Area	Registration Year						Total
	2005-2006 ¹	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	
HSC Trust							
Belfast	76	72	48	63	66	44	369
Northern	10	4	6	7	11	9	47
South Eastern	18	9	9	9	14	13	72
Southern	9	11	10	4	11	12	57
Western	15	15	13	13	14	11	81
Northern Ireland	128	111	86	96	116	89	626

1 The Civil Partnership Act came into effect on 5th December 2005.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether his Department assessed the scale of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community when considering the equality screening of the Legislative Consent Motion on same sex marriage.

(AQW 24630/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There is limited detailed information on the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community in Northern Ireland. Summary information is published in the Office for National Statistics Integrated Household Survey Report. However, it is important to remember that the legislative consent motion was focusing on the issue of same sex marriage and, as was recognised during the screening exercise, there is no research into attitudes within the Northern Ireland LGBT community toward same sex marriage and civil partnerships.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what proportion of the population is made up by the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

(AQW 24631/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There is no information available on the whole population in relation to sexual orientation, however, a question on sexual orientation is included in the Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS) and is asked of adults (persons aged 16 and over). The latest figure available from the CHS indicates that 1.4% of adults described themselves as Gay/Lesbian or Bisexual.

A specific option for transgender is not listed on the survey and therefore information for this category is not available.

Business Premises in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many business premises in North Down are considered vacant for rating purposes.

(AQW 24695/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Information on the number of business premises that are currently vacant in North Down is not available. There were 393 vacant non-domestic properties in the North Down Borough Council area as at 31 May 2013.

Payments to Contractors, Sub-Contractors and Suppliers

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in order to facilitate proper payments to contractors, sub contractors and suppliers, for an update on the adoption of Project Bank Accounts as good practice within his Department.

(AQW 24699/11-15)

Mr Wilson: On 8 January 2013, I announced that Project Bank Accounts (PBAs) will be introduced to projects awarded by Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) that have a construction value in excess of £1 million and which contain a significant subcontracting element.

CPD is finalising guidance which details how PBAs will be implemented within projects awarded by it. PBAs are now being included in projects which are suitable for their adoption and which are let by CPD.

PEACE III and IV

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how he intends to assess the experiences of the community and voluntary sector in accessing PEACE III before the potential roll out of PEACE IV.

(AQW 24702/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The PEACE IV Programme will be shaped by research and consultation in order that it best meets the needs of the eligible area. One such piece of research is a formal mid-term evaluation of the current PEACE III Programme. This is ongoing and will examine all aspects of the delivery of the PEACE III Programme. The evaluation has included engagement and consultation with a range of stakeholders and beneficiaries, including representatives and projects from the community and voluntary sector.

In autumn 2012 SEUPB led an initial public consultation on future programmes. This sought the views of all programme stakeholders, and provided an opportunity for the expression of experiences of the current PEACE III Programme. When prepared, the draft PEACE IV Operational Programme will be subject to a twelve week public consultation. This will provide a further opportunity for all stakeholders, including the community and voluntary sector, to provide input into development of the programme. It is anticipated that this consultation will take place in the autumn.

A Cross-border Programme Development Steering Group chaired by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), which again includes representation from both sectors, has also been established to oversee the process of developing both the future PEACE and INTERREG Cross-border Programmes.

PEACE IV

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he will take to ensure that PEACE IV is allocated more efficiently than its predecessor.

(AQW 24703/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The process of developing the PEACE IV Programme will include review of all aspects of programme delivery with a view to making improvements and simplifications where possible. My officials are working closely with the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) and the relevant government departments to this end.

The current PEACE III Programme has allocated funding more efficiently than its predecessors. Delivery structures have been centralised and streamlined, and the proportion of the budget allocated to Technical Assistance has reduced from 8.5 per cent in PEACE II to 6 per cent in PEACE III. The programme is almost fully committed and has met all of its EU expenditure targets to date.

Special EU Programmes Body

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he has taken to improve communication between organisations and the Special EU Programmes Body on issues of funding.

(AQW 24705/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) provides support to all PEACE III and INTERREG IVA project Lead Partners. SEUPB provides detailed guidance notes and advice on all aspects of funding and project management. Each Lead Partner is assigned a case officer and a verification officer to act as points of contact.

SEUPB is in the process of delivering a year long programme of training seminars for projects focusing on all aspects of effective project management. Over the past six months SEUPB has delivered twenty-seven such events, which have been attended by over 700 participants.

More broadly, SEUPB implements a proactive communication strategy. This encompasses the creation and maintenance of a comprehensive website; the production of a regular newsletter and e-zine; and the dissemination of detailed programme performance / monitoring reports to key stakeholders.

Equal Pay Claims

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on use of the £25m set aside for Equal Pay claims; and if it has been used to fund expenditure for the G8 Summit.

(AQW 24739/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department of Justice had, as part of the 2nd stage Devolution funding package, the right to ask HM Treasury for access to £26 million from the UK National Reserve in respect of PSNI Equal Pay. This funding was to be drawn down in the 2011-12 financial year, although the Chief Secretary, on two occasions, agreed that this facility could be carried forward while legal proceedings continued.

The Department of Justice has now successfully defended the Equal Pay case and therefore no longer has any access to this specific UK Reserve facility.

Strategic Investment Board: Social Clause Tool Kit

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the Strategic Investment Board's creation of a social clause tool kit, whether Central Procurement Directorate guidance will be adopting the principles of the toolkit; and which guidelines on social clauses will take precedence.

(AQW 24811/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) has worked closely with the Strategic Investment Board on the development of its toolkit "Delivering Social Benefits in Publicly Procured Works, Supplies and Services Contracts". This toolkit has not yet been published.

The toolkit reflects the principles of the Procurement Board's guidance entitled "Equality of Opportunity and Sustainable Development in Public Sector Procurement", which was produced jointly by CPD and the Equality Commission(NI). This guidance was endorsed by the Northern Ireland Executive in May 2008 and takes precedence over other guidance on social clauses.

Reval 2015 NI

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an update on the progress of Reval 2015.

(AQO 4440/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Work is well underway and proceeding to plan. Land & Property Services (LPS) has now issued letters to the occupiers of around 45,000 business occupiers requesting details of current rental and lease information.

This process is a critical part of any revaluation, to establish details of as many current rents as possible in order to compile a reliable, up to date Valuation List based on 2013 rental levels. These returns are being undertaken mainly online for the first time. By late summer the analysis of the market information will be well underway and this will be followed by a detailed valuation exercise, resulting in new values being applied to the 72,500 non-domestic properties in Northern Ireland.

This is a complex process, taking many months; throughout this period and indeed throughout the project LPS will continue to engage with the business community. This is essential to ensure LPS fully understand the market, what it is revealing and how it will impact on the new valuation assessments. I am pleased that business organisations like the Federation of Small Businesses and Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association and also the RICS representing the property profession have all added their voices to the call for ratepayers to respond to the Forms of Return. We all want this exercise to succeed, in order to rebalance business rates and ensure that individuals pay a fairer share of this local tax.

In Autumn 2014, LPS will complete the valuations in order that District Councils can undertake their calculations for striking District Rates for the coming year, and that DFP can assess the needs of business for transitional relief, and importantly to let the business community know what the new values are and what the likely impact will be.

The new draft List, containing all the new assessments, will be published on the Internet before the end of 2014. Bills based on the new values will issue at the usual time for turn of year billing in April 2015.

Spending Round 2013

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the recent UK Spending Round and the local impact.

(AQO 4435/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Chancellor's Spending Round announcement on Wednesday 26th June 2013 detailed the UK's budget for the financial year 2015-16 and provided an overall envelope for the Executive's 2015-16 Budget.

Our 2015-16 Resource DEL will be £10.2 billion, and our 2015-16 Capital DEL will be £1.1 billion.

In terms of the local impact of the Spending Round, it was inevitable that the savings announced at a UK level would have an impact here. However I welcome the Chancellor's decision to continue with protections for Health and schools, which effectively insulates the Northern Ireland budget from the full extent of the cuts applied to Whitehall departments.

I will now provide advice to my Executive colleagues on the proposed way forward for a local budget process and will outline a timetable in due course.

A5 Funding: Alternative Projects

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the money made available by the A5 road scheme not proceeding, for his response to the Minister for Regional Development's proposals for alternative capital spend on major road projects in 2014/15.

(AQO 4436/11-15)

Mr Wilson: All major capital projects have a significant lead-in time - it is simply not possible to immediately displace one project with another in the short term. This is, of course, the problem that the Executive has had to address with the ongoing delay to the A5 road scheme.

Minister Kennedy wrote to me in advance of the June Monitoring round, suggesting that the Executive take forward a number of alternative roads schemes in 2014-15. Although these schemes might well be worthwhile progressing, the Executive has agreed that all Ministers should be afforded the opportunity to bring forward viable capital projects.

The Executive will therefore consider, in a strategic manner, proposals from all Ministers as part of the October Monitoring round and I will update the House on the outcome of our deliberation at that time.

G8 Summit: Net Cost

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the net cost of hosting the G8 Summit 2013.

(AQO 4437/11-15)

Mr Wilson: I am sure the Member will join me in firstly recognising the successful delivery of a safe and secure event that has been referred to as the most peaceful G8 summit in terms of protests. The images of Northern Ireland shown around the world as a positive and welcoming place that is open for business should be recognised as a positive outcome.

As I have said earlier today, the policing and security-related costs are now estimated at some £75 million, with only £14.5 million of that falling on the Executive. I have also announced allocations to cover additional departmental costs of around £5.1 million to fund road improvements, a publicity campaign to maximise the economic benefits from the event and for the Ambulance and Fire and Rescue Service to provide additional support to the PSNI.

Of course, this event has the potential to generate huge economic benefits for Northern Ireland and this should be set against the costs. However, we will not know the benefits for years to come. A follow-up Investment Conference has already been announced for the autumn and I believe it is critical that we build on the positive publicity already generated. For example, a recent report by Barclays on the G8 event estimates that there could be significant net economic benefits in the short term with the potential for further longer term benefits.

Spending Round 2013

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline his strategy for addressing the impact of the Westminster June Spending Round on budgets.

(AQO 4438/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Chancellor's Spending Round announcement on Wednesday 26th June 2013 detailed the UK's budget for the financial year 2015-16 and provided an overall envelope for the Executive's 2015-16 Budget.

Our 2015-16 Resource DEL will be £10.2 billion, and our 2015-16 Capital DEL will be £1.1 billion.

In terms of the local impact of the Spending Round, it was inevitable that the savings announced at a UK level would have an impact here. However I welcome the Chancellor's decision to continue with protections for Health and schools, which effectively insulates the Northern Ireland budget from the full extent of the cuts applied to Whitehall departments.

I will now provide advice to my Executive colleagues on the proposed way forward for a local budget process and will outline a timetable in due course.

Central Procurement Directorate

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of whether the Central Procurement Directorate is fit for purpose.

(AQO 4439/11-15)

Mr Wilson: In my view the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) is fit for purpose. This is based on the positive assurances provided from external validation provided by independent experts.

These external reviews include, for example:

- Independent examination of CPD's capability against the model endorsed by the Procurement Board for accreditation as a Centre of Procurement Expertise.
- Independent examination of CPD's role as a Gateway Authorised Hub including its ability to promote and manage the Gateway Review Process as applied to public bodies.

- Independent examination to confirm the continuing accreditation of CPD's quality management system against ISO 9001:2008.
- Independent examination of CPD against the European Foundation for Quality Management Model following which CPD was assessed as having achieved Gold Standard.

Investment Strategy

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the current Investment Strategy, given the shift in budget allocation from the A5 project.

(AQO 4441/11-15)

Mr Wilson: All major capital projects have a significant lead-in time - it is simply not possible to immediately displace one project with another in the short term. This is, of course, the problem that the Executive has had to address with the ongoing delay to the A5 road scheme.

Minister Kennedy wrote to me in advance of the June Monitoring round, suggesting that the Executive take forward a number of alternative roads schemes in 2014-15. Although these schemes might well be worthwhile progressing, the Executive has agreed that all Ministers should be afforded the opportunity to bring forward viable capital projects.

The Executive will therefore consider, in a strategic manner, proposals from all Ministers as part of the October Monitoring round and I will update the House on the outcome of our deliberation at that time.

Capital Project Planning 2014-15

Mr Anderson asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he will take on 2014-15 capital project planning in light of the delay in the upgrade of the A5 road.

(AQO 4442/11-15)

Mr Wilson: All major capital projects have a significant lead-in time - it is simply not possible to immediately displace one project with another in the short term. This is, of course, the problem that the Executive has had to address with the ongoing delay to the A5 road scheme.

Minister Kennedy wrote to me in advance of the June Monitoring round, suggesting that the Executive take forward a number of alternative roads schemes in 2014-15. Although these schemes might well be worthwhile progressing, the Executive has agreed that all Ministers should be afforded the opportunity to bring forward viable capital projects.

The Executive will therefore consider, in a strategic manner, proposals from all Ministers as part of the October Monitoring round and I will update the House on the outcome of our deliberation at that time.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Closure of Rathmoyle Residential Care Home

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Northern Health and Social Care Trust or his Department are aware of any calculations to determine the savings that could be made by the closure of Rathmoyle residential care home; and to outline the calculations and the projected savings.

(AQW 24107/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): On 3 May 2013, I called a halt to the consultation proposal process for the closure of local residential homes within Trusts. There is no doubt that delaying change can have financial consequences. By not changing the model of care within a reasonable timeframe, less revenue resources can be moved from the statutory residential care home sector to improve services and support in the community.

I have asked the HSC Board to lead on a regional oversight process that adheres to best practice in consultation, engagement and change management. However, as it is not possible at this stage to put a definite timeframe on when this process will be completed and subsequent actions taken, it is not possible at this stage to identify the financial cost of my decision.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Area: Learning Disability Services

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how much is spent annually on learning disability services in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area, broken down by (a) north; (b) south; (c) east; and (d) west; and (ii) for a breakdown of the services on which the money is spent.

(AQW 24326/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not available by parliamentary constituency, however, expenditure on learning disability services for 2012/13, in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area, broken down by service area, is set out in the table below.

Learning Disability Services Expenditure 2012/13	£m
Residential, Supported Living and Day Services	16.6
Community Treatment and Support	2.8
Care Management	15.3
Muckamore Abbey Hospital(Regional Inpatient Services)	15.9
Medical Staff Costs (Muckamore Abbey Hospital & Community Medical Services to Belfast HSCT, South Eastern HSCT and Northern HSCT)	1.2
Total	51.8

Learning Disability Services Staff

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the number of staff who work in learning disability services in each Health and Social Care Trust; (ii) how many of these staff have management responsibilities; and (iii) how many posts are vacant.

(AQW 24339/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) The following information has been supplied by HSC Trusts who were asked to provide figures for staff in the Nursing & Midwifery, Social Services, Professional & Technical or Medical & Dental occupational families whose primary role is within Learning Disability, excluding bank staff. As Trusts are organised differently, and staff can work across services, it is not possible for Trusts to have fully accounted for their Learning Disability provision within the timescale allotted to this Assembly Question; nor does this information allow Trusts to be compared.

BELFAST HSC TRUST

Occupational Family	Whole-time Equivalent
Nursing & Midwifery	454.05
Professional & Technical	15.54
Social Services	421.99
Medical & Dental	9.20

NORTHERN HSC TRUST

Staff Group	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Qualified Nursing	23	21.52
Social Workers	33	31.20
Social Work Support/ Social Care staff	309	160.54
Occupational Therapist/ OT support	8	6.46
Speech & Language Therapist/ S&L support	10	8.00
Physiotherapist / Physio support	10	7.96
Clinical Psychologist / Assistant Psychologist	14	13.9
Community Psychiatrists	2	1.20
Learning Disability Dental Hygienist	1	0.61
Multi Service Managers (Individuals may have nursing, social work, AHP or social care qualifications)	28	27.80

SOUTH-EASTERN HSC TRUST

Staff Group	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Qualified Nursing	46	35.83
Nursing Support	7	6.13
Social Workers	75	63.58
Social Work Support/Social Care	263	204.05
Occupational Therapist	2	2.00
Speech & Language Therapist	4	3.80
Physiotherapist	2	1.20
Clinical Psychologist	9	8.40
Assistant Psychologist	3	3.00
Teacher/Training Support	18	14.30

SOUTHERN HSC TRUST

Staff Group	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Qualified Nursing	98	87.39
Nurse Support	85	77.64
Social Workers	51	43.40
Social Work Support/ Social Care staff	214	172.93
Occupational Therapist/ OT support	12	10.84
Speech & Language Therapist	5	4.80

Staff Group	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Physiotherapist/ Physio support	6	4.00
Clinical Psychologist/Assistant Psychologist	9	8.40
Medical & Dental	3	3.00
Multi Services Managers	8	7.15
Physical Disability/Sensory Impairment Support Worker (LD Supported Living facility)	3	3.00
Podiatrist Qualified	3	2.30

WESTERN HSC TRUST

Staff Group	Headcount	Whole-time equivalent
Qualified Nursing	50	48.67
Nurse Support	58	55.23
Social Workers	24	23.77
Social Work Support/ Social Care staff	255	223.59
Occupational Therapist	1	0.80
Clinical Psychologist/Assistant Psychologist	2	1.60
Medical & Dental	3	2.80

- (ii) Collating numbers of staff with management responsibilities could only be achieved at disproportionate cost. The HSC Trusts have informed my Department that to do so would require a time-consuming manual exercise on each of their parts.
- (iii) Collating vacancies is also a time-consuming manual process. Detailed HSC vacancy figures for March and September of each year are published in the biannual Northern Ireland HSC Vacancy Survey Report. The report showing vacancies HSC- wide as at 31st March 2013 will be published in September at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/workforce-statistics/stats-hsc.htm

Cancer Drug Fund

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to introduce a Cancer Drug Fund, similar to that in England, on a pro rata basis, or a Special Needs Fund such as that introduced in Scotland.

(AQW 24387/11-15)

Mr Poots: No decision has been taken regarding the establishment of a Cancer Drugs Fund for Northern Ireland. Patients in Northern Ireland may access unapproved cancer drugs through the process of individual funding requests (IFR). IFRs are made on behalf of patients by their consultants. The Health and Social Care Board has a process for considering those requests, details of which may be found at the following link:

Mater, City and Royal Victoria Hospitals in Belfast: Cardboard Balers

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how much has been spent on cardboard balers for the Mater, City and Royal Victoria Hospitals in Belfast, since 2010; (ii) whether any of the balers are off site; and (iii) if so, why this is the case.

(AQW 24402/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have no cardboard balers that are situated or operated off site.

The costs for cardboard balers and maintenance (purchase and lease) are as follows:

2010/11 RVH = £7,500 (purchase)	BCH = £4,500 (lease)	MIH = £0
2011/12 RVH = £295 (annual maintenance)	BCH = £4,500 (lease)	MIH = £0
2012/13 RVH = £19,000 (new purchase)	BCH = £3,036 (lease)	MIH = £0

Mater, City and Royal Victoria Hospitals in Belfast: Cardboard, Food Waste and Hazardous Waste

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent on the disposal of (i) cardboard; (ii) food waste; and (iii) hazardous waste at the Mater, City and Royal Victoria Hospitals in Belfast, in each year since 2010.

(AQW 24403/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust categorises cardboard and food as non-hazardous/non-infectious waste. Hazardous waste is categorised and disposed of as per Departmental guidance.

Costs for disposal of non-hazardous and hazardous waste have been detailed below.

NON HAZARDOUS/NON INFECTIOUS

2010/11	RVH = £275,814	BCH = £135,963	MIH = £81,071
2011/12	RVH = £207,535	BCH = £73,211	MIH = £61,089
2012/13	RVH = £252,760	BCH = £85,636	MIH = £26,246

HAZARDOUS/INFECTIOUS/POTENTIALLY INFECTIOUS

2010/11	RVH = £656,408	BCH = £321,563	MIH = £112,142
2011/12	RVH = £703,571	BCH = £375,845	MIH = £115,032
2012/13	RVH=£845,115	BCH=£371,940	MIH=£124,526

Suicide

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether any people who died by suicide in north and west Belfast, over the last three years, had been prescribed Tramadol.

(AQW 24415/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not available.

However, I am aware there have been growing concerns about tramadol related deaths and the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has carried out a review of the harms associated with the non-medicinal use of tramadol. The issue of prescription drug misuse will be the main point of

consideration at the next meeting of the Steering Group on the New Strategic Direction on Drugs and Alcohol.

One Stop Shop Service for Families Living with Autism

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) for his assessment of the proposal from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and the National Autistic Society to the Social Investment Fund for a One Stop Shop service for families living with autism; (ii) why Autism NI and Autism Initiatives NI are not included in this proposal; (iii) whether the National Autistic Society will be eligible for any subsequent tendering process, given its role in co-designing this proposal and service model; and (iv) whether the investigations regarding the One Stop Shop model that are referenced in the draft autism strategy plan have extended beyond England to Scotland and Wales to secure a researched basis for such developments locally.

(AQW 24423/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) Neither, I or my departmental officials were aware that this proposal had been submitted to the OFMDFM's Social Investment Fund. The proposal submitted is not for the 'One Stop Shop' pilot service as referenced in the draft Autism Strategy and Action Plan;
- (ii) The Northern HSC Trust has advised that the proposal to the Social Investment Fund was initiated by the National Autistic Society (NAS) who approached the Northern HSC Trust seeking their support;
- (iii) OFMDFM have advised that at this stage no decision has been made on the Autism project submitted as part of the Northern Social Investment Zone Area Plan;
- (iv) I can confirm that similar models in Scotland have also been researched as part of the early investigative work to develop a design specification for the Northern Ireland 'One Stop Shop' pilot service as referenced in the draft Autism Strategy and Action Plan. These investigations will continue as development and design of the pilot service progresses.

Provision of Residential Care Homes

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what engagement he plans with local councils on the review of the provision of residential care homes.

(AQW 24430/11-15)

Mr Poots: On 3rd May 2013, I called a halt to the Trusts' consultation processes. I have asked the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to lead on a new, regionalised process for consulting, engaging and implementing change. In doing so, I am keen to secure the best possible outcomes for older people, including those currently residing in statutory residential care homes.

I would urge everyone, individuals and organisations alike, who has an interest in how we deliver social care for our older people in the future to take part in the consultation process and make their views heard. Details of the consultation will be published as soon as they are available.

Mater, City and Royal Victoria Hospitals in Belfast: Road Sweeping Machines

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many road sweeping machines are available at the (i) Mater; (ii) City; and (iii) Royal Victoria Hospitals in Belfast; and what are the associated costs for these machines over each of the last three years.

(AQW 24436/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust operates one road sweeping machine at RGH site.

The annual costs of routine servicing and repairs is detailed in the table below

At the beginning of 2013 a new replacement sweeper was put into use at a cost of £33,750(Machine was purchased in June 2012). There have not been costs against the new machine in 2013 because no servicing or repairs have been carried out as yet

Years	Total Invoices Recorded (Routine Service)=A	Total Invoices Recorded (Callouts/ Repairs)=B	Total Cost Recorded = A+B	Approx expected Cost of Routine Service
2010	None recorded	£6,998.89	£6,998.89	2010/11 - £1,575.00
2011	£990.00	£2,124.16	£3,114.16	2011/12 - £1,626.00
2012	£330.00	£3000.47	£3330.47	2012/13 - £1,626.00
2013	None recorded	None recorded	None recorded	

There are currently no road sweeping machines available at the Mater or Belfast City Hospital.

‘Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland’ Publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the criticisms contained in the ‘Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland’ publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation, whether he plans to improve the Individual Funding Request system or introduce a cancer drug fund. **(AQW 24441/11-15)**

Mr Poots: No decision has been taken regarding the establishment of a Cancer Drugs Fund for Northern Ireland. Patients in Northern Ireland may access unapproved cancer drugs through the process of individual funding requests (IFR). The Health and Social Care Board has a clear process for the submission and consideration of IFR requests. This process has been communicated to all Health and Social Care Trusts.

‘Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland’ Publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the ‘Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland’ publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation, how he intends to approach the challenge that clinicians are eight times less likely to make requests for patients than they are in England. **(AQW 24442/11-15)**

Mr Poots: I am advised that the data related to the challenge that the Member has referred to is incomplete and as such may be questionable in terms of being reflective of activity in Northern Ireland. Patients in Northern Ireland may access unapproved cancer drugs through the process of individual funding requests (IFR). An IFR can be initiated by any consultant who feels their patient would benefit from an unapproved drug.

‘Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland’ Publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the ‘Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland’ publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation, how he will respond to the revelation that a large proportion of cancer specialists claim treatment has been unavailable in a timely manner for patients. **(AQW 24443/11-15)**

Mr Poots: I am advised that the statement referred to by the Member relates to a survey published in 2011 and may not be reflective of current activity in Northern Ireland, particularly since the latest guidance on access to unapproved drugs was issued in March 2012. In addition, clinicians who have concerns that their patients are not receiving treatment for cancer in a timely manner should raise that concern through the well established clinical governance arrangements that exist in each Health and Social Care Trust.

Pilot Study of Podiatric Surgery

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the pilot study of podiatric surgery carried out in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde in the Southern General Hospitals, Department of Podiatry in March 2010.

(AQW 24465/11-15)

Mr Poots: The pilot Podiatric Surgery Service Report was published in January 2011 by NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde. The report was produced by the Podiatric Surgery Pilot Steering Group which included Podiatry Managers, Consultant Orthopaedic Foot Surgeon, service managers and a Podiatric Surgeon. The report is endorsed by the Scottish government.

The HSCB and PHA will be considering this evidence and other potential models when progressing the development of Podiatric Surgery in Northern Ireland. The HSCB and PHA are committed to working in partnership with key stakeholders in the development of this service.

Commissioning Process for Podiatric Services

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the commissioning process for podiatric services.

(AQW 24466/11-15)

Mr Poots: The commissioning of services is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board. The Board has advised that the podiatric service will be commissioned from an agreed Health and Social Care Trust provider, in line with the majority of acute elective services. The commissioning process will ensure an integrated patient pathway from referral, through orthopaedic Integrated Clinical Assessment and Treatment Services (ICATS), podiatric surgeon and orthopaedic surgeon, as appropriate.

Podiatric Services

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the engagement and consultative processes around podiatric services.

(AQW 24467/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board is taking forward the development of a local podiatric surgical service. I assume that the Member is referring to this element of podiatric services. The Board will be working closely with key stakeholders, including clinicians, to ensure an agreed way forward in the development of this service.

Recruitment of Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Consultants

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the recruitment of orthopaedic foot and ankle consultants to Health and Social Care Trusts has not been prioritised.

(AQW 24468/11-15)

Mr Poots: I can confirm that all orthopaedic foot and ankle consultant posts within the Health and Social Care Trusts are filled and there is no requirement to recruit at this time.

Podiatric Services

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact the proposed changes to podiatric services will have on training orthopaedic surgeons, specifically in relation to their training targets.

(AQW 24470/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is not anticipated that the proposed changes to podiatric services will have any impact on the training of orthopaedic surgeons, including their training targets. The Health and Social Care Board has advised that the proposed new service will focus on the gap between the demand for foot and ankle surgery and the capacity to meet that demand ie it will deal with foot and ankle referrals which Trusts are currently unable to provide within existing capacity.

'Funding Cancer drugs in Northern Ireland' Publication by the Rarer Cancer Foundation

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the 'Funding Cancer Drugs in Northern Ireland' publication, why 23 life extending treatments remain inaccessible to patients.

(AQW 24482/11-15)

Mr Poots: The "Funding Cancer Drugs in Northern Ireland Report" lists 22 drugs which were unavailable in Northern Ireland in June 2012. The 22 drugs listed are drugs that had not been approved by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) at that date. The Health and Social Care Board does not routinely commission drugs unapproved by NICE. Patients in Northern Ireland may access unapproved cancer drugs through the process of individual funding requests. Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland is committed to providing the best services that it can within the funding available. It is important therefore that approved drugs and therapies are both clinically and cost effective.

Individual Funding Request System

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the need for a review of the Individual Funding Request system to ensure that care on par with the English system is provided to patients.

(AQW 24483/11-15)

Mr Poots: Patients in Northern Ireland may access unapproved cancer drugs through the process of individual funding requests. The Health and Social Care Board has a clear process for the submission and review of Individual Funding (IFR) requests. From April 2012 to March 2013 the Board received 105 IFR requests for cancer drugs, of which 93 were approved. Two requests for funding were not supported. The remaining 10 did not progress. The total cancer drug expenditure in 2012/13 was £24.8m

Business Services Organisation's Procurement and Logistics Service: Supply Contracts

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 24003/11-15, to detail the supply contracts awarded by the Business Services Organisation's Procurement and Logistics Service since 16 March 2013, including the (i) contract title; (ii) date the contracts were awarded; and (iii) names of businesses awarded either a whole or a part of the contract.

(AQW 24486/11-15)

Mr Poots: Details of the supply contracts awarded by the Business Services Organisation's Procurement and Logistics Service since 16 March 2013 are included in the table overleaf.

Contract Description	Supplier Name	Contract Award Date
PaLS - Mini Competition Video Camera Drape and Card Insert	M.E.D. Surgical	18/06/2013
PaLS - Maintenance of Boiler Water Controls	Mobrey Ltd	11/06/2013
PaLS-Delivery of Leadership Development Programmes for Integrated Care	Karen Picking Consultancy Limited	13/06/2013
Suction Canisters and Liners (Gelling Agent)	VacSax Limited	01/06/2013
PaLS - Supply & Delivery of Endoscope Transport Bags	Lancer UK Limited	23/05/2013
PaLS - Electrode Plate Diathermy - Supply & Delivery	ConMed UK	21/05/2013
Radiopharmaceutical Products & Generators Imaging Equip.	Imaging Equipment Ltd	24/05/2013
Radiopharmaceutical Products & Generators Mallinckrodt/Covidien	Covidien UK Commercial Limited	24/05/2013
Radiopharmaceutical Products & Generators GE H/Care	GE healthcare	24/05/2013
Radiopharmaceutical Products & Generators -Diagnostic Imag.	Diagnostic Imaging Ltd	24/05/2013
Radiopharmaceutical Products & Generators IBA Mol.	IBA Molecular UK Ltd	24/05/2013
Suction Canisters and Liners	VacSax Limited	01/06/2013
Provision of Water Safety Works within SE HSC Trust	PHS PEST CONTROL LIMITED	21/05/2013
Supply & Delivery Of Cover Set Image Intensifier	Vygon Uk Ltd	13/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 2 Curtains	John Mann & Company Ltd	01/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 1 Blinds	Anderson Interiors Ltd	01/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 1 Blinds	Interiors and floor design	01/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 2 Curtains	FRANCIS PRICE CONTRACTS (A DIVISION OF THE BEHRENS GROUP)	01/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 2 Curtains	Interiors and floor design	01/05/2013

Contract Description	Supplier Name	Contract Award Date
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 3 Disposable Curtains	FRANCIS PRICE CONTRACTS (A DIVISION OF THE BEHRENS GROUP)	01/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 1 Blinds	the fabric centre	01/05/2013
Supply, Delivery and Fitting of Blinds, Curtains and Disposable Curtains Lot 1 Blinds	Vertiking Services Ltd	01/05/2013
Nucleic Acid Extraction Systems RVH	Roche Diagnostics Ltd	13/05/2013
Normal Human Immunoglobulins	CSL Behring UK Limited	National Framework 1/6/2013*
Normal Human Immunoglobulins	Baxter Healthcare Ltd	National Framework 1/6/2013*
Normal Human Immunoglobulins	Grifols UK Ltd	National Framework 1/6/2013*
Normal Human Immunoglobulins	Octapharma Ltd	National Framework 1/6/2013*
Normal Human Immunoglobulins	Bio Products Laboratory Ltd	National Framework 1/6/2013*
Normal Human Immunoglobulins	Oxbridge Pharma Ltd	National Framework 1/6/2013*
PaLS - Simulators Wireless supply and delivery	Gaumard Scientific Co.	28/05/2013
PaLS - Evacuation Chair Supply, Delivery & Maintenance	DB McLarnon Fire Protection	21/05/2013
PaLS_ Supply & Delivery of Surgical Dressings for HSC**	Armstrong Medical Ltd	29/03/2013
Phosphate Buffered Saline	PREMIER SCIENTIFIC LTD	14/05/2013
PaLS - Beyond Silos EU Funding Application Support (TYC)	Ernst & Young LLP (Belfast)	09/05/2013
Arterial Sampling Syringes	Radiometer Limited	08/05/2013
Arterial Sampling Syringes	Radiometer Limited	08/05/2013
Lot Two - Western Trust (Northern Sector)	Dove House Community Trust	03/05/2013

Contract Description	Supplier Name	Contract Award Date
Lot One - Banbridge (with an outreach service in Craigavon)	REACT LTD	03/05/2013
Lot Three - Northern Trust (Northern Sector)	Opportunity Youth	03/05/2013
11298 - PaLS Maintenance of Patient Trolleys and Operating Tables	EMSA Belfast	07/05/2013
11297 - PaLS Maintenance of Eschmann Portable Suction	EMSA Belfast	25/04/2013
11535 - PaLS - Maintenance of Tourniquets and Diathermies	EMSA Belfast	25/04/2013
Medium Wash Up Pack	Pennine Healthcare	01/05/2013
Sterile Customised Procedure Packs: Anaesthetic Pack Musgrave	Clonallon Laboratories Ltd	01/05/2013
LABORATORY PAPER	United Paper Merchants Ltd	13/05/2013
Maintenance & Repair of Vehicle Heating & Air Conditioning Systems	CJ Collins Auto Electrics	25/04/2013
Maintenance & Repair of Vehicle Heating & Air Conditioning Systems	Premier Healthcare NI Ltd	25/04/2013
Laundry Chemicals and Associated Products - Lot 1	Zenith Hygiene Systems Ireland	01/05/2013
Natural Gas (Supply)	Firmus energy (supply) ltd.	25/04/2013
Clean Indicator Notes	GAMA Healthcare Ltd	09/04/2013
Media Monitoring	Kantar Media formerly MediaMarket	20/03/2013
Lithotomy Wash-Up Pack	Pennine Healthcare	23/04/2013
PaLS_Procurement of seasonal influenza vaccines 2013/2014	Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics Limited	29/03/2013
PaLS_Procurement of seasonal influenza vaccines 2013/2014	GlaxoSmithKline UK Ltd	29/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Adhesive Waste Labels	PM Labels Limited	25/04/2013
Knee Pack- Altnagelvin Hospital	Clonallon Laboratories Ltd	16/04/2013
11963 - PaLS - Maintenance of Wolf Equipment	Endosurgical NI Ltd.	24/04/2013
PaLS_Procurement of seasonal influenza vaccines 2013/2014	MASTA LTD	29/03/2013
PaLS_Procurement of seasonal influenza vaccines 2013/2014	Sanofi Pasteur MSD	29/03/2013
PaLS - Maintenance of Static System Nurse Call System	Alfred J Hurst Ltd	25/04/2013

Contract Description	Supplier Name	Contract Award Date
RTF Infant Formula	SMA Nutrition	17/04/2013
Provision of an Eye Care Voucher Service	Specsavers Optical Superstores Ltd	18/04/2013
D & C Pack	Intraveno Healthcare	18/04/2013
11208 - PaLS - Mini Competition for Maintenance of High Grade Diagnostic Imaging Systems	Medical Imaging NI Ltd	03/04/2013
Vaginal Hysterectomy Pack	Clonallon Laboratories Ltd	18/04/2013
Sterile Customised Procedure Packs - Laparoscopy Pack B	Pennine Healthcare	17/04/2013
Sterile Customised Procedure Packs Laparoscopy Pack A	Accuscience	17/04/2013
ENT Drape Pack	Clonallon Laboratories Ltd	17/04/2013
PaLS SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF NORTHERN TRUST NAME BADGES	Recognition Express NI	11/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Bunzl Healthcare	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Vernon Medical	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Partners for Endoscopy Limited	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Cardiac Services Limited	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Boston Scientific Ltd	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Medical Innovations	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Albyn Medical Ltd	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Cook UK Ltd	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	BVM Medical Limited	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Endosurgical NI Ltd.	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	ConMed UK	08/04/2013
Single Use Endoscopy Accessories	Intraveno Healthcare	08/04/2013
Inventory Management System for Trust owned Therapy Bedding	HILL-ROM	09/04/2013
Osmometer - Consumables	Vector Scientific & Ulster Anaesthetics Ltd	20/03/2013
Through Floor Lifts - Maintenance	Olympic Lifts	27/03/2013
PaLS - Stairlifts - Maintenance	Olympic Lifts	27/03/2013
Thermostatic Mixing Valves Servicing and Testing	DMC Shower Services	27/03/2013
Lot 9 - Frozen Bread, Speciality Bread	Henderson Foodservice Ltd	22/03/2013

Contract Description	Supplier Name	Contract Award Date
Supply and Delivery of Ready Meal Containers (CPET) and Sealing Film Lot 2 Peelable Lidding Heat Sealable Film	Wrapid Manufacturing Ltd	22/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Patient Moving and Handling Equipment for Daily Living	ArjoHuntleigh (Ireland) Ltd	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Simple Equipment and Seating for Daily Living	Tools For Living (Ireland)	21/03/2013
PaLS - Maintenance and Testing of Bed Pan Washers	ArjoHuntleigh (Ireland) Ltd	21/03/2013
NHS Supply Chain - Batteries and Torches	H-Squared Electronics Ltd	01/04/2013
Provision of an Eye Care Voucher Service	Specsavers Optical Superstores Ltd	25/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Patient Moving and Handling Equipment for Daily Living	Evolution Healthcare Limited	21/03/2013
Testing Systems for HLA Molecular Typing and Antibody Profiling	VH Bio Ltd	25/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Simple Equipment and Seating for Daily Living	Sidhil Ltd	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Simple Equipment and Seating for Daily Living	Bridge Medical Services	21/03/2013
Testing Systems for HLA Molecular Typing and Antibody Profiling	Quest Biomedical Ltd	25/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Patient Moving and Handling Equipment for Daily Living	John Preston & Co Ltd	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Patient Moving and Handling Equipment for Daily Living	Lisclare Limited	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Simple Equipment and Seating for Daily Living	Evolution Healthcare Limited	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Community Profiling Beds	Sidhil Ltd	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Patient Moving and Handling Equipment for Daily Living	HILL-ROM	21/03/2013
Supply and Delivery of Simple Equipment and Seating for Daily Living	coffey Healthcare	21/03/2013
Cover Slipper	Vector Scientific & Ulster Anaesthetics Ltd	28/03/2013
Tissue Cassette Printer	Sakura Finetek UK LTD.	25/03/2013

* The Immunoglobulins contracts were awarded against a framework agreement. Date of contract award is not available but the start date of the contract was 1 June 2013.

** This was also awarded against a framework agreement – the date of award of that framework agreement is 20th September 2012, however, the contract to Armstrong Medical Limited was awarded on 29th March 2013.

Business Services Transformation Programme Website

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the last monthly newsletter published on the Business Services Transformation Programme website was for the month of February 2013; and when the newsletters for March, April, May and June 2013 will be published.
(AQW 24487/11-15)

Mr Poots: The BSO BSTP newsletters for March, April, May and June 2013 were not produced due to limited staff resources. However, going forward, the programme plan is to provide a summer edition by the end of July 2013 and to provide quarterly reports thereafter.

Business Service Organisation's Procurement and Logistics Service: Supply Contracts

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 24003/11-15, to list the supply contracts still to be awarded by the Business Service Organisation's Procurement and Logistics Service for which the deadline for submission of the original tenders was a date prior to 16 March 2013, including the (i) tender title; and (ii) deadline for submission.
(AQW 24488/11-15)

Mr Poots: The supply contracts still to be awarded by the Business Service Organisation's Procurement and Logistics Service for which the deadline for submission of the original tenders was a date prior to 16 March 2013 are shown in the table below.

Tender Description	Original Close Date
Qualification ITT Pleural Drainage and Suction Devices	28/09/2012
Provision of Transport Services - SHSCT - Qualification and Technical Responses	02/11/2012
Nutrition Supply Services - Primary and Secondary Care Northern Ireland	28/12/2012
Supply of Dose Banded Cytotoxic Pharmaceuticals	28/12/2012
PaLS - Calibration of Test Equipment	07/01/2013
PaLS - Regional Information System for Oncology and Haematology Market Sounding	08/03/2013

Safe and Sustainable Review Process Report

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that the same process that was conducted in Great Britain has now been deemed flawed by the UK Secretary of State for Health, for his assessment of the credibility of the findings of the Safe and Sustainable Review Process report into paediatric cardiac surgery in Belfast.
(AQW 24527/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is considering the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's report to determine whether any of its recommendations are of immediate relevance to the Northern Ireland review of paediatric congenital cardiac services (PCCS). While the initial commissioning framework for PCCS in Northern Ireland, that was consulted on in 2012 by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), drew on the safe and sustainable standards the final standards for Northern Ireland, recommended by the PCCS Working Group and endorsed by the HSCB, have been tailored to reflect the particular needs and circumstances of the Northern Ireland population, informed by the local consultation process. My key priority is to ensure the delivery of a safe and sustainable service for these vulnerable children.

Cardiac Procedures

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to cardiac procedures completed in Northern Ireland, whether he has considered adopting the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's recommendation that children and adults procedures should be counted together towards a surgeons overall total number of cardiac procedures.

(AQW 24528/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is considering the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's report to determine whether any of its recommendations are of immediate relevance to the Northern Ireland review of paediatric congenital cardiac services.

Integrated Care Partnerships

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the community sector will be represented on Integrated Care Partnerships; and who will nominate the community representatives.

(AQW 24535/11-15)

Mr Poots: The work of each ICP will be overseen by a Partnership Committee whose members are drawn from the various collaborating organisations and will include one representative of the Community and Voluntary sector and two service user/ carer representatives. The Community and Voluntary sector will also be represented on ICP working groups which will be established for the short term to focus on specific conditions.

The HSCB arranged a briefing with representatives of the sector in collaboration with CO3 and the Long Term Conditions Alliance NI for Wednesday, 26th June, to provide an update on how ICPs are being established and the role of the community and voluntary sector within ICPs. This is to be followed up with a workshop in early July. It is expected that the Community and Voluntary Sector will develop a consensus approach and manage the process for nomination to ICPs.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Bus Driver Job Description

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the job descriptions of bus drivers in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, including the pay scales.

(AQW 24536/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised that bus drivers in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust are responsible for the safe transportation of clients between facilities/home/other venues, providing an efficient, safe and reliable service, contributing to the overall care of patients and clients. Bus drivers were originally graded at Band 2 (£14,294-£17,425) through the Agenda for Change (AfC) job evaluation process. These staff requested a review of their banding outcome and in May 2013 they were regraded at Band 3 (£16,271-£19,268); their job description will be updated to reflect this banding.

Some drivers employed by the Trust who were not included in the review group, e.g. were appointed (under the original Band 2 Job Description) after the review was submitted, but who claim to be undertaking duties identical to those staff within the review group, have submitted applications for review. This may result in their pay band being uplifted to the same grade as their colleagues if it is agreed that they are doing identical jobs.

Learning Disability Day Care Staff

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether all Belfast Health and Social Care Trust learning disability day care staff are on the same pay scales.

(AQW 24537/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised that the Trust currently has different grades of staff working within learning disability day care on the following pay bands: Band 3 (£16,271 - £19,268), Band 4, (£18,838 - £22,016), Band 5 (£21,388 - £27,901), Band 6 (25,783 - £34,530, and Band 7 (£30,764 - £40,558).

Health and Social Care Trust: Day Centres

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what incentives for adults to attend day centres are offered by each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 24538/11-15)

Mr Poots: The history of this payment dates back to when workshop and resource centres offered incentives to clients attending their services. This type of day care has now changed to one which offers more person-centred day opportunities and incentive payments are considered not to be in keeping with this change.

However, those clients who had historically received reward incentives for work undertaken in the workshop model retained those payments in line with the regional approach. New clients attending adult day centres do not receive incentives.

Private Weight Loss Groups or Programmes

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much has been spent by GPs in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area on private weight loss groups or programmes.

(AQW 24544/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) has informed me that it is not aware of any spend by GPs in the Northern Trust area on private weight loss groups. However, a Commercial Weight Loss Pilot Scheme, funded by the HSCB, is currently being operated across Northern Ireland in cooperation with the Public Health Agency. The scheme is a voucher based system that allows GPs refer patients, who meet the criteria, to commercial weight loss classes.

I can confirm that there have been 5,079 referrals to date, and 660 of these have been made by GPs in Northern Trust area. The cost (excluding printing and postage) to date of referrals from GPs in the Northern Trust area is estimated at £31,752.

Closure of Adult Respite and Day Care Centres

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on any consultations taking place on the possible closure of adult respite and day care centres.

(AQW 24546/11-15)

Mr Poots: I recognise that respite/short breaks and day care provision are a cornerstone of support to families and carers of adults with a learning disability.

I am advised by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust that they have no plans for the closure of any current day care facilities for adults with learning disability. They are keen to develop a range of respite/short breaks services to support carers and intend to commence an initial engagement process with stakeholders in September. The Belfast and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trusts have no consultations taking place on these services.

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust indicate that they are currently in the early stages of reviewing their adult respite and day care facilities. The Western Health and Social Care Trust are undertaking a review of respite provision across the Trust, both statutory and non-statutory. This is due to conclude in March 2014. These separate reviews have not yet been completed, therefore neither Trust are presently in a consultation process.

Ulster Hospital: Still Births

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of still births at the Ulster Hospital over the last two years.

(AQW 24548/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on the number of still births at the Ulster Hospital is published on an annual basis in the Northern Ireland Hospital Statistics: Inpatient and Day Case Activity publication (Table 4c) and is available to view or download from:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/inpatients.htm

Information for 2012/13 is due to be published on the 8th August 2013.

Transforming Your Care: Proposed Funding

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the proposed funding that will be allocated through Transforming Your Care to (i) mental health; and (ii) suicide awareness and prevention services.

(AQW 24563/11-15)

Mr Poots: The HSCB has advised that of the £70m transitional funding sought to aid implementation of Transforming Your Care (TYC) reforms over the 3 year period 2012/13-2014/15, it is anticipated that £2m will be ringfenced specifically for mental health services. In addition, nearly £13m is being invested over three years to 2014/15 from outwith the TYC transitional funding to support the development of community care, prevention/early intervention activities and resettlement of existing long stay residents. These figures do not include Department of Social Development Supported Living monies.

In addition, the Public Health Agency funds suicide prevention and bereavement support services. Total annual funding for these services in recent years has been around £7m. This includes investment in community led programmes.

Organ Transplants

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people were awaiting an organ transplant procedure, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24577/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested has been supplied by NHS Blood and Transplant, which is the organ donation organisation for the UK and is responsible for matching and allocating donated organs.

The information is shown in the following table –

NORTHERN IRELAND RESIDENTS ON THE UK ACTIVE TRANSPLANT LIST AS AT 30 JUNE 2009 -2012 AND 23 JUNE 2013

Organ	June 2009	June 2010	June 2011	June 2012	June 2013
Kidney	220	196	187	158	158
Kidney/pancreas	4	5	6	8	5
Pancreas	0	1	0	0	1
Heart	1	2	2	5	7
Lung	8	9	10	10	7
Heart/lung	2	1	0	0	0
Liver	10	16	15	20	19
Other multi organ	0	0	0	3	2
Total	245	230	220	204	199

Source – NHS Blood and Transplant.

Note: 'Active' means the patient is currently in a state to receive a transplant.

Organ Donation Register

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the organ donation register is kept up to date and accurate.

(AQW 24578/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested has been supplied by NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT), which is the organ donation organisation for the UK and is responsible for matching and allocating donated organs, and running the NHS Organ Donor Register (ODR).

NHSBT has implemented a range of processes to ensure that data held on the ODR is kept up to date and accurate. Existing records on the ODR are retraced, and new records are traced using registrants' NHS/Health and Care Number. For registrants who reside in Northern Ireland (NI), their records are traced every 6 months. NHSBT is currently working to improve the tracing system for NI by increasing the frequency; they expect the improved process to be in place by the end of 2013.

All UK records are retraced annually by registrants' date of birth in addition to NHS/Health and Care Number to again ensure accuracy of information. NHSBT also have in place a monthly sample checking with Boots, DVLA and all other ODR registration partners to detect issues with registration data, and to ensure that data provided is accurate and up to date.

NHSBT has recently completed a full data cleanse of the ODR. Individuals currently registered on the ODR can also help keep records up to date by notifying NHSBT either online or by telephone, when their personal details change. In addition, individuals can also amend their wishes to specify which organs they wish to donate.

Life Expectancy in Each Ward of the North Antrim Constituency

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list, in ascending order, the life expectancy in each ward of the North Antrim constituency.

(AQW 24587/11-15)

Mr Poots: Due to the small numbers involved, life expectancy estimates are not available for individual electoral wards in Northern Ireland.

Life Expectancy in Each Electoral Ward

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list, in ascending order, the life expectancy in each electoral ward.

(AQW 24588/11-15)

Mr Poots: Due to the small numbers involved, life expectancy estimates are not available for individual electoral wards in Northern Ireland.

Prescribed Medication

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether prisoners, who are in receipt of prescribed medication, sign a contract, and if so, to provide a copy.

(AQW 24599/11-15)

Mr Poots: Any prisoner who has been risk assessed and found to be capable of managing and being 'in-possession' of his/her own medication during detention is required to complete a Prisoner Medication Policy form.

The form outlines the monitoring arrangements in place to ensure that prisoners use their medications as intended by the doctor and are not misusing or trading medications which can lead to addiction and other adverse health outcomes. It also highlights the sanctions in place in the event that prescribed drugs have been misused.

The form is signed by the prisoner and one copy is retained by the prisoner and one copy is retained by the Trust in the prisoner's medical notes.

A copy of the Prisoner Medication Policy form is attached.

Card Before You Leave Appointment System

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what arrangements are in place in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust to ensure that patients residing in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area get a full psychiatric assessment within 24 hours when they are assessed as eligible for the Card Before You Leave appointment system.

(AQW 24627/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Card Before You Leave (CBYL) scheme was introduced for patients who present to an Emergency Department and who are assessed as posing no immediate risk to themselves or others but who may benefit from a follow-up appointment with the mental health team. These patients are given a card with a next day appointment with a member of the mental health team, who will assess them and arrange any on-going care and support that may be required.

In the South Eastern Trust, individuals eligible under the CBYL scheme who reside in the South Eastern Trust area are given a CBYL with a next day appointment at the local Mental Health Assessment Centre.

If the individual does not reside in the South Eastern Trust area, the South Eastern Trust will make a referral to the individual's local Trust, whose responsibility it is to offer a next day appointment, or agree an alternative service with them as required.

Fire and Rescue Service Stations

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Fire and Rescue Service stations do not have female specific toilet facilities; and where these stations are located.

(AQW 24645/11-15)

Mr Poots: All fire stations have specific female toilet facilities.

Referrals for Emergency Treatments

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in instances where a patient has been referred for emergency treatment to a hospital in London for specialist surgery which is not available in Northern Ireland, what patient waiting time is deemed appropriate; and what action he has taken to support the treatment of such patients in a timely manner.

(AQW 24657/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Health and Social Care Board that:

- Patients identified as requiring emergency (i.e. unscheduled) treatment will be treated in order of clinical priority relative to other patients waiting for emergency treatment at the receiving hospital;
- Patients identified as requiring urgent elective (i.e. planned) treatment will be treated in order of clinical priority;
- Patients identified as requiring non urgent/routine elective treatment will be treated in the order in which they have been registered on the appropriate waiting list.

This is the standard approach which all NHS hospitals employ both inside and outside Northern Ireland. In the event that a patient feels this has not occurred a complaint should be made to the Board and the matter will be fully investigated.

Banning of Smoking in Cars

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 21420/11-15, whether he has launched a consultation on the banning of smoking in cars, in line with his previous commitment; and if not, when the consultation will be launched.

(AQW 24674/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have written to Ministerial Colleagues regarding consultation on a range of options for prohibiting smoking in private vehicles. I plan to address this matter in the near future. My Department is currently focused on progressing the Tobacco Retailers Bill through the Assembly.

Efforts will also be made to educate and raise awareness amongst people in order to encourage them to voluntarily make their homes and private vehicles completely smoke-free.

Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Department

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) clinical; (ii) administrative; and (iii) medical staffing levels in the old Accident and Emergency department at Antrim Area Hospital compared to the new unit.

(AQW 24677/11-15)

Mr Poots: All staff at the Antrim Area Hospital Emergency Department fall into the Administrative & Clerical, Nursing, or Medical staff groups. Headcount and Whole-Time Equivalent (WTE) figures for each of these groups are shown in the table below. Figures for June 2012 are representative of the old unit; those for June 2013 are representative of the new unit. These figures have been obtained from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, and have not been validated by the Department.

Grade	June 2012		June 2013	
	Headcount	WTE	Headcount	WTE
Admin & Clerical	26	18.24	28	19.70
Qualified Nursing ¹	59	41.90	65	58.90
Emergency Nurse Practitioner	4	3.32	62	5.32
Nursing Support	11	9.67	16	11.67
Junior Doctor	16	16.00	16	16.00
Mid-Grade Doctor	4	3.14	6	5.14
Consultant	6	6.00	8	8.00

Source: Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes: The Northern HSC Trust informs that 8 qualified nursing posts are currently at various stages of recruitment:

- 1 as at the 28th of June 2013 these posts are being covered by bank staff.
- 2 One (1.0 WTE) Emergency Nurse Practitioner post, included in this total, is being recruited for as at the 28th of June 2013.

Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Department: Number of Beds

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of beds in the old Accident and Emergency department at Antrim Area Hospital compared to the new unit.

(AQW 24678/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed that this question refers to the number of cubicles in the old Accident & Emergency (A&E) department at Antrim Area Hospital compared to the new unit.

The old Antrim A&E department contained 24 cubicles whilst the new Antrim A&E department contains 31 cubicles. Each cubicle contains one trolley bed.

Residential Accommodation in Statutory Care Homes

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have applied for residential accommodation in statutory care homes within the Northern Health and Social Care Trust within the last two years; and how many applications were (i) accepted; and (ii) rejected.
(AQW 24680/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is not centrally available and was therefore requested from the Northern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust who advised that clients do not apply for statutory residential accommodation but rather an individual's needs are assessed to determine the need for residential accommodation. Once established, the client's needs are met, with client choice accommodated as far as possible. Placement would depend on availability and would not always be in a statutory care home.

Residential Homes

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the cost to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust of holding 16 places in private care homes in anticipation of the closure of the 16 places currently occupied in the Westlands residential Care Home for (a) three months; and (b) six months prior to the announcement by the Trust of the home closure; and (ii) any subsequent costs incurred as a result of change of approach by his Department.
(AQW 24681/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Trust have advised that no places were held in private care homes in anticipation of the closure of residential care homes therefore the Trust did not incur any costs.

No additional costs have been incurred by the Trust as a result of the decision not to proceed with the consultation.

People Diagnosed with a Severe Learning Disability: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area are diagnosed with a severe learning disability.
(AQW 24694/11-15)

Mr Poots: Under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF), GPs maintain a register of the number of patients aged 18 years and over with learning disabilities. The register includes all patients with learning disabilities, regardless of the severity of their condition. It is not possible to disaggregate the data to determine how many patients have severe learning disabilities.

As at 31 March 2013, there were 1,674 patients on the learning disability registers of GPs located in South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area.

This figure has been determined based on the constituency in which the GP practice is located; it should be noted that patients may not reside in the constituency in which their practice is located.

Pupils' Eyesight at Primary and Post-Primary Level

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures his Department takes to assess pupils' eyesight at primary and post-primary level.
(AQW 24727/11-15)

Mr Poots: In line with national guidelines, all children in Northern Ireland, between the age of 4 and 5 years, undergo vision screening. Therefore, all children in Primary 1 are offered a vision screening test by School Nurses. In addition all “movement-in” children from Primary 2 to Primary 7, with no previous vision recorded on the Child Health Surveillance system (CHS), are also offered this vision screening test.

The vision screening service is carried out primarily to detect children with amblyopia, a form of cerebral visual impairment, and is orthoptic led within Secondary Care.

A screening service is not provided for post primary children. If there is any concern about a child's eyes or vision after the P1 vision screening, whether at primary or post primary level in school then the GP should be contacted or an eye test arranged with an Optometrist.

Clinical Trial for Pomalidomide

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to run a clinical trial for Pomalidomide, which is being trialled in 12 centres across the UK as a treatment for myeloma.

(AQW 24773/11-15)

Mr Poots: Clinical trials are undertaken to allow data on the safety and efficacy of new drugs to be collected. Clinical trials of potentially beneficial new cancer treatments are managed by the Northern Ireland Cancer Trials Centre (NICTC), based within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT).

The timing, location and also the selection of participants in any particular clinical trial will be determined on the basis of the trial protocol and the inclusion and exclusion criteria that are specified. These criteria are developed by the relevant research team and are not matters in which I or my Department would normally intervene.

I am advised by the BHSCT that a trial for the drug pomalidomide will proceed as planned this month.

Fire Crews in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the occasions over the last twelve months in which fire crews in North Down have required back-up from neighbouring crews.

(AQW 24777/11-15)

Mr Poots: The table below outlines the number of occasions during 2012/13 when fire crews from North Down required back-up from neighbouring crews.

Station	Number Of Occasions Requiring Back-Up
BANGOR	19
HOLYWOOD	6

Answers to Written Questions

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether, in answers to written questions, he gives an answer that would be consistent if the same question was asked under a Freedom of Information request.

(AQW 24797/11-15)

Mr Poots: Under the Freedom of Information Act my Department is only required to provide information already held in recorded form. It does not have to create new information. However, in responding to Assembly Questions, my Department may create new information.

VAT Avoidance Schemes

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether VAT avoidance schemes have been implemented within the Health Service.

(AQW 24799/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am not aware of any VAT avoidance schemes that have been implemented within my Department or its Arms Length Bodies.

People Admitted to Hospital for Tooth Extraction

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many people were admitted to hospital for a tooth extraction because they were on medication that prohibited the procedure being carried out in a dental surgery in each year in the last five years; (ii) how many of these patients acquired an infection whilst in hospital for this procedure; and (iii) how many of the infected patients required a hospital stay as a result of an infection acquired.

(AQW 24803/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available on the number of people admitted to hospital for a tooth extraction because they were on medication that prohibited the procedure being carried out in a dental surgery.

Information is available on the number of tooth extraction procedures carried out in HSC Hospitals in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years and is shown in the table below;

Year	Procedures
2007/08	7,806
2008/09	7,700
2009/10	7,714
2010/11	8,055
2011/12	8,005

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

It is not possible to tell how many of these patients acquired an infection whilst in hospital for this procedure or how many of the infected patients required a hospital stay as a result of an infection acquired.

Bed Reductions at Lurgan Hospital

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail his long-term plans for bed reductions at Lurgan Hospital, particularly in relation to the 16 rehabilitation beds at the hospital.

(AQW 24804/11-15)

Mr Poots: Lurgan Hospital has a total of 51 non-acute beds, of which 16 are stroke rehabilitation. The remaining 35 provide geriatric assessment and rehabilitation.

As part of the Transforming Your Care Population Plan implementation process the Southern Local Commissioning Group is currently working with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust to agree a future model of hospital care for older people across the southern area. However no decisions have yet been made. Work continues to develop the service model and identify the future need for such assessment and rehabilitation in-patient beds across the southern area.

Proposals for the future provision of assessment and rehabilitation inpatient care for older people will be finalised over the summer and presented to the Southern Health and Social Care Trust Board and

the Southern Local Commissioning Group. If agreed they will then be subject to a public consultation process prior to any service changes being made.

Organ Donor List

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people were on the organ donor list in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24809/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested has been published by NHS Blood and Transplant, which is the organ donation organisation for the UK and is responsible for matching and allocating donated organs.

The number of Northern Ireland registrants on the organ donor register in is shown in the following table:

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Number of NI registrants	440,123	477,150	484,748	520,975	550,629

Cardiographers: Pay Bands

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why cardiographers in the Western Health and Social Care Trust are banded at Band 2 when cardiographers with the same job description are banded at Band 3 in the other Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 24817/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised that there are no Band 2 Cardiographers employed within the Western Trust. There are Band 2 Assistant Technical Officers working in Cardiac Investigation Departments in the Trust; this banding is under review. Their job summary is as follows: "To act as support staff to Cardio-Respiratory Clinical Physiologists in the provision of technical services in Cardiology and Respiratory Medicine."

It is not unusual that the job titles do not always indicate exactly the same level of responsibility and detail of role across different organisations.

Adoption of Children by Gay, Lesbian or Unmarried Couples

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) for an update on the ruling of the Court of Appeal on the adoption of children by gay, lesbian or unmarried couples; (ii) the cost of legal action to date; and (iii) whether any further legal action will be taken on this matter.

(AQW 24866/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Court of Appeal found against the Department in the case taken by the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission against existing adoption law and guidance.

Officials will write to Health and Social Care Trusts and voluntary adoption agencies to make them aware of the judgment.

All courts have consistently made it clear that no one has a right to adopt. The ultimate decision with regard to any adoption will be that of the Court. The Court will be governed by what is in the best interests of the child, following a rigorous assessment of prospective adopters.

The cost of the legal action to date is approximately £40K.

I am currently considering an appeal to the Supreme Court.

Craigavon Area Hospital: Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when construction of the new psychiatric intensive care unit for Craigavon Area Hospital will commence.

(AQW 24896/11-15)

Mr Poots: Construction work on the new Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit at Craigavon Area Hospital commenced in February 2013 and work is due to be completed in April 2014.

GPs: Quality and Outcomes Framework

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much additional administration time will be incurred in GP practices by raising the Quality and Outcomes Framework thresholds in 23 areas of GP contracts.

(AQO 4448/11-15)

Mr Poots: Out of a total of 121 Quality and Outcomes indicators, performance thresholds were increased by 13 indicators, not 23 as stated by the member. The 13 indicators are clinical outcomes which are recorded automatically by computer extract and therefore no additional administrative time will be required.

The changes to the thresholds within the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) were agreed with GPC NI with the key aim of promoting improvements in the quality of care for patients.

The provision of safe, sustainable healthcare for patients is my primary focus.

Social Workers: Travel Allowance

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact the changes to travel allowances will have on Social Workers.

(AQW 24939/11-15)

Mr Poots: The rates of reimbursement for business travel applicable from 1 July 2013 are the same for all HSC Agenda for Change staff which includes Social Workers. HSC employers have carried out a scoping exercise on all staff impacted by the changes to travel allowances which indicates that over 70 per cent will gain under the revised arrangements.

Causeway Hospital: Options Appraisal

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the option appraisal in relation to management at the Causeway Hospital.

(AQO 4449/11-15)

Mr Poots: Preparatory work on the appraisal of the 3 options for the future management arrangements for the Causeway Hospital, identified during the TYC consultation exercise, has commenced. The work will be informed by the recent report of the Turnaround and Support Team on the Northern Health and Social Care Trust and be taken forward by my Department, with inputs from the Health and Social Care Board, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust, the Western Health and Social Care Trust and others, as required.

The team's report signalled the need to remove any sense of uncertainty in regards to the future management arrangements for Causeway Hospital. I am very keen to remove that uncertainty as soon as possible.

The objective is to ensure that we have effective delivery of safe, sustainable and resilient services for patients and clients served by the Causeway Hospital.

Arm's-length Bodies: Accountability

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on his plans to have public meetings in order to hold arm's length bodies to account.

(AQO 4450/11-15)

Mr Poots: I held my first Public facing accountability meeting with Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) on Tuesday 25th June. The meeting provided me with an opportunity to hold NIAS to account around issues of public interest and served to raise public awareness of the important work of NIAS. It also provided an opportunity not only for the public to listen in on this type of meeting, but also to submit questions of their own to be answered by the most senior people in the organisation. My intention is to hold the next meeting with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in the next few months.

204 Field Hospital

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if he plans to recognise Health Service employees who served with the 204 Field Hospital in Afghanistan.

(AQO 4452/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am fully supportive of and have recognised the health service staff that deployed with 204 Regiment to Afghanistan. I hosted a reception for them and their families on 11 November 2012 at Hillsborough Castle. I visited Army Medical Services Training Centre (AMSTC) near York on Friday 11 January 2013 whilst 204 were undertaking the final part of their pre-deployment training. I attended the Service of Thanksgiving and Medal Parade on Sunday 9 June 2013 at Hillsborough Castle following their successful deployment when operational service medals were presented. I hosted a Summer Ball for 204 in Parliament Buildings on 22 June 2013.

Paediatric Cardiac Services: Royal Victoria Hospital

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety will the recent announcement by the Secretary of State for Health on children's cardiac services have an impact on the review of children's cardiac services at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

(AQO 4453/11-15)

Mr Poots: Mr Speaker, with your permission, I will answer questions 11 and 14 together, as they both relate to the future commissioning of paediatric congenital cardiac services (PCCS) for the population of Northern Ireland. My Department is considering the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's report to determine whether any of its recommendations are of immediate relevance to the Northern Ireland review. While the initial commissioning framework for the paediatric congenital cardiac services (PCCS) in Northern Ireland, that was consulted on in 2012 by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), drew on the safe and sustainable standards the final standards for Northern Ireland, recommended by the PCCS Working Group and endorsed by the HSCB, have been tailored to reflect the particular needs and circumstances of the Northern Ireland population, informed by the local consultation process.

I met with the Republic of Ireland's Minister for Health, Dr James Reilly TD, on 8th May 2013 to discuss whether there is any scope for flexibility in the location for the future delivery of this service. I asked Minister Reilly to give consideration to a two centre model potentially providing PCCS services in both Belfast and Dublin. Consideration of this proposal is continuing at official level to determine whether such a model would be feasible. I will make my decision on this as soon as possible.

My overriding priority is to ensure the delivery of a safe and sustainable service for these vulnerable children.

Bangor: Health and Well-being Centre

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on any plans for a Health and Wellbeing centre in Bangor.

(AQO 4454/11-15)

Mr Poots: Following my announcement of the Lisburn and Newry schemes, and the completion of the consultation process on “Vision to Action”, the HSCB in conjunction with LCGs and Trusts has been asked to review the indicative hub and spoke model as set out in Transforming Your Care with a view to bringing forward over the next few months a prioritised list of projects for consideration within the available resources. Bangor Health Centre will be considered as part of this process.

Victims of Sexual Assault

Mrs Hale asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what developments there have been to assist the victims of sexual assault.

(AQO 4455/11-15)

Mr Poots: The first Regional Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in Northern Ireland, known as The Rowan, opened its doors on 7 May 2013 (to PSNI referrals in the first instance). From Monday 2 September 2013, all adult victims will be able to self refer into the service.

The Rowan, delivering a 24/7 service 365 days per annum will raise the standards of care for all victims (male and female adults and children) of sexual assault in Northern Ireland.

The ultimate objective of The Rowan is to make a positive difference for men, women and children who have been sexually violated by helping them recover good mental health and well being.

The Rowan will offer victims a range of services including a comprehensive assessment of their needs and depending upon those assessed needs, various support/ agreed care pathways will be followed. The emotional needs and psychological wellbeing of the victim will be considered and if required an adult victims who self refers will be supported in making a report to the PSNI.

Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Surgery: Belfast

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps are being taken to ensure that the paediatric congenital cardiac surgical service continues in Belfast.

(AQO 4456/11-15)

Mr Poots: Mr Speaker, with your permission, I will answer questions 11 and 14 together, as they both relate to the future commissioning of paediatric congenital cardiac services (PCCS) for the population of Northern Ireland. My Department is considering the Independent Reconfiguration Panel's report to determine whether any of its recommendations are of immediate relevance to the Northern Ireland review. While the initial commissioning framework for the paediatric congenital cardiac services (PCCS) in Northern Ireland, that was consulted on in 2012 by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), drew on the safe and sustainable standards the final standards for Northern Ireland, recommended by the PCCS Working Group and endorsed by the HSCB, have been tailored to reflect the particular needs and circumstances of the Northern Ireland population, informed by the local consultation process.

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My overriding priority is to ensure the delivery of a safe and sustainable service for these vulnerable children.

Department of Justice

Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22820/11-15, whether appointments to the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission at Deputy Principal and above are made at the mid-point of the scale following external recruitment; and to outline how many Executive Officers and Staff Officers were recruited externally since 2003, broken down by year, and the point on the salary scale that each started.

(AQW 24187/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): Permanent appointments to posts at Deputy Principal and Grade 7 are subject to the mid point of the salary following external recruitment, except in cases where existing NILSC staff are successful in which case promotion rules apply.

Appointment to Director posts within the NILSC are publicly advertised; the remuneration is determined by the recruitment panel, with the approval of the NILSC Board.

The number of Executive Officers and Staff Officers appointed since 2003, broken down by year, is outlined in the table below.

Year	Number of Executive Officers Appointed	Number of Staff Officers Appointed
2003	0	0
2004	0	0
2005	0	4
2006	1	4
2007	0	2
2008	0	0
2009	1	2
2010	0	1
2011	0	1
2012	0	1
2013	0	0
Total	2	15
2003 – to date		

It is not possible to provide information on the point of the salary scale that each appointee started on as to do so would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998 and would effectively identify those involved.

Desertcreat Training College, Cookstown

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice what due diligence assessment has been carried out on the ability of companies that tendered for the works at Desertcreat Training College to fulfil the financial aspects of the contract.

(AQW 24328/11-15)

Mr Ford: In accordance with the normal process adopted for construction contracts in the public sector, the financial standing of all bidders is undertaken by the independent financial assessor –

Constructionline. Constructionline is a Public Private Partnership vehicle between the UK Department of Business Innovation and Skills and Capita PLC.

Constructionline applies a standard financial assessment formula which looks at a supplier's financial viability and established track record for successfully delivering contracts. Factors considered include last reported annual turnover, net assets and the average value of references obtained. Bidders are required to meet a pre-determined 'notation level' to allow them to proceed to the tender stage.

In the case of Desertcreat, the bidders were all assessed at the pre-qualification (shortlisting) stage prior to being invited to tender and were found to be above the required 'notation level' and, therefore, of sound financial standing from the perspective of carrying out this construction contract.

This assessment will be undertaken again prior to the appointment of a preferred bidder and prior to the subsequent award of the construction contract.

Director of Estates for the Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the answer provided by the Director of Estates for the Northern Ireland Prison Service to the Committee for Justice on 16 May 2013 when asked about the confidence in the robustness of procedures in terms of physical and mental health and suicide risk of prisoners, he stated, 'In the last death in custody report the Prisoner Ombudsman made the point that she is satisfied with the existing processes and procedures but that those can be no substitute for common sense and compassion'; and given that the last death in custody report highlighted 44 issues of concern surrounding the Supporting Prisoner at Risk processes, procedures and appropriate level of care; to clarify which report the Director referred to.

(AQW 24334/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Director of Estates was referring to the Prisoner Ombudsman's report into the near death of Mr C. His statement was not a verbatim quote from the report but reflected the Prisoner Ombudsman's public statements at the time of publication of the report, including comments in her investigation report which acknowledged that efforts have been made by the Northern Ireland Prison Service to improve the arrangements for protecting prisoners at risk of self harm.

Prisoners who Absconded whilst on Compassionate Bail

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 23178/11-15, from the figures provided of prisoners who absconded whilst on compassionate bail, how many (i) were arrested during or following the commission of another offence; (ii) handed themselves in to police or presented back at prison; (iii) were detected and arrested specifically for absconding; and (iv) remain unlawfully at large.

(AQW 24336/11-15)

Mr Ford: The response to the question is contained in table A below. Please note that it is not possible to answer part (ii) as this information is not recorded in NIPS records.

TABLE A

	2011	2012
Number of prisoners who absconded from Compassionate Bail	17	10
(i) Number of prisoners unlawfully at large (UAL) who were arrested during or following the commission of another offence;	2	1
(ii) Number of prisoners UAL who handed themselves in to police or presented back at prison;	N/A	N/A
(iii) Number of prisoners UAL who were detected and arrested specifically for absconding; and	2	0
(iv) Number of prisoners who remain UAL.	2	0

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Incorrect Answers

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice (i) whether he will conduct a review following the number of incorrect written answers, reported as administrative errors, provided to him by the Northern Ireland Prison Service; (ii) what steps he will take to ensure that in future written answers are quality assured for relevance and accuracy prior to being provided to him and elected representatives; and (iii) for his assessment of whether responses which are incorrect have a detrimental impact on public confidence and can cause embarrassment to MLAs acting on behalf of constituents.

(AQW 24337/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) I do not intend to conduct a review into written answers provided by the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS).
- (ii) Officials have informed me that every effort will be made to continue to answer the high volume of questions received correctly and within Assembly deadlines.
- (iii) I refer to part (ii) of my answer and I accept that incorrect information provided to the public by an elected representative may have a detrimental impact on public confidence.

Prisoner Granted Temporary Leave

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22586/11-15, to detail (i) if the approving Governor sought permission from the Governor at Maghaberry and, if not, why not; (ii) who sanctioned the accompaniment of Mr Parker to the wedding by the approving Governor; (iii) the number of duty hours performed by the Governor and the cost to the Northern Ireland Prison Service; (iv) the custom and practice, in cases of temporary release of prisoners, in terms of the grade of the accompanying member of staff; (v) the number of times during the last five years that this Governor approved the temporary release of prisoners and accompanied them outside prison; and (vi) whether the Governor accepted the same hospitality as other guests at the wedding.

(AQW 24356/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- i The Governor in question did not require the permission of the Governing Governor to escort Mr Parker outside of the establishment, as the accompanied temporary release was within guidelines. Further to this, all Governors have the power of escort.
- ii. The approving Governor was at this time responsible for the management of all Life Sentenced prisoners in Northern Ireland and as such made the operational decision to escort Mr Parker to his niece's wedding.
- iii. The Governor grade in the Northern Ireland Prison Service does not attract payment for any additional hours worked, and as such there was no additional cost to the prison service in relation to the Governor escorting Mr Parker to the wedding.
- iv. Main Grade officers normally escort prisoners on temporary release but from time to time other grades carry out this function. This is helpful for a variety of reasons, including the writing of reports and monitoring of prisoner's behaviour.
- v During the past five years the Governor has not had the operational responsibility for life sentenced Prisoners and therefore has not approved or accompanied any Life Sentenced prisoner on temporary release.
- vi. I understand that the Governor was given limited hospitality, by way of a meal.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Prisoner Attendance at Funerals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, Pursuant to AQW 23068/11-13, to detail (i) the grade of staff who conducted the review in to the assessment of applications for prisoner attendance at

funerals of close family members; (ii) the dates the review commenced and concluded; (iii) the terms of reference; and (iv) whether the Prisoner Ombudsman has been informed of the outcome and conclusions of the review.

(AQW 24364/11-15)

Mr Ford: Staff in Prison Service Headquarters examined the way in which applications for compassionate temporary release are considered during late 2012 and early 2013. This included applications to attend funerals, requests for graveside visits and visits to critically ill relatives, under both Prison Rule 27, when the prisoner may be granted temporary release and under Section 18 of the Prison (NI) Act 1953, when a risk assessment determines that a prisoner must be removed under escort.

The decision to delegate such decisions (other than in respect of Category A prisoners) to Governors was ratified by the Director of Offender Services and the Director General. The Prisoner Ombudsman has been informed of this decision.

Prisoner Transfers to Maghaberry Prison

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners, who served their time in Foyle View, had to be transferred back to Maghaberry Prison for a breach of prison rules, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24395/11-15)

Mr Ford: There have been no prisoners transferred back to Maghaberry Prison from Foyleview in each of the last five years.

Prison Officers on Duty

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prison officers on duty, broken down by (i) prison; (ii) prison wing; and (iii) type of accommodation, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24396/11-15)

Mr Ford: Information in the form requested is not readily available and could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

Prisoner Numbers

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prisoners in each (i) prison (ii) prison wing; and (iii) type of accommodation in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24397/11-15)

Mr Ford: In response to parts (i) and (ii), a snapshot has been provided at Annex A detailing the number of prisoners in each establishment recorded on the nominal roll at 31 December of each of the last 5 years.

The accommodation in Hydebank built in the 1970's has 5 self-contained houses – 1 of which, Ash House, has been designated as the women's prison.

Each house can accommodate approximately 60 inmates/prisoners in single cell accommodation.

Maghaberry has four Square Houses which were built in the 1980's and each block has 108 cells with the two Linear Blocks having 96 cells in each being added in the 1990's. In 2012 a new accommodation block (Quoile House) was completed with a capacity of 120 cells. Mourne House comprises of one 120 cell linear block and two blocks with a total of 56 cells.

Magilligan has three H Blocks, each having 108 cells, a modular unit of 50 cells, sectional unit with 82 rooms and a new, more self-efficient 60 cell linear block.

Magilligan Prison: Death of Prisoner

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the investigation into the death in custody (from natural causes) of a prisoner at Magilligan Prison on 21 April 2012 by the Prisoner Ombudsman who raised as an issue of concern that staff felt unsupported, (i) to detail the reasons that senior prison staff are not providing the appropriate level of care and support necessary to meet the individual needs of staff; and (ii) given that this issue has been raised in a number of previous death in custody investigations, to provide an assurance that steps will be implemented at the earliest possible stage to manage these needs effectively and to prevent any recurrence.

(AQW 24432/11-15)

Mr Ford: Procedures are in place when dealing with a death in custody. A 'hot' debrief is completed immediately after an incident to give all staff involved the opportunity to discuss the incident and raise any issues and/or concerns, and if any additional support is required. Within two weeks of an incident a more comprehensive debrief also takes place.

The Governor of Magilligan prison spoke personally to Prison Service and Healthcare staff and thanked them for the quality of care they provided when dealing with the natural death in custody on 21 April 2012.

Support services for staff are well established but were not requested during these discussions. Staff can avail of support from Carecall and Occupational Health Services (including Psychology related services) at any time following a death in custody.

Audited Accounts for the 2011/12 Period

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Justice to detail which of his Department's non-departmental public bodies post their audited accounts for the 2011/12 period on their websites.

(AQW 24433/11-15)

Mr Ford: The following Department of Justice non-departmental public bodies posted their audited accounts for the 2011/12 period on their websites:

- Probation Board for Northern Ireland www.pbni.org.uk
- Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland www.ciini.org
- Northern Ireland Law Commission www.nilawcomrnission.gov.uk
- Northern Ireland Policing Board www.nipolicingboard.org.uk
- Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) www.psni.police.uk
- Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission www.nilsc.orgjkk
- Police Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust (PRRT)* www.prrt.org
- Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland www.policeombudsman.org
- Royal Ulster Constabulary George Cross Foundation www.rucgcfoundation.org

*2011/12 PRRT was not classified as a non-departmental body but was reclassified with effect from 1 April 2013.

The following DOJ non-departmental public bodies did not post their audited accounts for the 2011/12 period on their websites:

Northern Ireland Police Fund

This body did not post its audited accounts for 2011/12 on its website however there are copies available in the Assembly Library. As a Company limited by Guarantee, the NI Police Fund lays its accounts in Companies House and these are available for the public to access at www.companieshouse.gov.uk.

Independent Assessor for PSNI Recruitment Applications

There is no requirement for this body to prepare audited accounts and it does not have a web site.

Compassionate Temporary Release

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners applied for Compassionate Temporary Release in each of the last three years; and of these, how many were (i) refused; and (ii) granted, shown by prisoners deemed to be either republican or loyalist.

(AQW 24445/11-15)

Mr Ford: Compassionate Temporary Release, when a prisoner is allowed to leave custody unescorted for a set period of time under Prison Rule 27(2), is granted following the completion of a satisfactory risk assessment. In the absence of such a satisfactory risk assessment the Prison Service may decide to remove the prisoner under escort under Section 18(2) of the Prison (NI) Act 1953. Under the latter arrangements the prisoner remains in custody at all times.

With the exception of one case in 2012 and a further one in 2013 when CTR was granted the tables below represent prisoners who were removed from prison under escort. They relate to those prisoners housed under separated conditions in Roe (Republican) and Bush (Loyalist) as well as one application from a Republican female prisoner.

2011

	Republican	Loyalist
Total Applications	2	NIL
Refused	2	N/A
Granted	NIL	N/A

2012

	Republican	Loyalist
Total Applications	4	6
Refused	3	6
Granted	1	NIL

2013(UP TO 31 MAY)

	Republican	Loyalist
Total Applications	3	4
Refused	2	2
Granted	1	2

G8 Summit

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the G8 Summit 2013, to detail (i) the numbers of police personnel from East Antrim who have been transferred to duties relating to the Summit; (ii) the rank of the personnel; (iii) the areas of East Antrim from which personnel have been transferred; (iv) the budgetary implications for East Antrim, including the cost and whether expenses will be met from local budgets.

(AQW 24449/11-15)

Mr Ford: The issues raised are operational matters for the Chief Constable. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Appeals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 23885/11-15, to detail (i) why this information is being withheld under the Data Protection Act 1998 when the Northern Ireland Civil Service Appeals Board publishes the following information in its Annual Report (a) appeals withdrawn prior to hearing; (b) appeals struck out; (c) an analysis by Department or Agency; and (d) a synopsis of Appeals upheld by the Board; and (ii) if he will review the decision not provide information in his previous answer.

(AQW 24456/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The Northern Ireland Prison Service complies with the Principles at Section 4 and as detailed in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 1998. To provide the information requested by the Member would be contrary to this.
- (ii) The Northern Ireland Civil Service Appeal Board, whilst sponsored by the Department of Finance & Personnel, acts independently when discharging its responsibilities. I cannot comment on the detail published in their Annual Report.

Compassionate Temporary Release

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 23529/11-15, in relation to the three decisions by the Northern Ireland Prison Service in 2012 to refuse Compassionate Temporary Release to prisoners and the subsequent overturning of those decisions following judicial review, (i) to provide brief details of each case; and (ii) whether the Governor involved in the decision making process in the McManus case was also involved in processing any of the cases in 2012.

(AQW 24469/11-15)

Mr Ford: Two of the three decisions related to the same prisoner, who applied for compassionate temporary release to visit his baby in hospital.

The third decision related to a prisoner who applied to visit his father in hospital.

The Governor involved in the decision making process in the McManus case had no involvement in any of these cases.

Maghaberry Care and Supervision Unit

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22957/11-15, given the circumstances and consequences surrounding the near death of 'Mr C' at Maghaberry Care and Supervision Unit, whether he will order a review into staffing levels at such units so as to ensure that a similar incident is not permitted to recur.

(AQW 24471/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have no plans to order a review of staffing levels at Maghaberry Care and Supervision Unit or other such units.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes in Ballymena

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to outline the steps that are being taken to restrict the sale of illegal cigarettes in the Ballymena area.

(AQW 24490/11-15)

Mr Ford: The efforts to tackle illegal cigarettes are led by HMRC. They have advised that their principal focus and engagement is in disruption to seek to stop illegal cigarettes coming to the United Kingdom. To achieve this they will, for instance, engage with overseas Law Enforcement agencies.. Together with Border Force they will also seize illegal cigarettes being brought into the United Kingdom.

Where, as a result of reliable intelligence, they suspect illicit goods may be available for sale or are being stored in premises they will conduct visits to retailers and other premises.

Anyone knowingly importing or selling such goods can be prosecuted under section 170 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes in Ballymena

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice, to detail, for the last five years (i) the number of seizures of illegal cigarettes in the Ballymena area; (ii) the number of arrests for selling illegal cigarettes in the Ballymena area; and (iii) the number of successful prosecutions and the sentences given to those selling illegal cigarettes.

(AQW 24491/11-15)

Mr Ford: Excise evasion on cigarettes is a matter for HMRC. HMRC have provided the following information.

Duty evaded on United Kingdom seized cigarettes in the last three years was £386 million (2010/11), £442 million (2011/12) and £518 million (2012/13) – HMRC does not collate these figures on a regional level and figures on seizures and arrests are not available.

There were six convictions for excise evasion in relation to tobacco in Northern Ireland during 2010/11, none in 2011/12 and 6 in 2012/13. In 2010/11, five people received suspended custodial sentences and one received a non custodial sentence. In 2012/13 one person received a suspended custodial sentence, three received non custodial sentences and two were still awaiting sentencing at March this year.

I have recently issued a consultation on the adding of excise evasion offences in relation to tobacco (and fuel) to those offences which the Director of Public Prosecutions may refer to the Court of Appeal where he believes a sentence in the Crown Court is unduly lenient. This consultation runs until the end of August.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to detail the estimated annual loss to HM Revenue and Customs from the sale of illegal cigarettes.

(AQW 24492/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have been advised by HMRC that the United Kingdom revenue lost on tobacco in 2012 was £1.8 billion. This figure is not broken down on a regional basis.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes in Ballymena

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to detail the steps that the public can take to alert agencies confidentially to the sale of illegal cigarettes; and the number of reports that Crimestoppers has received regarding the sale of illegal cigarettes in the Ballymena area.

(AQW 24493/11-15)

Mr Ford: There are a number of options available to members of the public to report suspicions about the sale of illegal cigarettes. For instance, they may contact the PSNI, the HMRC hotline or, anonymously, Crimestoppers. The various numbers are readily available, including on the Organised Crime Task Force website.

Crimestoppers is an independent charity but has advised that it has received five pieces of intelligence regarding illegal cigarettes since 2005 which it has passed to the PSNI in Ballymena.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of whether republican terror groups benefit from the proceeds of the sale of illegal cigarettes.

(AQW 24495/11-15)

Mr Ford: Despite publicly denouncing organised criminality, republican paramilitary groups remain dependent on organised crime to fund their activities. This can include tobacco smuggling.

Operational Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21771/11-15, to detail the number of operational Prison Service staff who are (i) under disciplinary investigation; (ii) suspended from duty; (iii) awaiting a disciplinary hearing; (iv) charged with minor misconduct; (v) charged with gross misconduct; and (vi) awaiting determination of appeal.

(AQW 24506/11-15)

Mr Ford: To provide the information requested in relation to those under disciplinary investigation and those currently suspended from duty would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

At present there are no operational staff awaiting a disciplinary hearing, charged with either minor or gross misconduct, or awaiting the determination of an internal disciplinary appeal.

Maghaberry Prison: Supervised Swallowing of Prescribed Medication

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 23268/11-15 and in relation to supervised medication that is considered high value, tradeable medication, when will supervised swallowing of prescribed medication by prisoners at Maghaberry Prison be implemented.

(AQW 24507/11-15)

Mr Ford: Supervised swallowing of prescribed medication by prisoners is a matter for the South Eastern Trust.

Prison Review Team's Report

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Justice whether he will personally intervene in the prison reform process to bring all parties, agencies and departments together, given that 20 months after the publication of the Prison Review Team's report only 4 of the 40 recommendations have been completed.

(AQW 24523/11-15)

Mr Ford: One of my first actions following the publication of the Prison Review Team (PRT) report was to establish a Ministerial Oversight Group to oversee the implementation of the recommendations. I chair the Oversight Group which has a robust independent element. The Group also has representation from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

The Oversight Group has met on a quarterly basis since November 2012 and it will continue to meet until it is satisfied that the PRT recommendations have been appropriately implemented.

The Prison Service continues to work with all partners who have a role to play in the reform programme. I hosted a partnership event on Thursday 27 June 2013, which brought together statutory, community and voluntary organisations involved in the reform of the prison system. This builds on a number of stakeholder workshops held earlier in this year.

This engagement will continue as work develops on the implementation of the 40 recommendations from the PRT Report. The reform of the prison system in Northern Ireland is a three year programme

and it will take time to implement the recommendations in full. With the progress made to date, I am confident that the necessary reforms will be in place by April 2015.

Child Contact Order

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice what options are available to judges to ensure that a child contact order is adhered to; and for his assessment of the adequacy of these provisions.

(AQW 24532/11-15)

Mr Ford: When proceedings for breach of a contact order are issued, the court can fine or imprison the parent who has not adhered to the order. My Department is, however, aware that courts may be reticent to use these powers, out of concern for the welfare of the child. My Department is considering whether provision should be made for a wider menu of options for dealing with breaches of contact orders.

Human Trafficking

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Justice to outline the steps that his Department is taking to tackle human trafficking.

(AQW 24551/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice is working in partnership with statutory and non government partners across the United Kingdom and in Ireland to tackle human trafficking through prevention, protection and prosecution.

The Human Trafficking Action Plan, published on 23 May 2013, sets out my priorities and objectives for tackling this heinous crime throughout the year ahead. It has been informed by the work of the OCTF's Immigration and Human Trafficking Sub Group and the Department's Engagement Group on Human Trafficking. The action plan sets a clear direction of travel in tackling this appalling crime and will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure that we are meeting our responsibilities.

The Department of Justice strengthened the law on human trafficking this year by including new human trafficking offences in the Criminal Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2013 and by making trafficking cases triable on indictment only. These changes have ensured that criminal law in Northern Ireland is now compliant with the requirements of the EU Directive on human trafficking.

My Department also funds a package of support for potential adult victims of human trafficking during the recovery and reflection period. The Human Trafficking Action Plan sets out a number of actions which my Department is taking forward with partners, to ensure that adequate support, protections and information for victims of this abhorrent crime are in place.

The Engagement Group on Human Trafficking, through which my Department is working in partnership with Non Government Organisations (NGOs), has developed an impressive education resource pack on human trafficking for use in schools, which I plan to launch in advance of the next academic year. The Group has also identified awareness raising and training as priorities and my Department plans to hold a training event for NGOs later this year.

Significant progress was made during 2012/13 when the Department of Justice's work on human trafficking included publishing guidance on the working arrangements for the welfare and protection of adult victims of human trafficking, developed jointly by the DOJ and DHSSPS.

Together with the Irish Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, I launched a cross border initiative to raise awareness of human trafficking with third level students. My Department also provided funding to a Crimestoppers campaign to raise awareness of trafficking for forced labour which I launched in January 2013.

I am committed to ensuring that Northern Ireland presents a hostile environment to traffickers and I will consider other measures, including legislative change, if they add value and enhance our response to this heinous crime.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the extent of the sale of illegal cigarettes in the North Down area.

(AQW 24553/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the member to the responses I gave to AQW/24490/11-15 and AQW/24491/11-15. It is not possible to provide this information for specific regions of Northern Ireland.

Sale of Illegal Cigarettes in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the steps being taken to restrict the sale of illegal cigarettes in the North Down area.

(AQW 24554/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the member to the responses I gave to AQW/24490/11-15 and AQW/24491/11-15. It is not possible to provide this information for specific regions of Northern Ireland.

Firearms Legislation

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the legislation under which civilians who are employed by the PSNI's Firearms and Explosives Branch (Firearms Inspectorate) are entering and carrying out checks of explosives stores and explosives registers, on the premises of firearms dealers licensed to carry on their business under either the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 or under the Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006.

(AQW 24570/11-15)

Mr Ford: Firearms licensing of dealers is a matter for the Chief Constable under the Firearms (NI) Order 2004. The PSNI does not require DOJ approval to inspect an explosives store or its register as there exists a right of inspection under the Order. The Chief Constable may authorise staff to carry out inspections in order to ensure that licensing conditions continue to be met.

Breach of Security in Postal Correspondence: Lay Magistrates

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 24304/11-15, to detail (i) what legality exists for the Court Service to release this information; (ii) if a breach of data protection occurred as a result of this information being released; (iii) if Lay Magistrates were asked if they wanted the Youth Justice Agency to have their information; and (iv) if any other information was released to the Youth Justice Agency regarding judges.

(AQW 24581/11-15)

Mr Ford: Under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), a public authority is regarded as a single organisation. The Department of Justice (DOJ) is the registered Data Controller that includes both the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) and the Youth Justice Agency (YJA). Personal information can be shared between different parts of an organisation, in this case the DOJ, providing it is used for a similar purpose. In these circumstances the information provided by the NICTS to the YJA would not be regarded as a disclosure and therefore not a breach of the DPA.

Individual Lay Magistrates were not consulted on this occasion as the YJA had previously posted similar information to their home addresses.

The information provided to the YJA only included details in respect of Lay Magistrates.

Monitoring of Supporting Prisoner at Risk Documentation

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 24029/11-15 (i) when audits commenced in the monitoring of Supporting Prisoner at Risk documentation; and (ii) whether he intends to compile a comprehensive report or records of the audits, and if so, if this will be publicly available.

(AQW 24597/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since the introduction of the Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Policy in February 2011 each prison establishment monitors and reviews samples of Supporting Prisoner at Risk (SPAR) documentation.

The Prison Service introduced an enhanced auditing system of SPAR documentation in March 2013. Audit records are held at each establishment. I have no plans to compile a report on these audits.

Cost of Civil Compensation Claims

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice for an estimated cost of civil compensation claims brought by those arrested and detained in prisons as a result of failure to pay court fines.

(AQW 24606/11-15)

Mr Ford: Following the ruling in March 2013 by the Divisional Court that the warrants in the five judicial review cases before it were unlawfully issued, the Divisional Court did not make any determination in relation to liability. Instead the issue of liability will be considered by the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court. These cases are not expected to be heard in the High Court until the Autumn.

Until these cases are dealt with and liability determined by the High Court, no estimate of the cost of civil compensation claims brought by those arrested and detained in prisons as a result of failure to pay court fines can be provided.

Prisoner Sentences

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice how long of the four and a half years to which Damien McLaughlin was sentenced in June 2011 was (i) custodial; and (ii) served on licence in the community; and by whom has he been supervised by.

(AQW 24619/11-15)

Mr Ford: Damien McLaughlin was sentenced to a determinate custodial sentence of four and half years in June 2011. This comprised 27 months in custody followed by 27 months on licence in the community.

Where licence conditions are imposed on persons released from prison they are monitored by the Probation Board with support, where appropriate, from the PSNI, Prison Service and DOJ.

Prisoners with Terrorist Convictions

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice who supervises prisoners with terrorist convictions who are released on licence in the community, as opposed to who is responsible under Article 17 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008.

(AQW 24621/11-15)

Mr Ford: Prisoners convicted of terrorist offences are monitored during their post-custodial licence period by the Probation Board with support, where appropriate, from the PSNI, Prison Service and DOJ.

Northern Ireland Police Fund

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Justice to detail which groups funded by the Northern Ireland Police Fund are required to submit fully audited accounts, in line with legislation, in order to secure funding.

(AQW 24660/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am advised by the Northern Ireland Police Fund (NIPF) that they have, to date, requested the Carers' Association, Disabled Police Officers' Association Northern Ireland (DPOANI) and Parents Association to submit audited accounts in order to provide evidence that public monies were spent in accordance with the organisation's intended purpose; and in order to provide assurances which would inform the consideration of subsequent applications for grant funding.

Answers Involving Statistics

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 23884/11-15, to clarify what he means when he states that 'data on the information requested is not statistically recorded' given that a number of questions that sought statistics and/or other information that is retained by Northern Ireland Prison Service, have been answered.

(AQW 24686/11-15)

Mr Ford: While a copy of every Assembly Question answered by the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is retained, a record of the number of questions that contained inaccurate information is not.

Death in Custody of a Prisoner

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to an early report submitted to the Northern Ireland Prison Service by the Prisoner Ombudsman on the death in custody of Frances McKeown, (i) to clarify who or which agency carried out an external independent investigation into any aspect of this case; (ii) on what date it commenced and concluded; and (iii) when he will publish the report.

(AQW 24688/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Prisoner Ombudsman's interim report into the death in custody of Frances McKeown was received by the Northern Ireland Prison Service on 11 May 2012.

The Scottish Prison Service was appointed to carry out an external independent investigation. This commenced on 18 May 2012 and concluded on 4 July 2012.

The resultant report of this investigation will not be published as to do so would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Death in Custody of a Prisoner

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, on what date was an early report submitted to the Northern Ireland Prison Service by the Prisoner Ombudsman on the death in custody of Frances McKeown; and to provide a timeline of the resultant action.

(AQW 24723/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Prisoner Ombudsman's interim report into the death in custody of Frances McKeown was received by the Northern Ireland Prison Service on 11 May 2012.

The Scottish Prison Service was appointed to carry out an external independent investigation. This commenced on 18 May 2012 and concluded on 4 July 2012.

The resultant report of this investigation will not be published as to do so would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Equal Pay

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice whether he could, through ministerial direction, approve payments to those civil servants disadvantaged financially by the outcome of the legal action concerning equal pay which was ruled upon by Judge Babington on 7 March 2013.

(AQW 24735/11-15)

Mr Ford: I fully articulated the Department of Justice's position when the Assembly debated this matter on Tuesday 4 June.

During the debate, I gave a commitment to write to the Finance Minister on this matter and I wrote on 6 June. I said in the debate that I would ask him to set out the basis on which a business case could be advanced in the absence of a legal liability. The Finance Minister and I are now in correspondence.

Departmental Underspend

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Justice what was his departmental underspend in the last financial year.

(AQW 24755/11-15)

Mr Ford: The DOJ Departmental underspend for the 2012/13 financial year, based on provisional outturn figures is as follows:

Resource DEL Non Ringfenced (cash) £7.0m

Resource DEL Ringfenced (non cash) £23.2m

Capital DEL £14.4m

Departmental underspends relating to resource DEL and capital DEL will be rolled forward by the Department in line with the DOJ's ringfenced finance arrangements to offset expenditure in future years.

Offenders: Victims of Crime

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will commission research to investigate how many offenders, particularly but not exclusively those who have been offending from a young age, were victims of crime, whether formally reported or not, prior to commencement of offending, paying specific attention to any who were sexually, physically and/or emotionally abused.

(AQW 24759/11-15)

Mr Ford: Identifying the causes of offending behaviour is of great benefit to my Department in providing evidence for supporting offenders and targeting interventions, and there is international research which shows that many offenders have been prior victims of some sort of abuse, particularly during childhood.

My Department, through its Statistics & Research Committee, commissions research to inform policy development, and this year's agenda includes projects under the priority theme of reducing offending. Part of this research is likely draw out some statistics in relation to prior victimhood amongst offenders. Whilst I therefore have no plans to commission specific research in this area at this time, it may be considered at a future date if Statistics & Research Committee believe that further research is necessary based on findings from this year's projects.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Managing Serious Self-Harm and Deaths in Custody

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice for a copy of the Northern Ireland Prison Service policy on managing serious self-harm and deaths in custody.

(AQW 24760/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not currently have a separate managing serious self harm and deaths in custody policy. These issues are reflected in the current Suicide and Self Harm Prevention policy, which is available on www.dojni.gov.uk/index/ni-prison-service/nips-publications/policy_reports.

A copy of the Prison Service's Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Policy has also been placed in the Assembly library.

Northern Ireland Police Service: Incorrectly Answered Questions

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 24111/11-15, in conjunction with AQW 16052/11-15; AQW 16931/11-15; AQW 20305/11 - 15; AQW 16049/11-15; AQW 17725/11 - 15; and on separate issues AQW 17146/11-15 and AQW 21663/11-15, all of which have been answered

incorrectly by the Northern Ireland Prison Service, what immediate action he plans to take to (i) have this matter fully investigated; and (ii) ensure record keeping is more streamlined and accurate.

(AQW 24761/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the Member to the reply I gave to points (i) and (ii) in my response to AQW/24337/11-15.

Magistrates Court: Young Witnesses giving Evidence

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice, on how many occasions since he took office has a (i) seventeen year-old witness; and (ii) sixteen year-old witness, applied for and been permitted to give evidence to a Magistrates Court by video link; and on how many occasions have witnesses of that age appeared in court, excluding cases of an alleged sexual nature.

(AQW 24831/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) does not record the age of witnesses who give evidence in court.

The Department of Justice (DOJ) sponsors the work of the NSPCC Young Witness Service which provides support services to young prosecution witnesses in order to assist them to give their best evidence at court. This service includes supporting young witnesses who give evidence either in the courtroom or through the video link.

The following NSPCC Young Witness Service statistics show the number of sixteen and seventeen year old young witnesses supported by the Service in the Magistrates' and Youth Courts from 2010-11 (excluding cases of an alleged sexual nature), broken down by those witnesses who gave evidence by video link and those who gave evidence in court.

	Sixteen Year Old Witness		Seventeen Year Old Witness	
	Video Link	Courtroom	Video Link	Courtroom
2010-11*	5	51	15	46
2011*-12	15	105	16	133
2012-13	15	145	11	146
Total	35	301	42	325

* Prior to October 2011 the NSPCC Young Witness Service was only available in a limited number of Magistrates' and Youth Courts.

Claims for Compensation Associated with Bonfire Sites

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice how many claims have been made for compensation associated with bonfire sites, broken down by reason, in the last three years.

(AQW 24852/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am unable to provide the information requested as Compensation Services records do not distinguish compensation paid for damage associated with bonfire sites as opposed to other criminal damage.

Community Safety College

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the training college at Desertcreat.

(AQO 4467/11-15)

Mr Ford: I informed the Assembly on 21 May that the construction tender cost was some £30m higher than budget; and that the Project Board had established a working group which sought measures to deliver cost reductions whilst not affecting the overall operational functionality of the college.

A business case addendum with options based on this work was presented to DHSSPS and my Department for consideration. Several issues were identified with this addendum and the Project Board revised this document and re-submitted accordingly. Various cost saving measures have been identified which do not significantly reduce the functionality of the college. This business case addendum is currently being considered by the two Departments.

Whilst it is not yet possible to give a new final cost for the build, I can report that substantial progress has been made in reducing the cost overrun, although it remains likely that the final cost will exceed the original budget.

Should this addendum demonstrate that an integrated college at Desertcreat represents value for money and is affordable, it will be submitted to DFP for approval.

Stillbrith Inquests

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to outline the steps being taken to ensure stillbrith inquests can be held locally.

(AQW 24925/11-15)

Mr Ford: The question of whether or not, at present, a Coroner has jurisdiction to conduct an inquest into a stillbirth is the subject of an appeal to the Northern Ireland Court of Appeal. I understand that a date for hearing has not yet been set. My officials will wish to study the judgment of the Court of Appeal carefully in due course, before considering any steps which may be required.

Prison Service: Prison Officers' Association

Mr Maskey asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the relationship between the Prison Officers' Association and the Northern Ireland Prison Service and its impact on the wider prison reform programme.

(AQO 4466/11-15)

Mr Ford: Day-to-day relationships with the POA remain positive. However I regret that issues of disagreement in relation to the POA's claim for the payment of an Environmental Allowance have resulted in the Union withdrawing co-operation from Management in the context of the Reform Programme.

NIPS management remains committed to working with their Trade Union partners in delivering the reform programme.

Courts and Tribunals Service: Public Record Office

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Justice when senior officials in the Courts Service first informed him and obtained his approval for drafting a memorandum of understanding with the Public Record Office.

(AQO 4469/11-15)

Mr Ford: It is not correct that Officials in the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service sought my approval to draft a memorandum of understanding with the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland.

The existing PRONI memorandum covers access to public records transferred by various Departments. It was drafted prior to the devolution of policing and justice.

PSNI: Fixed-term Contracts

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice to clarify the role that he, his Department or the Policing Board, has or may have in the award of fixed term staff contracts by the PSNI.

(AQO 4470/11-15)

Mr Ford: The award of fixed term contracts by the PSNI is an operational matter for the Chief Constable, for which he is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Neither the Minister, the Department nor the Policing Board has any role in awarding fixed term contracts for the PSNI, as this matter is delegated to the Chief Constable from the Board.

Prison Service: Staffing

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister of Justice how many positions within the Prison Service are currently filled by people from England, Scotland or Wales.

(AQO 4471/11-15)

Mr Ford: NIPS does not hold information in relation to the number of employees who originally came from England, Scotland or Wales. However, of the 2030 staff six (0.3%) have either previously worked for the National Offender Management Service or are currently on secondment from that organisation.

Department for Regional Development

Compensation Claims Lodged by Pedestrians

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development how many compensation claims were lodged by pedestrians claiming to have fallen on either footpaths or roadways in each of the last five years, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 24060/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): My Department does not record information on claims for compensation in the format requested, however, it does record the information on a Roads Service Section Office basis. The Section Office areas are similar to those covered by District Councils.

Details of the number of claims lodged by pedestrians, claiming to have fallen on either footpaths or roadways on a Roads Service Section Office basis, in each of the last five financial years, are set out in the table below:

COMPENSATION CLAIMS LODGED BY PEDESTRIANS WHO HAVE FALLEN ON FOOTPATHS / ROADS

Section Office	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Antrim	13	15	18	23	10
Ards	37	35	30	52	31
Armagh	21	20	11	15	11
Ballymena & Larne	20	29	18	32	17
Ballymoney & Moyle	8	11	5	14	4
Banbridge	12	17	16	16	11
Belfast North	125	137	159	147	114
Belfast South	78	102	108	103	81
Castlereagh	12	19	23	22	19
Coleraine	18	13	14	12	12
Cookstown	8	10	14	18	12
Craigavon	33	38	46	31	26
Down	27	26	35	23	17
Dungannon	10	18	26	29	13

Section Office	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Fermanagh	9	16	10	12	18
Limavady	8	13	12	8	5
Lisburn	51	58	57	63	49
Londonderry	45	67	72	97	76
Magherafelt	4	1	11	11	7
Newry & Mourne	33	36	43	45	37
Newtownabbey & Carrick	40	54	57	48	51
North Down	21	25	32	25	22
Omagh	14	17	8	11	15
Strabane	16	5	10	15	15
Totals	663	782	835	872	673

Major Road Schemes

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 22738/11-15, and given the need for investment in roads infrastructure in South Down, to detail (i) the reasons why no major road schemes are sufficiently advanced in order to benefit from additional funding at this time; and (ii) when such road schemes will be in a position to benefit from additional funding in the future.

(AQW 24234/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Strategic Road Improvement (SRI) Programme has been developed following the principles set out in the Regional Development Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy.

The Strategic Road Network in South Down has benefited from significant upgrades to the A1 in recent years with the delivery of substantial projects to complete the dual carriageway from Loughbrickland to the border, along with the provision of flyover-type junctions at various locations.

Preferred options are currently being developed for five further junction improvements on the A1 and the draft statutory orders are being prepared for the proposed bypass of Ballynahinch. A feasibility study is also being undertaken to ascertain the viability of a Newry Southern Relief Road which would link the A1 to Warrenpoint Harbour.

It typically takes 6 years to develop a major road scheme from inception through to a point where construction can commence. This development work must be commensurate with available resources and it is a more efficient use of resources to develop the SRI Programme in phases rather than aim to bring all schemes to the point of procurement at one time.

The works programme was predicated on the A5 advancing to construction in 2013/14, with the majority of the funding in this budget period to 2015 being allocated to the A5, A8 and A2 projects. Other schemes in the Programme are at various stages of development with some ready to enter the procurement phase, however, procurement cannot start for any project until funding has been secured. It will typically take 12 months to procure a scheme to start construction.

I will review priorities within the SRI programme when the Executive's decision on funding the revenue consequences of a £390m package of major road schemes, identified in ISNI 2011-21 for progression using alternative finance, is received.

Bridge Order for the Narrow Water Bridge Project

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister for Regional Development when he will make an announcement on the Bridge Order for the Narrow Water Bridge Project.

(AQW 24273/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's primary role is in respect of the legislative orders required for Louth County Council's Narrow Water Bridge project.

Notices of the subject draft Bridge Order and draft Extinguishment and Diversion of Navigation Order were published in the local Press during weeks commencing 22 and 29 April 2013. The consultation period for interested parties to submit comments, letters of support and objections ended on 4 June 2013.

A number of objections have been received and my Department is facilitating meetings between Louth County Council and these objectors. I have also asked Minister Attwood and Minister O'Neill for some further clarification, but to date have not received substantive replies. Upon receipt of this, I will then decide if a public inquiry is necessary.

Noise Insulation Regulations (NI) 1995

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 23064/11-15, to detail (i) the calculated figures, derived from modelling work, for the purposes of assessing the Ardmore area in relation to duties arising from the Noise Insulation Regulations (NI) 1995; (ii) the threshold level for the purposes of regulation 5(1) of the legislation; (iii) the date on which these calculations were made; and (iv) the date on which notification was given in a local newspaper of the determination in respect of the figures pursuant to the duty arising from regulation 14(1) of the legislation.

(AQW 24280/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The calculated figures, based on the 2009 traffic flows, derived from modelling work, for the purposes of assessing the Ardmore area in relation to duties arising from the Noise Insulation Regulations (NI) 1995 are: 72.5 dB LA(10) 18hr and 74.3 dB LA(10) 18hr for the ground and first floors respectively. The calculated figures, based on the pre-scheme situation, derived from modelling work are: 74.6 dB LA(10) 18hr and 76.3 dB LA(10) 18hr for the ground and first floors respectively.

For the purpose of regulation 5(1) of the legislation, the qualifying noise level must be equal to or greater than 68 dB LA(10) 18 hr, it must be at least 1dB LA(10) 18hr higher than the pre-construction year road traffic noise level and noise from the new or altered road must contribute at least 1dB LA10 18hr to the 'relevant' noise level. Consequently, the criterion is not met as the noise level is not at least 1dB LA(10) 18hr higher than the pre-construction year road traffic noise level.

The noise modelling report was prepared for my Department during March 2013 and received on 3 April 2013. The notification of the determination was given in a local newspaper on 26 June 2013.

Parking Restrictions, Violations and Other Similar Issues: Coalisland

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of, and reasons for, audits and monitoring exercises that his Department completed in relation to parking restrictions, violations and other similar issues in Coalisland, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 24335/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: There are currently limited parking restrictions to be enforced in Coalisland.

Previous proposals by Roads Service to provide additional waiting restrictions in Coalisland were presented to the town's Regeneration Partnership several years ago, but received no support from the business community and consequently were not implemented at that time.

In relation to enforcement, my Department has to prioritise its limited Traffic Attendant resource so that it can provide an effective and balanced enforcement service. Although it is not possible to monitor and patrol every restriction, officials do respond when they receive complaints or requests for enforcement.

Such requests for enforcement come from various sources, including individuals, town traders, public representatives and from local traffic engineers, who have on site knowledge of the area.

I understand there have been no such requests or complaints regarding enforcement in Coalisland over the past five years.

Flags on Departmental Property

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the protocol for flags on departmental property.

(AQW 24370/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's policy in relation to flying the Union flag is in line with the Flags Regulations (NI) 2000, as amended by the Flags Regulations (NI) (Amendment) 2002. Dates on which to fly the flag are circulated by OFMDFM to Departments each year.

As regards flags erected on lamp posts, my Department has signed up to the Joint Protocol on the Display of Flags in Public Areas. Other Agencies involved in the Joint Protocol include the PSNI, the Department of the Environment, the Department for Social Development, OFMDFM and the NI Housing Executive.

The aim of the current protocol is to provide a proactive approach, with the support of communities and their representatives, to address the removal of flags from arterial routes and town centres and from particular locations such as interface areas, or near schools, hospitals and churches. The protocol recognises that an effective resolution to the flags issue is more likely to be achieved through the co-operation of local communities. It will require widespread community support for the partnership established by the protocol to be effective. In each case, the Agency in the most effective position to consult, negotiate, or resolve the situation will take the lead. The PSNI, where best placed, will take on this role. The PSNI will also take the lead where the display of flags is causing community tension, or is affecting the quality of life for a community.

Under the protocol, Roads Service, when called upon by the lead Agency, will provide the access equipment and resources to remove unwanted flags in cases where agreement has been reached that they should be taken down but the community cannot reach them easily.

DRD has contributed to the review of "The Joint Protocol in Relation to the Display of Flags in Public Areas", which was initiated by OFMDFM in April 2008. OFMDFM continue to lead on this review.

Donaghadee Bus Station

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development if he will consider using the site of Donaghadee Bus Station as (a) a turning circle for buses and (b) a Park and Ride facility when the station closes in September 2013.

(AQW 24426/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise that Translink has altered bus operations from Donaghadee and as a result there will be no requirement to retain the current bus facility after 1 July 2013.

I would confirm that Translink has no plans to operate the site as a turning circle or for a Park and Ride Facility. I am, however, aware that following a recent public meeting regarding the development of the site including the proposal for a turning circle for bus, Translink explained that they are open to engagement with relevant stakeholders. Specifically, Translink has since been in touch with Ards Borough Council but I understand that they still await contact from the Council. It may, subsequently, be necessary for Translink to engage with Roads Service to progress this issue.

Uni-Link Scheme to the University of Ulster

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development why the Uni-Link scheme to the University of Ulster does not offer a student rate.

(AQW 24431/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Discounted fares are available on all bus services through the use of the yLink card, for all 16-23 year olds or through use of Smartlink multi journey tickets. This includes the service you are referring to which connects Queens University and the Ulster University.

Traffic Wardens: Coalisland

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 23624/11-15, to detail all complaints and/or requests for enforcement and their outcomes in Coalisland, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24472/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 24278/11-15.

Roads Service Owned Car Parks

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development why Roads Service owned car parks are free of charge on 12 and 13 July, but not on 17 March.

(AQW 24514/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The On-Street Parking Order states my Department cannot charge for on-street parking on five specific holidays:

- Easter Monday;
- 12 and 13 July (or days in lieu); and
- 25 and 26 December (or days in lieu).

The Off-Street Parking Order does not identify any holidays where charges in the off-street car parks will not apply.

To ensure consistency both on and off-street, these five days (with the addition of 1 January) have been considered non-charging days since the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement in 2006. These are also days when Traffic Attendants are not deployed.

Number of Murals Painted Over

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of murals that have been painted over by his Department or by contractors working on behalf of his Department in the last year, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 24559/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: No murals have been painted over by my Department or by contractors working on behalf of my Department in the last year.

Sewerage System in the Beverley Heights Area of Newtownards

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration NI Water has given to the sewerage system in the Beverley Heights area of Newtownards; and its ability to deal with future proposed residential development in the area.

(AQW 24609/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the sewer network in the Beverley Heights area of Newtownards will be upgraded to meet future development needs if it

becomes necessary. NIW is aware of a proposed development in the area and is liaising with the developer to ensure that it will not cause any detriment to the existing sewer network.

Taxi Ranks: Public Hire Only

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Regional Development where in Belfast City Centre will taxi ranks be designated as Public Hire only.

(AQW 24647/11-15)

Mr Kennedy:

Location	Number of Bays	Hours of Operation
Amelia Street	7	24/7
Bedford Street	6	7pm-7am
Bradbury Place (Benedict's Hotel)	4	7pm-7am
Bradbury Place (Lavery's Bar)	4	7pm-7am
Brunswick Street	4	7pm-7am
Chichester Street	10	24/7
Corporation Square	7	24/7
Donegall Street	3	7pm-7am
Donegall Quay	1	24/7
Donegall Square East	8	24/7
Donegall Square North	6	24/7
Dublin Road (Ventry Street)	3	7pm-7am
Dublin Road (Movie House Cinema)	8	7pm-7am
Fisherwick Place	3	24/7
Glengall Street	7	24/7
Great Victoria Street (Great Northern Mall)	3	24/7
Great Victoria Street (opposite Europa Hotel)	3	7pm-7am
Lisburn Road	3	24/7
Malone Road (Botanic Inn)	4	7pm-7am
Malone Road (Olde Eglantine Inn)	2	7pm-7am
Mays Meadow	16	24/7
University Road	5	7pm-7am
University Street	4	6pm-8am
Waring Street	6	7pm-7am

Officials will shortly commence work with a view to providing additional facilities for Public Hire Taxis in High Street and Botanic Avenue, Belfast. This will be subject to the normal legislative procedures.

Department for Social Development

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Contractors

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development for a breakdown and dateline of the £18m overpayments to Northern Ireland Housing Executive contractors, as referred to in his statement of 10 June 2013.

(AQW 24243/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The £18 million figure is an estimate provided by the Housing Executive and at this point has not been confirmed as the actual level of overcharging. In relation to a breakdown of this amount please see table below:

	Contract Sum	No	Potential Overpayment	%
Closed Accounts	£32.2m	96	£5.2m	16.1%
Pre July 2012	£86.4m	216	£10.1m	11.6%
Subtotal Closed Pre July 2012	£118.6m	312	£15.3m	12.9%
Post July 2012 Schemes	£53.4m	157	£2.7m	5.1%
Total	£172.1m	469	£18.0m	10.5%

This was estimated on the basis of extrapolation by applying levels of overcharging identified by Moore MacDonald and the Housing Executive's Central Cost Group, on the assumption that this level of overcharging may also be present in all the schemes issued to the four contractors. The amount estimated after extrapolation is therefore a broad based estimate and subject to change. In relation to the dateline, the work of Moore MacDonald commenced in October 2012 and they completed their reports in June 2013. The Central Cost Group is an internal Housing Executive function restructured to close out all final accounts from June 2012 and the work of the group is ongoing.

The Information provided in this response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

Current or Planned Legislation

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to list the current or planned legislation that his Department will bring to the Assembly before the end of the current term.

(AQW 24254/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department is currently progressing the Welfare Reform and Pavement Cafes Bills through the Assembly.

I also intend to bring forward Primary Legislation relating to Housing; Pensions; Regeneration and Housing; Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements before the end of the current Assembly mandate.

National Citizen Service Programme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development what progress is being made on the implementation of the National Citizen Service programme.

(AQW 24377/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As you are aware the Northern Ireland NCS is entirely complementary to the programmes DSD is delivering under its responsibilities for volunteering, where it aligns well with the Volunteering Strategy for NI (published March 2012). It is also consistent with the Delivering Social Change agenda and with our policies under Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Development.

I am pleased to inform you that I have agreed to fund two further National Citizen Service (NCS) pilots, one for 300 young people in autumn 2013 and for 400 young people in summer 2014. An advertisement for selecting a strategic partner to deliver Northern Ireland NCS over the next 2 years will issue via the Community NI website over the next few days

Tree and Hedge Cutting Contracts

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development how many tree and hedge cutting contracts his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, awarded between 1 March and 31 August, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 24380/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department has not awarded any tree nor hedge cutting contracts in any of the last three years. However, the Housing Executive has advised that since 2010/11 they have awarded six contracts covering all forms of ground maintenance, including tree and hedge cutting. These were all awarded in 2012/13.

2011 Census: Urban Regeneration Funding

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has undertaken any assessment of the results of the 2011 census; and whether the results mean that any additional settlements will qualify for urban regeneration funding.

(AQW 24405/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department has not conducted any assessment of the results of the Northern Ireland 2011 Census of Population, with regard to regeneration funding, as data at a settlement level will not be available until 2014.

In recognition of the needs of smaller settlements my Department has a commitment in the Rural White Paper Action Plan to work with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to explore the potential to better co-ordinate urban and rural regeneration needs to maximise, and where possible integrate, funding opportunities available for the regeneration of urban and rural communities.

When powers for regeneration and community development are conferred on Councils in 2015, the Department will no longer be responsible for the operational delivery of these programmes. It will be for Councils to decide how and where they fund these activities.

Jobs and Benefits Offices in Newtownards and Ballynahinch

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on his Department's plans for new Jobs and Benefits Offices in Newtownards and Ballynahinch.

(AQW 24406/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Ballynahinch and Newtownards Social Security Offices are two of eight offices whose replacement by co-located Jobs & Benefits offices has not been possible due to failure to secure capital funding in Spending Review 2011. It was agreed at that point that the replacement of these offices would be pursued as opportunities arose and as funding became available. Currently my Department has no plans for new offices in these two locations.

Housing Executive: Overpayments to Contractors

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development who established the estimate of £18million in overpayments to contractors by the Housing Executive.

(AQW 24408/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The amount of £18 million was estimated on the basis of extrapolation, applying the levels of overcharging identified by an external consultant, Moore MacDonald, and the Housing Executive's Central Cost Group (CCG).

Housing Executive: Maintenance Contracts

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development whether there was a terms of reference for the Housing Executive internal probe into maintenance contracts.

(AQW 24410/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the terms of reference for the internal probe into maintenance contracts were:-

- What issues led to this situation arising?
- What are we doing to address identified deficiencies?
- How will we demonstrate that the situation has improved?

Housing Executive: Overpayments to Contractors

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development what were the shortcomings in the Housing Executive that led to contractor overpayments.

(AQW 24464/11-15)

Mr McCausland: An external independent review of the Housing Executive's handling of planned maintenance contracts is to be carried out immediately by a consultant. Specifically the review is to establish how this situation arose, the reliability of the information on overcharging and the actions taken to recover the overpayments.

ASM Howarth Report into Northern Ireland Housing Executive Maintenance Contracts

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost to his Department of the production of the ASM Howarth Report into Northern Ireland Housing Executive Maintenance Contracts.

(AQW 24500/11-15)

Mr McCausland: This information is classified as commercial in confidence and it would not be appropriate to disclose it.

Housing Executive's Renovation and Replacement Grants Schemes for Private Homes

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development what plans there are to restore the Housing Executive's Renovation and Replacement Grants Schemes for private homes.

(AQW 24503/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Since the budget review of 2009 which brought about reductions to available grants budgets, the Housing Executive has awarded the following discretionary grants – Renovation, Replacement and Home Repairs Assistance, on an exceptional basis. These are now only awarded where there is an imminent or significant risk to the occupier as a consequence of the condition of the dwelling. The Housing Executive will continue to monitor any applications made for discretionary grants on that basis.

Poker

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has any plans to legalise poker.

(AQW 24512/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Under current Northern Ireland gambling law, Poker is legal under certain circumstances.

My Department is currently working to improve and modernise Northern Ireland gambling laws. As I do not propose to increase opportunities to gamble, the current restrictions in relation to Poker will remain.

“Teenage Kicks” Mural at Bridge End, Belfast

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development how the decision was taken to paint over the “Teenage Kicks” mural at Bridge End, Belfast.

(AQW 24576/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department has been completing a number of major public realm improvement schemes in East Belfast including Woodstock Road, Castlereagh Street, Newtownards Road and Albertbridge Road with total investment costs of £3million. It is also planned to complete other major public realm works in the locality at Templemore Avenue, Mountpottinger Road and Short Strand with estimated costs exceeding £5million over the incoming business years.

The public realm scheme at Bridge End is the conduit that connects all these schemes together and involves soft landscaping, tree planting and cleaning or repainting defaced property.

During the design of public realm schemes, Departmental Officials and Landscape Architects consider all aspects of the scheme area including: new street lighting; resurfacing footpaths; semi-mature tree planting; and boundary treatments. When considering defaced property, officials will seek to identify any pieces of community art within the scheme area, and apart from these will clean or repaint the affected surface with the owner’s agreement. Consultation is also carried out with relevant statutory bodies, including the local council and DRD Roads Service.

As the “Teenage Kicks” graffiti was not identified as community art it, and other graffiti, was removed to improve the visual appearance of the area.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Irish Language Strategy

Mrs D Kelly asked the Assembly Commission for an update on the Irish Language Strategy.

(AQO 4347/11-15)

Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly Commission does not yet have an agreed Irish Language Strategy. However, draft Language Guidance has been under consideration by the Assembly Commission and the views of all Parties were sought following a meeting of the Assembly Commission held on 27 February 2013. The Assembly Commission is planning to hold a further meeting to discuss Good Relations issues which will include consideration of the draft language guidance.

Thyssenkrupp Elevator UK Ltd

Mr Spratt asked the Assembly Commission, in relation to Thyssenkrupp Elevator UK Ltd, to detail (i) all work carried out in the past six months at Parliament Buildings; and (ii) costs associated with this work.

(AQW 24550/11-15)

Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): I can confirm that in the past 6 months Thyssen Krupp attended Parliament Buildings on 13 occasions to address breakdowns of the passenger lifts and 5 times to carry out planned preventative maintenance. They were also here on 2 occasions to carry out maintenance work on the food service lifts.

The total cost of this work was £3,849.53 (excl. Vat).

Thyssen Kruup carried out major refurbishment of the north and west lifts in Parliament Buildings last year and we are planning for them to refurbish the east lifts during this summer recess.

I hope that the above information provides the detail that you sought. However, should you require any supplementary information, I would be very happy to assist with your enquiry

Question for Written Answer: Response in English and Irish

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Assembly Commission whether one of its Members can respond to a Question for Written Answer in Irish and English if they wish; and for a breakdown of any vote taken on the subject.

(AQW 24907/11-15)

Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): When responding to AQWs, Assembly Commission Members do so on behalf of the Assembly Commission and within the relevant policies and decisions of the Commission.

At the Assembly Commission meeting on 7 May 2013, following a proposal from a Commission Member to respond to AQWs to the Assembly Commission bilingually, a vote was taken. The Assembly Commission voted as follows:-

For:- Ms Ruane and Mrs Cochrane = 37 votes.

Against:- Mr Weir, Mr Cree, Mr Ramsey = 67 votes.

The proposal was lost.

It was therefore agreed that responses to questions to the Assembly Commission for Written Answer would continue to be in English only. At its meeting on the 5 June 2013, the Assembly Commission further discussed the issue of bilingual responses to Written Assembly Questions. The Speaker proposed that the responses now issue in the format agreed by the Commission on 7 May 2013. The Assembly Commission voted as follows:-

For:- Mr Weir, Mr Cree, Mr Ramsey and Mrs Cochrane = 75 votes.

Against:- Ms Ruane = 29 votes.

The proposal was agreed.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 5 July 2013

(AQW 23156/11-15)

My Department is aware of nineteen illegally erected monuments to terrorists on roadsides, 18 of which are Republican whilst one cannot definitively identified as it is currently blank.

(AQW 23391/11-15)

Details of the number of illegal paramilitary or terrorist roadside monuments, broken down by constituency, are set out in the table below:

Constituency	Number of illegal paramilitary or terrorist roadside monuments
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	8
Mid Ulster	2
West Tyrone	1
Foyle	1
Lagan Valley	1
Newry & Armagh	6
Total	19



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