

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 18 November 2011

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

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Weir, Peter (North Down)
Wells, Jim (South Down)
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 18 November 2011

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Shortfalls in Capital Investment Projects

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what consideration has been given to making use of the borrowing powers of local councils to fund shortfalls in capital investment projects. (AQW 3163/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): The potential to use district councils' borrowing powers to draw in additional private investment is currently being explored.

Value for Money Audits on Arm's-Length Bodies

Mr S Anderson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether their Department has (a) carried out any value for money audits on the arm's-length bodies it funds; and (b) identified any savings that could be made by these bodies.

(AQW 3329/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: OFMDFM assesses value for money through the business case approval process for individual items of expenditure.

OFMDFM has identified a number of savings that can be made by the Arm's Length Bodies it funds through the savings delivery plans published by the Department as part of the Budget 2010 process.

The Department is participating in the Arm's Length Body Review being conducted centrally by the Budget Review Group to establish the scope for abolition, merger or absorption into Departmental structures of each body. The Budget Review Group will convey its recommendations to the Executive in due course.

Asset Management Unit

Mr D Bradley asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what progress the Asset Management Unit has made in delivering £10 million in additional capital receipts in this financial year to date; and to provide a breakdown of these receipts.

(AQW 3844/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: To date, 10 assets with a value of some £1.6 million have been sold, subject to confirmation of contract. A further 41 assets are currently on the market with a total valuation of around £10 million. In addition, 9 assets have been identified as suitable for transfer for social housing with a total valuation of some £4.7m.

The Asset Management Unit has also appointed a panel of agents to enable a further 14 assets to be marketed. In some cases, the initial valuations need to be reviewed by Land and Property Services to reflect current market values.

Strategic Investment Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what was the total cost incurred by the Strategic Investment Board in commissioning a report on the sustainability of St Mary's University College, Belfast.

(AQW 3901/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The total cost incurred by the Strategic Investment Board in commissioning a report on the sustainability of St Mary's University College, Belfast was £53,250 plus VAT.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department plans to conduct any assessment into the impact of Hydraulic Fracturing on agriculture and rural development; and whether she has any concerns about the process of Hydraulic Fracturing.

(AQW 4018/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): My Department has no plans to conduct an assessment into the impact of Hydraulic Fracturing on agriculture and rural development.

I am aware that the activity is regulated and that the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is responsible for licensing the exploration of potential gas fields.

Planning permission would be necessary for any drilling to take place and the Department of Environment would determine whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is also required.

I am both personally and politically concerned about the process of Hydraulic Fracturing and its effects on the environment on the island of Ireland.

Report by the Committee for Climate Change 'The Appropriateness of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act'

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the recent report by the Committee for Climate Change 'The Appropriateness of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act'; and what action she will take to focus research and development towards developing measurement and mitigation strategies for greenhouse gas emissions from the agricultural sector.

(AQW 4114/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Minister for the Environment asked the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) to investigate and report on the appropriateness of a local Climate Change Act. I believe he is considering their report in his lead role on Climate Change issues.

I welcome the CCC references to agriculture being of key importance to the local economy and that the sector's scope for emissions reductions is limited compared to other sectors, for example power, heat and transport. Nevertheless the Report concludes that there is opportunity for significant agri-emissions reductions over the next decade from improvements in production efficiency. This is an area where my Department is actively working with agriculture and forestry stakeholders to identify measures which can reduce emissions and enhance production efficiencies. This voluntary approach is, I believe, the most appropriate way forward.

I also need to consider how lowering carbon can complement and not compete with sustainable growth objectives in the agri-food sector. Exporting jobs and or production or limiting local growth potential due to imposition of reduction targets is not considered a sensible approach and may actually increase GHGs if production takes place in other regions and countries that are less efficient.

My Department has a detailed programme of research underway on mitigation of agriculture GHGs which includes carbon footprinting of dairy and beef systems, breeding strategies, carbon sequestration and on the types of chemical fertilizer best suited to local atmospheric and soil conditions. My Department also co-fund the development of the agriculture GHG Inventory to better measure naturally occurring emissions and which will result in revised measurement techniques being available in 2014/15.

Review into the Recent Flooding in Beragh, County Tyrone

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) who is leading the review into the recent flooding in Beragh, County Tyrone; (ii) what is the timeframe for this review; and (iii) whether the review will be extended to cover all the areas which were affected by the flooding.

(AQW 4150/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have asked my Assembly Private Secretary Pat Doherty MP, MLA to undertake a review into the operational performance of my Rivers Agency during the October flooding events. This review will include the recent flooding events in Beragh.

A written report, supported by documentary evidence and including recommendations for improvement is to be completed by 18 November 2011.

As referred to above, the review will cover all the areas which were affected by flooding.

Department's Independent Panel

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the appointments process for her Department's Independent Panel closed for applications; and how many applications were received.

(AQW 4194/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The deadline for applications closed on 9 September 2011 and there were 35 applications received.

Department's Independent Panel

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when she received notification of the successful applicants for appointment to her Department's Independent Panel.

(AQW 4195/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The interview process for the recruitment of new members to my Department's Independent Panel is still ongoing and should conclude at the end of November. I anticipate receiving notification of the outcome of the appointment process in December.

Department's Independent Panel

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she asked for a revision to be made to the list of successful appointees to her Department's Independent Panel.

(AQW 4196/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have not asked for a revision to be made to the list of successful appointees to my Department's Independent Panel. No list currently exists.

Department's Independent Panel

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when successful appointees will be notified of their appointment to her Department's Independent Panel.

(AQW 4197/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: It is intended to notify successful appointees of their appointment in January 2012.

Review into the Recent Flooding in Beragh, County Tyrone

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the terms of reference of the review into the recent flooding in Beragh, County Tyrone.

(AQW 4223/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: During the month of October 2011 a number of slow moving, narrow bands of intense rainfall moved across the north of Ireland and caused flooding to a number of residential and business properties including some located in Beragh. As a result I have asked my Assembly Private Secretary Pat Doherty MP, MLA to undertake an investigation into the operational performance of my Rivers Agency during the October flooding incidents and report by 18 November 2011. The written report is to be supported by documentary evidence and include recommendations for improvement. The investigation is to address:

Before the Event:

- (i) Actions taken to put contingency plans into operation and state of readiness. To include availability of emergency response plan and records of and testing of the plan; incorporation of lessons learnt from earlier severe weather incidents.
- (ii) During the Event: Actions taken to prioritise and respond to incoming calls to Rivers Agency offices and the Flooding Incident Line. To include comparison of the operational performance with that recorded in 2008 and 2009 flooding events and to consider any action points from earlier events which remain unresolved.
- (iii) After the Event: Actions taken to effect emergency/repair works, where required, and internal review completed of the response.

In addition, the investigation should consider the nature and level of communication throughout the event, including the co-ordination with and co-operation with other statutory agencies.

Ilex Urban Regeneration Company's One Plan for Derry Regeneration Programme

Mr Eastwood asked Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, with regard to Ilex Urban Regeneration Company's One Plan for Derry regeneration programme, to detail (i) the funds from her current budget that have been committed to projects under this programme; (ii) the projects that are being funded; and (iii) the start dates for these projects.

(AQW 4224/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I met with representatives of Ilex Urban Regeneration on 2nd November 2011 in Derry and we had a very positive and constructive discussion about the One plan.

My Department has not been approached with regard to funding for the One plan for the Derry regeneration programme, however, any future requests will be fully considered.

Waterways in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans her Department has to desilt the waterways in North Down.

(AQW 4243/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The North Down area has watercourses which are designated under the terms of the Drainage (NI) Order 1973 and for which my Rivers Agency has a maintenance responsibility. Watercourses are categorised as "urban" or "rural". Generally urban open watercourses are inspected and maintained on a yearly basis, while rural watercourses are inspected and maintained at least every six years. If significant localised accumulations of silt are encountered in watercourses during routine maintenance inspections, consideration is given to their removal in order that a free flow of water in the watercourses can be preserved. Such removal of silt must be carried out in accordance with any relevant environmental legislation. Many undesignated open watercourses are also located in the North Down area and the maintenance responsibility for these rests with the riparian occupiers of the land.

Letter on CAP Reform

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why it was necessary for departmental staff to pigeon-hole a letter on CAP Reform, dated 9 November, to each MLA in an unmarked A4 envelope.

(AQW 4322/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In issuing the Public Consultation on EU Commission Proposals for CAP Reform post 2013, DARD officials followed the July 2011 OFMDFM Guidance on the Distribution of Publications and Consultation Documents.

Review into the Recent Flooding

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what she expects to achieve from the review into the recent flooding.

(AQW 4329/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have asked my Assembly Private Secretary Pat Doherty MP, MLA to undertake an investigation into the October 2011 flooding incidents. The investigation will cover:

- (i) The mechanisms of the emergency response;
- (ii) A comparison of the performance in October 2011 with that recorded in 2008 and 2009 flooding events, including any action points from earlier events which remain to be resolved; and (iii) Communications around the emergency including coordination and cooperation with other statutory agencies.

The key outputs of the investigation will be an assessment of my Rivers Agency's performance in preparation for and during the flood events of October 2011 and recommendations for improvement where appropriate.

Flooding at Beragh, County Tyrone

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many people will be on the review team to consider the flooding at Beragh, County Tyrone; and what criteria will be used to appoint members.

(AQW 4393/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have asked my Assembly Private Secretary Pat Doherty MP, MLA to undertake an investigation into the October 2011 flooding incidents. He will request whatever evidence and analysis he requires from officials in my Rivers Agency and report to me by 18 November 2011.

Specifically with regard to flood alleviation works in Beragh the recent flooding will be considered with the context of the overall design of the scheme.

Review into the Recent Flooding in Beragh, County Tyrone

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the application process for membership of the review team to consider the flooding in Beragh, County Tyrone; and how this process is being advertised.

(AQW 4436/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I consider that a quick review is essential while the events are fresh in people's minds. That is why I have asked my Assembly Private Secretary Pat Doherty MP, MLA to undertake the investigation into the October 2011 flooding and report to me by 18 November 2011. Accordingly there was no application process and no review team appointed.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the impact of the process of Hydraulic Fracturing on the water-sports industry.

(AQW 4022/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): There is currently no consensus or agreement as to the impact of the process of hydraulic fracturing on water-sports activities generally. I understand that hydraulic fracturing is a relatively new process and, as such, its long term effects on water sport are not yet known. I am, however, aware that there is widespread concern within sport about the potential damage fracturing might cause. Sport NI, which is responsible for the development of sport in the north of Ireland, is working in partnership with local authorities to develop a number of Local Outdoor Recreation Forums, including in areas of the north where fracturing is being considered. These Forums are intended to provide a platform for the recreation community and industry generally to discuss issues of concern. Sport NI hopes that the Forums will assist sport, including water-sports, reach a clearer consensus position on the impact of hydraulic fracturing on the recreation industry as a whole and how any concerns in relation to this can best be addressed.

Mobile Libraries

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what consideration has been given to the use of mobile libraries as a method of providing broadband access to people in rural communities.

(AQW 4024/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Libraries NI will address the issue of using mobile libraries as a method of providing broadband access to people in rural communities as part of its forthcoming review of mobile library services.

Libraries NI currently has two mobile libraries equipped to provide access via satellite connectivity which works effectively in many but not all locations.

Ulster Canal

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an estimate of the potential tourist traffic to the River Bann if the Ulster Canal was completed.

(AQW 4028/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: It is not possible to predict accurately the number of tourists who may visit or use the River Bann (upper and lower sections) if the Ulster Canal was completed.

The "Feasibility Study – Re-opening of the Ulster Canal , June 2001" projected the annual users to be 14,000 – 15,000. This included boaters, anglers, cyclists, hikers and walkers. The "Ulster Canal Socio-economic study – March 2006" projected that as a result of a fully restored Ulster Canal, expenditure could be estimated at between £2.6m and £3.2m pa.

These estimates are for the re-opening of the complete length (45 miles) of the Ulster Canal only.

Libraries in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many people visited each library in the Strangford constituency in each of the last five years.

(AQW 4040/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The following table shows how many people visited each library in the Strangford Constituency in each of the last five years;

Library	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Ballynahinch	25,750	28,600	27,650	32,050	37,750
Comber	37,950	36,400	28,150	23,660	26,950
Killyleagh	20,950	21,450	25,450	16,900	18,750
Newtownards	73,350	60,900	68,000	78,260	69,900
Portaferry	25,450	19,550	19,750	24,076	17,800
Saintfield	19,950	28,250	24,950	30,004	24,950

These figures were provided by Libraries NI.

Odyssey Trust Company Limited

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 3754/11-15, how her Department 'does not direct, or intervene in, the Odyssey Trust Company's schedule of planned maintenance and/or refurbishment' when the mechanisms for the OTC, set out in the 1998 funding agreement with her Department, 'provides that the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure approval is required for the Company to incur expenditure on property and assets exceeding £200,000'.

(AQW 4054/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The clause to which you refer is from Schedule 8, Paragraph 3.1 of the 1998 Funding Agreement and requires Departmental approval for expenditure on the acquisition of property or assets.

Expenditure on planned maintenance or refurbishment of existing assets is not within the scope of this clause.

2012 Olympic Games Training Camp Agreements

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how many 2012 Olympic Games training camp agreements have been signed to date; (ii) with whom the agreements are signed; (iii) what is the cost of these agreements to Northern Ireland; and (iv) how the cost for each will be met.

(AQW 4070/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: To date three pre games training camps for the north of Ireland have been announced. These are:-

1. The Australian Olympic boxing team;
2. The Paralympics Ireland team; and
3. The Chinese Olympic women's and men's artistic gymnastics team.

Each camp's requirements and associated costs will be different and the costs for each camp are currently being explored.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG), provides an incentivisation fund of up to £25,000 to each Olympic and Paralympic Committee, to encourage them to train in approved venues in the UK.

In some cases, additional support will be required.

My Department may provide an element of funding to support the camps subject to approved business cases and funding being made available.

Sport NI in conjunction with other key partners will produce a business case for each camp requiring funding in addition to the LOCOG grant.

SNI, DCAL, local Councils, venues and other partners will work together to jointly fund pre Games training camps.

London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many people from Northern Ireland will participate in the London 2012 (i) Olympic Games; and (ii) Paralympic Games.

(AQW 4081/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The number of athletes from the north of Ireland competing in the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will not be known until all the qualification events take place. These events will take place up to May 2012.

The number of volunteers from the north of Ireland who will be participating in the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games is not yet known.

The London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) confirmed that 1740 applications from the north of Ireland were received and approximately 900 applicants were offered an interview to become a volunteer during the Olympic and Paralympic Games (known as Games Makers).

LOCOG has started the process of informing successful candidates. This process will continue until April 2012. It is anticipated that 50% of those interviewed may be successful.

Talent Identification and Development for the 2012 Olympics

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent on talent identification and development for the 2012 Olympics; and for a breakdown of this spend.

(AQW 4083/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI is the lead development agency for sport in the north of Ireland with responsibility for the distribution of exchequer and lottery funding. In the last three financial years, Sport NI has provided £782,235 towards talent identification and development within Olympic sports through its Investing in Performance Sport Programme. This figure is broken down by Olympic sport in the table below.

Sport	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Total
Athletics	0	£28,000	£28,000	£56,000
Badminton	£13,600	£13,600	£13,600	£40,800
Canoeing	0	£6,275	£6,275	£12,550
Cycling	£29,606	£29,606	£29,606	£88,818
Equestrian	0	£18,475	£18,475	£36,950
Hockey	0	£62,712	£62,712	£125,424
Rowing	0	£33,873	£33,873	£67,746
Sailing	0	£34,848	£34,848	£69,696
Swimming	0	£20,625	£20,625	£41,250
Table Tennis	£13,600	£13,600	£13,600	£40,800
Tennis	£35,000	£35,000	£35,000	£105,000
Triathlon	0	£35,000	£35,000	£70,000

Sport	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	Total
Wrestling	0	£13,600	£13,600	£27,200
Total	£91,806	£345,214	£345,214	£782,235

2012 Olympics

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent on volunteering for the 2012 Olympics; and for a breakdown of this spend.

(AQW 4084/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Under the NI Strategy for the 2012 Games Volunteer Now lead on volunteering, £210,000 has been committed to the end of March 2012.

The funding is broken down as follows:

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Award	£50,000	£50,000	£50,000	£60,000

2012 Olympics

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much has been spent on events training and holding camps in Northern Ireland for the 2012 Olympics; and for a breakdown of this spend.

(AQW 4086/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Under the NI Strategy for the 2012 Games Sport NI lead on sports legacy including pre Games training camps and events. £250,000 has been committed to the end of March 2012.

The funding is broken down as follows:

Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Award	£65,000	£85,000	£100,000

Olympics Games 2012

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) what the total cost of the Olympics Games 2012 will be to Northern Ireland; (ii) to detail the sources of funding which were available to Northern Ireland towards these costs; and (iii) to detail the amount drawn down from each source.

(AQW 4087/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: DCAL leads and facilitates the Olympic Strategy in the north through partnership arrangements and the Department has established the Games Legacy Unit to advance work to secure a local legacy from the Games with an allocation of £450k per annum by the Department. This money is not being used to deliver the London2012 Games – that is the responsibility of the Organising Committee – but is directed at ensuring programmes, projects and activities of benefit to the north area realised.

DCAL's total expenditure is expected to be in the region of £1.8m by 2012/13. DCAL provides funding to local partners to support participation and local benefits across the three NI 2012 legacy themes of sport including disability sport, community engagement and economic.

Full details of partner investments in local 2012 activity and funding leveraged from other sources will not be known or completely calculated until post Games Time. However, current sources of funding include £1.31m from Legacy Trust UK for the NI Connections Programme. In addition the London

Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) provides funding up to £25k to support international teams for pre-games training in the UK and through 2012 sponsors funding has been secured to support unique art/cultural commissions as well as major events as part of the London 2012 Festival. The 2012 Arts and Culture programme is presently estimated at a value of around £5million, secured from external sources.

Proposals for the Core Funded Irish Language Organisations

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if, and when, she will publish the analysis of responses received to the extended consultation on the proposals for the core funded Irish Language organisations.

(AQW 4089/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) met on 12 October 2011 and reviewed progress towards the Review of Core funded bodies. The NSMC asked Foras na Gaeilge to undertake a further 12 week consultation about the portfolio of draft schemes.

The further consultation will include a full Equality Impact Assessment and also provide an opportunity for comments and alternative suggestions about the main economic impacts and benefits if the proposed schemes were implemented.

Foras na Gaeilge will publish an analysis of responses once the consultation has been completed.

Indigenous Languages Strategy

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what financial resources she has set aside for (i) the Irish Language; and (ii) Ulster-Scots within the Indigenous Languages Strategy; and (iii) an Irish Language Act.

(AQW 4090/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: In relation to the promotion of the Irish language my Department already contributes 25% of the total Foras na Gaeilge budget. This amounted to £4,593,143 in 2010.

No resources have yet been specifically allocated for either Irish Language or Ulster-Scots within an Indigenous Languages Strategy or an Irish Language Act.

European Union: Infraction Fines

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what level of infraction fines she is anticipating being levied against her Department by the European Union because of breaches of the Habitats Directive by the interception of mixed stocks of salmon by commercial nets, which have been licensed by her Department, on the North Coast of Antrim.

(AQW 4106/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is not aware of any infraction proceedings against this Department by the European Union.

DOE is the lead Department in Northern Ireland for the implementation of the Habitats Directive. DCAL seeks to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Directive and the implementing legislation in Northern Ireland through the discharge of its responsibilities in relation to the conservation and protection of salmon and inland fisheries.

Infraction proceedings by the EU in relation to breaches of the Habitats Directive will be against the UK as a Member State and not against the devolved administrations or individual Government Departments.

Illegal Netting of Fish on Lough Neagh

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the representations she has received on the issue of the illegal netting of fish on Lough Neagh; and what actions her Department is taking to address this issue.

(AQW 4107/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Between October 2008 and the current date, I and my predecessors have received the following representations on the issue of illegal fishing which includes netting of fish on Lough Neagh.

- 13 - Written Assembly Questions some of which are not exclusive to Lough Neagh but include Lough Neagh.
- 5 - correspondence cases relating to all forms of illegal fishing on Lough Neagh.
- 1 - invitation to discuss illegal fishing on Lough Neagh.

DCAL Fishery Protection Officers, under the management of Senior Fisheries Officers continue to undertake regular patrols on land and water around Lough Neagh and throughout the DCAL operational area. They also continue to undertake inspections of premises such as hotels, restaurants and commercial outlets to ensure that those businesses comply fully with the 1966 Fisheries Act and Fisheries Regulations.

DCAL will endeavour to make the best use of its own resources to protect and conserve fish populations in the DCAL operational area including Lough Neagh.

Fishing Nets at Lough Neagh

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she has considered introducing regulations to ensure the clear identification of legal fishing nets at Lough Neagh which would facilitate the confiscation of illegal nets either on shore or on the Lough.

(AQW 4108/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Regulations regarding the identification of legal fishing nets on Lough Neagh already exist and are clearly specified in the 1966 Fisheries Act and associated regulations.

Each net or row of nets of a single wall set net or trammel net used for the taking of trout and coarse fish on Lough Neagh must be marked at each end with a float not less than 30 centimetres in diameter, of a bright yellow colour projecting not less than 30 centimetres above the surface of the water.

Each float must have clearly and legibly painted or fixed in figures of not less than 12 centimetres in height, the number allocated to the licence-holder by the Department (or any number the Department has allocated to the net or row of nets of which the float shall be a mark) and at all times when the net or row of nets is in use such number must be clearly legible.

Any nets that do not comply with these requirements are illegal and, if discovered, are subject to seizure by DCAL Fisheries Protection Officers.

Fish Caught on Lough Neagh

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what arrangements are in place for the licensing of fish merchants trading in fish caught on Lough Neagh.

(AQW 4110/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Arrangements for the licensing of fish merchants are clearly defined under section 113 of the 1966 Fisheries Act and subsequent Regulations. These cover the DCAL jurisdiction which includes Lough Neagh.

Those persons selling salmon, trout (including sea trout) and eels commercially must have in their possession a fish dealers licence issued by DCAL regardless of the origin of the fish, unless it is fish which they caught. This requirement was extended in subsequent Regulations to include pollen and pike.

Fish merchants must also keep a daily register of all purchases and sales of fish. Fish merchant's premises and their registers and those suspected of selling fish can be subject to inspections by DCAL officials.

Lough Neagh: Fish Population

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the current population status of each fish species normally found in Lough Neagh; and what constitutes a sustainable population.

(AQW 4112/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has received scientific advice from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) concerning the European eel. Their report concludes that the European eel stock in Lough Neagh is outside safe biological limits.

DCAL, working in conjunction with the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), has undertaken research for the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO), which includes electro-fishing surveys, habitat surveys and the installation of fish counters on the Rivers Blackwater and Maine. Records conclude that salmon populations in these rivers, which flow into Lough Neagh, are failing to achieve conservation levels and are outside safe biological limits.

The status of the population of migratory trout in Lough Neagh is unknown at present but research is currently being undertaken and a report is due in 2012.

Of other fish species occurring in Lough Neagh, there is currently no data on populations of pollan, roach, rudd, bream, rudd/roach/bream hybrids, pike, perch, tench, stone loach, gudgeon, minnow and stickleback.

The term sustainable population is applied to a fishery where the populations have safe biological limits and/or reproductive capacity and can be exploited to provide a yield. A sustainable yield is within the range where the populations can maintain productivity to provide a satisfactory yield.

Library Opening Hours

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if she will copy the letters that she has received from the general public and library staff expressing concern over the proposed reduction in library opening hours to the Chief Executive of Libraries NI.

(AQW 4128/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: It is normal practice for my officials to forward letters or e-mails received from the general public and library staff to the Chief Executive of Libraries NI. It is important that they can be taken into consideration during the public consultation process.

Ilex Urban Regeneration Company's One Plan for Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, with regard to Ilex Urban Regeneration Company's One Plan for Derry regeneration programme, to detail (i) the funds from her current budget that have been committed to projects under this programme; (ii) the projects that are being funded; and (iii) the start dates for these projects.

(AQW 4137/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: DCAL has been working closely with Digital Derry – an initiative involving private, public and academic organisations to support the digital content sector in Derry and the North-West. Digital Derry is a crucial contributor to the “Growing the Digital Economy” catalyst programme identified by the One Plan.

In 2011/12 my Department committed £25,000 to enable Digital Derry to launch a Culture Tech seed competition in January 2012.

Digital Derry will also receive £9,500 to assist development of a "Legenderry Festival" - Ireland's first festival of digital culture incorporating film, TV, animation, games, music technology, web and mobile content and digital arts. The festival is planned to take place in 2012 and 2013.

My Department has provided £6,000 to Derry City Council in respect of the August 2011 Milwaukee Irish Fest to allow Craft workers to take part. This provided an opportunity to highlight programmes taking place in Derry in 2012 (such as the North Atlantic Fiddle Festival and Clipper round the world yacht race) which are lead in programmes to 2013 when Derry is City of Culture.

My officials are also working with the Culture Company 2013 to enable it to take a lead in promoting Creativity Month in March 2012 and 2013.

ACNI and DCAL continue to work with ILEX on proposals for 2013.

Fisheries Act 1966

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of whether the Fisheries Act 1966 is fit for purpose; and if not, when she will begin consultations on a replacement Bill.

(AQW 4193/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Fisheries Act, as amended, has been in place for 45 years and I am aware that some of its provisions have been superseded by more recent European Directives. I consider that the Act still provides a sound foundation for the conservation and protection of fisheries and can address changing circumstances through the making of subordinate legislation.

A review of the Act would be resource intensive for DCAL and is not currently a priority for the Department.

Coverage of Gaelic Games on Television and Radio

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what steps she will take to promote fair coverage of Gaelic games on television and radio.

(AQW 4241/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Broadcasting is a reserved matter.

Responsibility for the promotion of Gaelic games, including related television and radio coverage, rests with the governing body for the sport, the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA).

The level of television and radio coverage that Gaelic games receives is a matter for negotiation between the GAA and broadcasting companies and is not within the remit of my Department.

Ulster-Scots Community

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the support her Department has provided in the last 12 months for initiatives aimed at building relationships between the Ulster-Scots community and the Lowland-Scots community in Scotland.

(AQW 4268/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: As defined in the North/South Co-operation (Implementation Bodies) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 the Ulster-Scots Agency has the statutory remit for the promotion of Ulster-Scots culture issues. Any project or initiative which requires financial support from the Agency is considered on its merits in line with the financial corporate governance requirements and the Agency's statutory obligations.

The Ulster-Scots Agency has not resourced any initiative in the last 12 months with the aim of building relationships between the Ulster-Scots community and the Lowland-Scots community in Scotland.

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of staff currently employed at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

(AQW 4274/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: There are currently ninety-nine staff employed at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, of which 59 are full time, 12 are part time and the remaining 28 staff are non-contract casual staff.

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline any changes to the staffing structures at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum within the last twelve months.

(AQW 4276/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The following recruitment has taken place at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum within the last 12 months:

- a) Front of House Supervisor (1 temporary full time post filled internally).
- b) Front of House Assistants (3 temporary posts filled internally and 5 temporary posts filled externally).
- c) Seasonal Visitor Guides (8 temporary posts filled internally).
- d) First Person Interpreter (6 temporary posts filled internally and 1 temporary post filled externally).

National Museums has advised me that the creation of the Front of House Supervisor and First Person Interpreter posts are the only changes to the museum's staffing structure in the past 12 months.

Report Commissioned by the Odyssey Trust Company's Trustees

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 3753/11-15, where the report commissioned by the Odyssey Trust Company's Trustees can be accessed; and if it has not yet been published, whether she will publish this report.

(AQW 4288/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The independent Remuneration Review Report referred to in AQW 3753/11-15 was commissioned by the Trustees of the Odyssey Trust Company. It is therefore their decision on whether they will release it. My Department does not hold a copy of this report.

Coverage of Gaelic Games

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she will meet with the BBC to discuss the lack of coverage of Gaelic games compared to other sports.

(AQW 4310/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The level of television and radio coverage that Gaelic games receives is a matter for negotiation between the GAA and broadcasting companies and is not within the remit of my Department. Therefore, I have no plans to discuss this with the BBC

Tourism Potential of Canals

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to increase the tourism potential of canals.

(AQW 4326/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for the development of tourism lies with the Department for Trade, Enterprise and Investment and the NI Tourist Board.

DCAL manages and maintains a number of inland water recreation sites. Its role in respect of these inland waterways is to develop the recreational and navigational potential.

Among these inland waterways are the abandoned Ulster Canal and Lagan Navigation. Both would require substantial financial investment to re-open them. Work has been undertaken to investigate the potential costs of re-opening both of these canals.

Promoting Theatres and Theatre Going

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what additional resources her Department will put in place to promote theatres and theatre going.

(AQW 4379/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department does not directly fund organisations. DCAL funding is mainly disbursed through its Arms Length Bodies.

The Arts Council provides core funding as well as substantial lottery funding to theatre companies for production, individual projects, new work and access to the arts. This funding is available to community drama companies, youth, amateur and professional companies. Awards totaling £2,631,156 (£2,026,933 Exchequer funding and £604,223 Lottery funding) were made in the current financial year. In addition, both the Northern Ireland Theatre Association and Ulster Youth Drama Association received funding (total £89,510, of which £34,650 is Exchequer).

The Arts Council along with the Arts Councils of England, Scotland and Wales, contributes to a central "UK Cross Border Touring Fund" which enables the touring companies to tour outside their regions. As a result larger venues in the north of Ireland have hosted performances by large –scale companies. In 2011/12 the Arts Council contributed £220,000 to this fund.

There are currently no plans to further increase resources to promote theatres and theatre going.

Sport Matters Capital and Equipment Awards Programme

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she intends to make the Sport Matters Capital and Equipment Awards Programme available next year.

(AQW 4388/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department's capital budget for 2011/2015 is fully committed to the specific programmes for which it was allocated by the Executive. This allocation does not include funding for the Sport Matters Capital and Equipment Programme. Therefore, there is no scope to make this programme available in the current CSR period.

Sharing of Sports Facilities in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action her Department is taking to encourage the sharing of sports facilities between local councils and the Department of Education in the North Down area.

(AQW 4398/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for promoting the sharing of sports facilities between local councils and the Department of Education (DE) in the North Down constituency is a matter for the councils concerned and the individual school management authorities.

The embedding of a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the provision of education and district council sports facilities throughout the north of Ireland, including in the North Down constituency, is identified as one of a number of 'Key Steps to Success' under the published sports strategy, Sport Matters. This step has recently been incorporated into a detailed Sport Matters Action Plan which has been agreed by local councils, including those in the North Down constituency, and DE.

As part of this Action Plan, Sport NI, with DE support, is also developing an advocacy document which is designed to promote shared use of school sports facilities in all areas and all constituencies in the north of Ireland. The Sport Matters Monitoring Group (SMMG), which I chair, has recently agreed that local councils, including those in the North Down constituency, should be consulted on the document's development prior to its wider publication and circulation.

Arts Council's Annual Support for Organisations Programme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what support organisations in the North Antrim area have received in the last three years from the Arts Council's Annual Support for Organisations Programme.

(AQW 4417/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: There have been no organisations from the North Antrim Constituency which have received funding from the Arts Council's Annual Support for Organisations Programme in the last 3 years. However, a total of £197,285 has been awarded to the constituency since 2009/10 through a variety of other funding programmes including Public Art, Lottery Project Funding, Small Grants programme and the Musical Instruments for Bands programme.

Establishment of an All-Ireland Soccer Team

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she has any plans to meet with the Irish Football Association and the Football Association of Ireland to discuss the establishment of an all-Ireland soccer team.

(AQW 4476/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have no plans, at present, to meet with the Irish Football Association (IFA) or the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) to discuss the establishment of an all-Ireland soccer team. The establishment of such a team is not a matter for me but wholly a matter for the two governing bodies together with FIFA. Both the IFA and the FAI are, however, aware of my personal views on this matter and my belief that there would be real benefits for football in having an all-Ireland soccer team.

Funding Earmarked for the Arts Sector

Mr P Maskey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for a breakdown of the funding her Department has earmarked for the arts sector in each Belfast constituency in the 2011-15 budgetary period.

(AQW 4502/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department's funding in support of the arts is disbursed by the Arts Council through a number of funding programmes. This funding is not allocated on the basis of constituency but on the merits of the application to the relevant funding programme.

It is not possible to provide details of future funding in each Belfast constituency, but the current Arts Council budget figure for 2011/12, and the indicative allocations to the Arts Council for each subsequent year of the Budget period are as follows:

	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total resource budget	14.4	13.2	12.8	12.9
Total Capital Budget	3.8	0.6	0.5	0.5

NB. Above figures exclude the Creative Industries Innovation Fund allocation.

Violence at the Recent Gaelic Football Match between Carrickmore and Dromore

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the on and off pitch violence at the recent gaelic football match between Carrickmore and Dromore, and the message that it sent out to children and young people; and whether either of the clubs involved have received funding from her Department in the last four years.

(AQW 4507/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have already publicly stated that I totally condemn acts of violence and disorder at any sporting event in the north of Ireland, including GAA games. I believe the behaviour demonstrated by some of the players and a small number of spectators at the match between Carrickmore and Dromore does nothing to promote the good name of Gaelic games and sport in general and sets a very poor example to children and young people. I understand that Tyrone GAA has already launched an investigation into the matter and I trust that appropriate disciplinary sanctions will be taken against those found to be responsible. In my view, Tyrone GAA's prompt response and the sanctions imposed by the GAA in the past send out a very clear message to children and young people about what is regarded as acceptable behaviour at GAA events. I also believe that the strong stance the Association traditionally takes in such cases, sets a good example for other sports where on or off pitch violence or disorder has occurred.

Sport NI is the lead development agency for sport in the north of Ireland with responsibility for the distribution of funding. In the last four financial years, Sport NI has awarded £232,310 to Dromore St Dympna GFC as detailed below:

Date	Project	Award
27/5/09	2nd training pitch with floodlighting and fencing	£230,000
11/2/10	Under 6 Nursery Programme	£2,310
Total		£232,310

Library Provision in Gilford, County Down

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline her Department's role in delivering future library provision in Gilford, County Down.

(AQW 4515/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Board and Senior Management Team of Libraries NI are responsible for the delivery of future library provision in Gilford.

Libraries NI has assured me that it will work in partnership with Banbridge District Council and the Gilford Community Development Group to provide library services from the new Community Centre. The exact nature of this provision is subject to ongoing discussions between Libraries NI, the Community group and the Council.

Library Provision in Gilford, County Down

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how she will prioritise the social, economic and cultural development of Gilford, County Down when she is considering the library provision for the village from March 2012.

(AQW 4516/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Board and Senior Management Team of Libraries NI are responsible for the delivery of future library provision in Gilford.

I have put the onus on Libraries NI to work locally to ensure that the library services available to the community of Gilford are adequate, remain sustainable and contribute fully to the social, economic and cultural needs of the community.

It is my understanding that Libraries NI will develop an action plan for the implementation of closures of each Library, including Gilford, to be published on its website.

Community Festivals Fund

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 4147/11-15, why the North Down area has received only £4000 from the Community Festivals Fund in each of the last two years.

(AQW 4532/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: One of the requirements of the Community Festivals fund is that the councils must provide match funding.

North Down Borough Council accepted £18,600 in 2008/2009 but asked for an allocation of £4,000 in the following two years, due to the amount of match funding available in the council.

Violence at the Recent Gaelic Football Match between Carrickmore and Dromore

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of (i) the on and off pitch violence at the recent gaelic football match between Carrickmore and Dromore and its impact on Gaelic games and sport in general; and (ii) the call from the Tyrone County Board for the culprits to own up.

(AQW 4594/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have already publicly stated that I totally condemn acts of violence and disorder at any sporting event in the north of Ireland, including GAA games. I believe the behaviour demonstrated by some of the players and a small number of spectators at the match between Carrickmore and Dromore does nothing to promote the good name of Gaelic games and sport in general. Responsibility for taking action following such incidents is a matter for the GAA. I understand that the Tyrone County Board has already launched an investigation into the matter and that, in addition to studying video footage and photographs of the incident, it has called on those involved to come forward and accept responsibility for their actions.

I would fully support any action the GAA takes that will ultimately identify those responsible and lead to appropriate disciplinary sanctions being applied.

Líofa 2015

Mr G Kelly asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the uptake of Líofa 2015 since it was launched.

(AQO 773/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: 733 people have signed up to the Líofa 2015 campaign to date.

Libraries: Rural Areas

Mr Lynch asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if her Department will encourage Libraries NI to work pro-actively with rural communities to help make local libraries more sustainable.

(AQO 774/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: As the member will be aware the Libraries NI Board has decided that a number of rural libraries may not be sustainable without the action of other organisations. I have asked Libraries NI to develop an action plan for each library to set out how they will work with local partners to ensure that these libraries become sustainable. The action plan will be published on the Libraries NI website.

The closure of any public library, or reduction in opening hours, is of great concern to me. I am acutely aware of the potential impact that such actions can have on a local community.

In rural areas there is an onus on public sector organisations to work together and with community associations to ensure continued access to public services.

DCAL: Spending Controls

Dr McDonnell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what measures she intends to take to ensure that her Department will not breach spending controls again.

(AQO 775/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The member is referring to qualifications to my Department's accounts for the 2010/11 year where there was expenditure in excess of Estimates cover.

Although the breach in spending controls was very regrettable, it arose from the somewhat technical issue of asset revaluations and did not involve a cash overspend. Nor did it affect the ability of my Department to continue its normal operations.

Having said that, I am, of course, very mindful of the need to comply with Assembly controls over expenditure and can report that internal processes have been changed to ensure such a breach does not happen again.

My Department will also seek Assembly approval for the excess expenditure in the next Budget Order.

Public Library Standards

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the timetable for the completion of the review into the existing Public Library Standards.

(AQO 776/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Public Library Standards form part of DCAL's policy framework for the public library service entitled 'Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries'. This policy was published in July 2006.

The Policy is still relevant to the continued development and monitoring of public library services. However, Libraries NI is faced with working within very tight budget allocations and some of the aspirational targets within 'Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries' are currently unaffordable during this time of austerity. It may be necessary to modify expectations to live within budgets.

My officials continue to keep the Library Standards under review and will initiate a review of the Standards in 2012.

Sport: Participation

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what actions she is taking to increase participation in sports.

(AQO 777/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The sports strategy, Sport Matters, sets out a number of targets to be achieved over the next 10 years that are specifically designed to increase participation in sports across the population. In order to ensure these targets are delivered, a DCAL led Sport Matters Monitoring Group, chaired by me, has been established to oversee the implementation of Sport Matters including its sports participation elements. This group is made up of senior representatives of DCAL, DHSSPS, DE, DSD, DARD, DEL, the Environment Agency, SportNI, district councils and sports governing bodies.

The Monitoring Group recently approved a Sport Matters Action Plan setting out detailed actions that are now being taken to ensure that all of the targets set out in Sport Matters, including those relating to increasing sports participation, are achieved within the life of the strategy. This Action Plan was developed and agreed by key partners and sports stakeholders represented on SportNI led Sport Matters

Implementation Groups. These Implementation Groups report to my Monitoring Group and I monitor progress on the Action Plan via that mechanism.

In the meantime, SportNI, which is responsible for the development of sport including the distribution of funding, is continuing to invest in programmes that are designed to help deliver the sports participation targets set out in Sport Matters. A total of £24.6m of exchequer and lottery funding has already been invested by SportNI in these programmes since Sport Matters was approved by the Executive in 2009.

The latest Continuous Household Survey data, for example, indicates that there has been an increase in adult participation rates over the past year - recovering from 46% in 2009/10 to 50% in 2010/11.

Museums Policy

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the implementation of the Museums Policy which was launched on 9 March 2011.

(AQO 778/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Immediately following the launch of the Museums Policy, in April 2011 an Implementation Working Group was established which comprises representatives from National Museums, the NI Museums Council and my Department.

This Group is tasked with working through the issues around the implementation of the Policy and agreeing an effective implementation strategy that can be meaningfully delivered by the museums sector.

We are now approaching the start of the business planning cycle for 2012-13. I will ensure that National Museums and the NI Museums Council incorporate detailed plans to implement the Museums Policy within their published business plans for 2012-13.

This group continues to meet formally on a monthly basis.

World Pipe Band Championships

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if her Department will do everything in its power to encourage the World Pipe Band Championships to come to Belfast in the future.

(AQO 779/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Belfast City Council (BCC) has been given the opportunity to bid for Northern Ireland to host the World Pipe Band Championships 2013 – 2015.

My Department is fully supportive of Belfast's bid to host the Championships and has written to encourage the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association to make Belfast the host city for the Championships.

My Department will continue to support the City Council in its bid to achieve a positive outcome.

World Police and Fire Games

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when an announcement will be made about the venues selected to host events for the 2013 World Police and Fire Games.

(AQO 780/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Between 2 July 2010 and 29 July 2010 Sport NI completed an 'expression of interest' exercise (on behalf of the Stakeholder Group - the lead body prior to the formal establishment of 2013 World Police and Fire Games Limited on 28 February 2011) to identify potential venues to host the sports events for the 2013 Games.

The Board of Directors of 2013 World Police and Fire Games Limited approved a list of 35 provisional venues that met the minimum standards to host approximately 67 sports.

The Company is now engaging in pre-contract negotiations with the shortlisted venues prior to the Board making final decisions. The negotiations are without prejudice. Venues are expected to be confirmed in Summer 2012 when that process is complete.

Arts in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding her Department has invested in the arts in the North Down constituency in each of the last five years; and where this funding was applied.

(AQW 4627/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department does not directly provide funding for the arts, as funding is disbursed through the Arts Council. For information on arts funding in the North Down constituency, you should contact the Arts Council directly.

DCAL does allocate Community Festivals funding to the local councils, but does not hold information at constituency level.

If you require a breakdown of arts related Community Festivals Funding in the North Down constituency, you should contact the relevant council directly.

Department of Education

Líofa 2015

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 2220/11-15, given his intention 'to support Líofa 2015 in whatever ways might be possible through the education system', to detail (i) the "traditional misconceptions about Irish language and culture being the preserve of one section of our community'; (ii) what analysis the Department has carried out in relation to this matter; (iii) upon what have such misconceptions been based; and (iv) in what way he intends to use support for Líofa 2015 to address this issue.

(AQW 3719/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): Policy on Irish language and culture is a matter for my ministerial colleague, Caral ni Chuilin, in DCAL and I share the Culture Minister's view that Líofa 2015 is an initiative aimed at broadening the appeal of the Irish Language. As far as support for Líofa from the education system is concerned there is a role for Irish Medium education (IME) to contribute to the development of the Irish language. Non Irish Medium education schools can play a role in this also. However the promotion of IME must take place in the context of schools delivering a high quality education.

Líofa 2015

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 2221/11-15, (i) to explain why he did not state whether he has carried out any analysis on the prevalence of the view, of the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, that some people have sought to portray the promotion of Gaelic culture and the Irish Language as the preserve of one section of our community; and (ii) whether he has carried out any such analysis.

(AQW 3722/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Policy on Irish language and culture is a matter for my ministerial colleague, Caral ni Chuilin, in DCAL and I share the Culture Minister's view that Líofa 2015 is an initiative aimed at broadening the appeal of the Irish Language. As far as support for Líofa from the education system is concerned there is a role for Irish Medium education (IME) to contribute to the development of the Irish language. Non Irish Medium education schools can play a role in this also. However the promotion of IME must take place in the context of schools delivering a high quality education.

Value of School Property

Mr McNarry asked Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 2901/11-15, AQW 2941/11-15 and AQW 3001/11-15 and, in relation to the information provided on the controlled estate, to detail the name of each school, broken down by (i) Education and Library Board area; and (ii) the value of each school property (a) in use; and (b) not in use.

(AQW 3963/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information on the controlled estate broken down by (i) Education and Library Board and (ii) the value of each school property (a) in use; and (b) not in use has been placed in the Assembly Library.

It should be noted that the valuation figures being supplied for the South Eastern Education and Library differ slightly from those in the response dated (13 October 2011) due to a portion of one property now being reported as being 'not in use'.

Pupils Attending Grammar and Non-Grammar Schools

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Education to detail the percentage of pupils currently attending (i) grammar schools; and (ii) non-grammar schools who live in the wards (a) Academy; (b) Ardeevin; (c) Ballyloughan; (d) Dunclug; (e) Fair Green; (f) Galgorm; (g) Park; (h) Ballee; (i) Ballykeel; (j) Castle Demesne; (k) Harryville; (l) Kells; (m) Moat; and (n) Summerfield.

(AQW 4052/11-15)

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

PERCENTAGE OF POST-PRIMARY PUPILS RESIDENT IN SELECTED WARDS ATTENDING GRAMMAR/ NON-GRAMMAR SCHOOLS, 2010/11

Ward Name	% attending Grammar schools	% attending Non- Grammar schools
Academy	72.5	27.5
Ardeevin	57.4	42.6
Ballyloughan	65.3	34.7
Dunclug	19.2	80.8
Fair Green	16.4	83.6
Galgorm	71.2	28.8
Park	43.3	56.7
Ballee	13.9	86.1
Ballykeel	19.2	80.8
Castle Demesne	22.0	78.0
Harryville	41.7	58.3
Kells	53.4	46.6
Moat	19.3	80.7
Summerfield	39.7	60.3

Source: NI school census.

Pupils Attending Grammar and Non-Grammar Schools

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Education to detail the percentage of pupils currently attending (i) grammar schools; and (ii) non-grammar schools who live in the wards (a) Ahoghill; (b) Cullybackey; (c) Dunminning; (d) Grange; (e) Portglenone; (f) Broughshane; (g) Craigwarren; (h) Glenravel; (i) Glenwhirry; and (j) Slemish.

(AQW 4053/11-15)

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

PERCENTAGE OF POST-PRIMARY PUPILS RESIDENT IN SELECTED WARDS ATTENDING GRAMMAR/ NON-GRAMMAR SCHOOLS, 2010/11

Ward Name	% attending Grammar schools	% attending Non- Grammar schools
Ahoghill	57.5	42.5
Cullybackey	38.7	61.3
Dunminning	51.4	48.6
Grange	52.8	47.2
Portglenone	49.0	51.0
Broughshane	59.1	40.9
Craigwarren	61.9	38.1
Glenravel	37.4	62.6
Glenwhirry	66.5	33.5
Slemish	58.1	41.9

Source: NI school census

Central Primary School, Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education whether his Department or the South Eastern Education and Library Board have agreed funding for a new build for Central Primary School, Bangor.

(AQW 4055/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I would confirm that neither the Department nor the South Eastern Education and Library Board has agreed funding for a new build for Bangor Central Primary School.

As I set out in my Statement to the Assembly on Monday 26 September 2011, I have commissioned the five Education and Library Boards working with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and other sectors to co-ordinate a strategic area planning process based on Board areas to shape the future pattern of education delivery.

Schools previously identified as needing a new build, including that for Bangor Central Integrated Primary School (IPS), will be critically assessed alongside all other potential projects as part of the area planning process to determine how they will contribute to the overall infrastructure needed and may re-emerge if identified as a priority to support the area plan. Future capital investment will be targeted at supporting area plans.

Viability Audit Process for Schools

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education whether the viability audit process for schools has been rural proofed by his Department; and if so, to detail the issues identified.

(AQW 4068/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Sustainable Schools Policy is the Department's framework for assessing the viability and long term sustainability of schools across the North. The policy addresses the issue of rural schools and it was rural-proofed before publication in 2009. The viability audit draws on the relevant indicators set out in the Sustainable Schools Policy and applies these to all primary and post-primary schools, with the main focus being on enrolments, quality of education and financial stability.

Since commissioning the viability audit I have not had any formal discussions with my colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development as the views of her Department are encompassed in the Sustainable Schools Policy and will therefore be reflected in the audit.

Viability Audit for Schools

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education whether he has had any discussions with the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development about the potential impact of the viability audit for schools on the survival of rural communities.

(AQW 4069/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Sustainable Schools Policy is the Department's framework for assessing the viability and long term sustainability of schools across the North. The policy addresses the issue of rural schools and it was rural-proofed before publication in 2009. The viability audit draws on the relevant indicators set out in the Sustainable Schools Policy and applies these to all primary and post-primary schools, with the main focus being on enrolments, quality of education and financial stability.

Since commissioning the viability audit I have not had any formal discussions with my colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development as the views of her Department are encompassed in the Sustainable Schools Policy and will therefore be reflected in the audit.

Transfer 2011 Application Forms

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education how many of the application forms for Transfer 2011 received by his Department and the Education and Library Boards were completed in Irish.

(AQW 4073/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The admissions procedures for transfer from primary to post-primary education are administered by the Education and Library Boards, therefore, no transfer forms are received by the Department of Education. The Education and Library Boards have advised that 21,035 transfer forms were received for Transfer 2011, 20 of which were completed in Irish.

Transfer 2011 Application Forms

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education how many application forms, in total, for Transfer 2011 were received by his Department and the Education and Library Boards.

(AQW 4074/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The admissions procedures for transfer from primary to post-primary education are administered by the Education and Library Boards, therefore, no transfer forms are received by the Department of Education. The Education and Library Boards have advised that 21,035 transfer forms were received for Transfer 2011, 20 of which were completed in Irish.

Cost of Transporting Pupils Between Schools

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of transporting pupils between schools in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) mode of transport; and (ii) areas of partnership.

(AQW 4097/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not hold the information requested.

The current Entitlement Framework (EF) support funding is allocated to schools on the presumption that there may be additional costs associated with planning and delivering an expanded curricular offer through collaboration. The EF support funding formula includes an urban/rural weighting in recognition of the fact that rural schools are more likely to incur greater transport costs than urban schools.

I have made it clear that while schools will of course be able to continue to collaborate with one another, collaboration is not an end in itself. Schools should be planning on the basis that pupils, particularly between the ages of 14-16, should be able to access most of their curriculum within their own school, thus avoiding unnecessary and disruptive travel.

Entitlement Framework

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Education to detail the rationale used to set the minimum number of courses at 24 for Key Stage 4 and 27 at post-16 in the Entitlement Framework.

(AQW 4099/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The policy of the Entitlement Framework originated from the Costello report on future post-primary arrangements in Northern Ireland which found inconsistency in the number of Key stage 4 and Post-16 courses available to pupils depending on the size, type and location of school attended. The Report recommended that Key Stage 4 pupils should have access to a menu of courses with a minimum of 24 courses of which at least one-third must be general and at least one-third applied. The range of options available to all post-16 pupils should be greater than those at Key Stage 4 (ie) a minimum of 27 courses of which at least one-third must be general and at least one-third must be applied. The numbers remain important as a measure of what constitutes a broad and balanced curricular offer. They are an indicator, but only that and represent a challenging target for schools to provide the benefits of the Entitlement Framework for all pupils.

Teachers on Medical Suspension

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Education (i) how many teachers were placed on medical suspension in each of the last three years, broken down by Education and Library Board area; and (ii) of these, how many (a) returned to their post; (b) were redeployed; (c) retired on an incapacity pension; and (d) were dismissed.

(AQW 4105/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department does not hold this information and therefore contacted the five Education and Library Boards and CCMS to provide the information which is detailed in the table below. A breakdown by board area is not appropriate due to the small numbers involved and the sensitive nature of the data.

All Board Areas	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Teachers on medical suspension	16	18	20
Returned to post	13	14	13
Redeployed	0	0	0
Retired on Incapacity Pension	1	2	1
Dismissed	0	0	0

All Board Areas	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
Total	30	34	34

New Builds for Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education whether he will consider all options to increase the number of new builds for schools, including public private partnerships.

(AQW 4164/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Proposals for new capital builds will in the main be determined by the outcome of the work on strategic area planning that I have commissioned with the Education and Library Boards, working in close conjunction with CCMS and other school sectors. Moving forward, school building projects will be considered in the context of the wider area.

Costs of new school builds will be managed within the existing Budget 2010 capital budget allocations with further bids for capital made as funding requirements are confirmed.

Options for the financing of capital builds is considered as part of the Business Case process, including conventional and private finance, in line with NIGEAE guidance to ensure best value for money.

School Buildings

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Education how many school buildings are owned by a third party; and of these, how many are currently vacant.

(AQW 4179/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: At present there are approximately 626 schools in third party ownership that receive funding from the Department. When a school owned by a third party is closed, the Department is not necessarily made aware of the subsequent use of the vacated buildings. For example, they may be used by the local community or demolished for reasons of health and safety (providing no listed building grading is applicable).

Over the last 5 years, the following schools in third party ownership have closed or been subject to an amalgamation with one or more other schools:

School	Date of Closure	ELB area	Type	Management
Gaelscoil an Damba, Belfast	31/08/08	BELB	Primary	Irish Medium
St Gabriels College, Belfast	31/08/08	BELB	Secondary	Maintained
Bloomfield Collegiate School Prep Dept, Belfast	31/08/11	BELB	Preparatory	Voluntary
St Joseph's High School, Plumbridge	31/08/07	WELB	Secondary	Maintained
St Columba's PS, Curley, Dromore	31/08/09	WELB	Primary	Maintained
St Patrick's PS Garvallah, Seskinore	31/08/09	WELB	Primary	Maintained
St Patrick's PS, Creggan	31/08/10	WELB	Primary	Maintained
St Mary's PS, Aghadowey	31/08/06	NEELB	Primary	Maintained
Braid PS, Broughshane	31/08/11	NEELB	Primary	Maintained

School	Date of Closure	ELB area	Type	Management
Lourdes PS, Whitehead	31/08/11	NEELB	Primary	Maintained
St Mary's PS, Ballygowan	31/08/07	SEELB	Primary	Maintained
Guinness Primary School, Ballynahinch	31/08/08	SEELB	Primary	Maintained
St Colman's PS, Moira	31/03/09	SEELB	Primary	Maintained
Connor House Prep Dept, Bangor Grammar School	31/08/11	SEELB	Preparatory	Voluntary
All Saints PS, Ballela, Banbridge	31/08/06	SELB	Primary	Maintained
Armagh Integrated College	31/08/09	SELB	Secondary	GMI
St Colmcille's PS, Armagh	31/08/09	SELB	Primary	Maintained
St John's PS, Glenn, Newry	31/08/10	SELB	Primary	Maintained
St John the Baptist Girls PS and St John the Baptist Boys PS amalgamated and re-opened as St John the Baptist PS on both of the former school sites.	28/02/11	BELB	Primary	Maintained
St Malachy's HS, Antrim & St Olcan's HS, Randalstown amalgamated and reopened as St Benedict's College on the St Olcan's site.	31/08/06	NEELB	Secondary	Maintained
St Louis PS, St Joseph's PS, St Mary's PS & All Saints PS, Ballymena amalgamated and reopened as St Brigid's PS & St Colmcille's PS on the St Louis's and All Saints PS sites.	31/08/07	NEELB	Primary	Maintained
St Joseph's PS & St Patrick's PS, Ahoghill amalgamated and reopened as St Paul's PS on the St Joseph's site.	01/04/08	NEELB	Primary	Maintained
St MacNissi's College St Comgall's HS & St Aloysius HS amalgamated and reopened as St Killians College on the St MacNissi's site.	29/03/10	NEELB	Secondary	Maintained

School Closures Following Amalgamation (Cont)	Date of Closure	ELB area	Type	Management
St Patrick's Boys PS & Convent of Mercy PS, D'patrick amalgamated and reopened as Our Lady and St Patrick's PS on the Convent of Mercy site.	31/08/11	SEELB	Primary	Maintained
Convent of Mercy PS & St Mary's Boys PS amalgamated and reopened as St Bronagh's PS on the Convent of Mercy PS site.	31/08/06	SELB	Primary	Maintained
St James' PS, Tandragee & St Joseph's PS, Pontzpass amalgamated and reopened as St Joseph's and St James' PS on St Joseph's PS, site.	31/08/07	SELB	Primary	Maintained

In-Year Budgetary Position

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to outline his Department's in-year budgetary position.

(AQW 4219/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Budget 2011-15 outcome for education has produced major challenges and it is clear that difficult choices will have to be made. For 2011/12 the Department's Savings Delivery Plan details that it must make savings of £101m to balance its resource budget. I have already made clear that I will do all that I can to bear down on unnecessary bureaucracy and administration and to protect frontline services. However, the scale of these savings has meant that the Aggregated Schools Budget will be impacted. The ELBs and other arms length bodies have significant savings requirements to achieve and the Department continues to carefully monitor their delivery. I am expecting Funding Authorities to, in turn, monitor schools budgets closely. In October Monitoring the Department received valuable resources to address the considerable maintenance backlog across the schools estate. In terms of capital we are once again working within a much smaller allocation, within which we are tackling a backlog of work and prioritising minor works. I expect full spend on both resource and capital by the year end.

Suspended Teachers

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of teachers currently suspended from (a) primary schools; and (b) post-primary schools; and (ii) the total cost of the teachers' salaries.

(AQW 4220/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: At 8 November 2011, there are 9 teachers currently suspended in primary and post primary schools. A breakdown into sectors is not appropriate due to the small numbers involved and the sensitive nature of the data. The total cost of the teachers' salaries to 31 October 2011 is £406,190.38 gross.

Land on which the Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College is Situated

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education whether the South Eastern Education and Library Board owns the land on which the Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College is situated.

(AQW 4230/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The South Eastern Education and Library Board own the land on which Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College is situated. The new school was procured by way of a Public Private Partnership.

For the duration of the PPP contract, use of the site is subject to the Project Agreement made between the SEELB and Bangor & Nendrum School Services Limited.

P1 Pupils: Free School Meals

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Education how many pupils in P1 are entitled to free school meals. (AQW 4272/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There were 5,418 (24.0%) year 1 pupils in primary schools entitled to free school meals at the time of the 2010/11 school census. Figures for 2011/12 are currently being collected from schools and provisional figures should be available in December 2011.

St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge

Mr S Anderson asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 3726/11-15, for each of the last five years, to detail (i) the total level of funding allocated to St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge; (ii) the level and percentage of the funding which was not spent; and (iii) the level of underspend which was accumulated as moderate savings.

(AQW 4295/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The total funding allocation (and expenditure) to St Mary's Primary School, Banbridge (DE Reference 503-6043) and the underspend (and overspend) amount and percentage at year-end, for each of the last five years, are shown below.

Year	Delegated Resources £	Non-Delegated Resources £	Total Resources £	Surplus/Deficit of Delegated Resources carryover at year-end £	Surplus/Deficit at year-end as a percentage of available delegated resources
2006/07	1,041,395	336,320	1,377,715	53,345	5.12%
2007/08	1,053,451	387,591	1,441,042	38,993	3.70%
2008/09	1,063,169	446,021	1,509,190	26,087	2.45%
2009/10	1,065,942	498,872	1,564,814	-9,374	-0.88%
2010/11	1,078,326	502,951	1,581,277	-35,799	-3.32%

The Department's definition of an acceptable level of school budget surplus is that it must not exceed 5% or £75,000, whichever is the lesser, of the school's delegated budget. It is also acceptable to carry forward a surplus in excess of this, if it is being accumulated for specific approved purposes, and these are detailed in the three-year plan which a school agrees with its Education and Library Board.

A school may also carry-forward a deficit (overspend), as is the case in the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years, where permission has been given by the appropriate Education and Library Board. Any overspend will be subject to an upper limit of 5% or £75,000, whichever is the lesser, of a school budget share

Schools Estate

Mr McNarry asked Minister of Education to detail (i) the total value of the Schools Estate in the (a) integrated; and (b) Irish-Medium sector; and (ii) the value of each school property (a) in use; and (b) not in use.

(AQW 4375/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I would refer you to my response to AQW 2901/11-15 where I stated that it was not possible (within the timeframe or within reasonable cost) to secure the information requested for the Grant Maintained Integrated and Irish Medium sectors as it would have to be sourced from individual schools.

Information has already been provided with regard to valuation of the individual Controlled Integrated schools in my response to AQW 3963/11-15.

The next formal valuation of the education estate is scheduled for 2012/13.

Department for Employment and Learning

External Teaching Bodies

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what external teaching bodies receive funding from his Department.

(AQW 3972/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): In addition to the Department providing funding to the local universities, university colleges and colleges of further education, 14 of the contracts for the delivery of the Training for Success and Apprenticeships NI training programmes are with organisations in the voluntary and community sector.

My Department's Steps to Work programme is delivered by 9 Lead Contractors across ten Contract Management Areas throughout Northern Ireland. Three of the Lead Contractors (covering four contract areas) are from the voluntary and community sector, and all nine have extensive subcontracting arrangements with organisations within the voluntary and community sector.

The NI European Social Fund Programme 2007-2009 funds 81 projects throughout Northern Ireland under Priority 1, mainly from the community and voluntary sector.

St Mary's University College's Board of Governors

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people sit on St Mary's University College's Board of Governors; and how many of these are members of the clergy.

(AQW 4236/11-15)

Dr Farry: Eighteen members sit on the Board of Governors of St Mary's University College. Three of these are members of the clergy.

Applications for the Step Ahead Programme

Mr McCartney asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in light of the error by the North West Regional College on applications for the Step Ahead programme, whether he will now accept applications from voluntary groups in the Derry area which have been refused funding on the basis of this error, given that these groups submitted their applications within the timeframe and with all the completed documentation.

(AQW 4549/11-15)

Dr Farry: It is regrettable that it has been necessary to introduce a pause on recruitment to the Step Ahead strand of the Steps to Work (StW) programme due to budgetary pressures on my Department.

Applications for Step Ahead vacancies closed on Friday 21 October. However, due to a combination of an administrative error and IT problems, the vacancies referred to by the Member were not registered by North West Regional College before the closing date.

As the Department must be even-handed and consistent in its application of the closing date across all of our Lead Contractors, I cannot agree to accept any late applications.

Should additional resources become available later this year, I would intend to restart recruitment to Step Ahead, though this may be on a more selective and targeted basis.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Investment and Jobs Created in Each Council Area

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the level of investment by her Department in each council area; and (ii) the number of jobs created in each council area, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 3933/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): Table 1 below shows the (i) the level of investment, or assistance offered, by Invest NI and (ii) the number of jobs expected to be created, which are described as 'Jobs Promoted', by Invest NI clients that had an offer of assistance approved between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2011, broken down by District Council area and financial year. This represents the total amount of assistance that investors have been offered and the number of jobs that they plan to create over the lifetime of assisted projects.

The assistance offered has been further broken down to show the amount that relates to employment-related projects and business development projects. Business development offers include activities such as R&D, training and trade development, and although not directly related to job creation, will underpin business competitiveness leading eventually to growth and employment opportunities.

However, it should be noted that Government grant support is offered at the start of a project based on a company commitment to create jobs. Based on these financial commitments, the company will then contract with Invest NI to create an agreed quantity of jobs, which will be delivered over an agreed period of time and some may stretch for as long as five years. If the company cannot fully deliver their commitments then all the assistance offered may not be paid.

It should also be noted that Invest NI does not allocate budgets by geographic areas such as District Councils. The geographic location of projects is determined by those businesses which bring forward projects suitable for Invest NI assistance and are based on their specific requirements.

TABLE 1: INVEST NI ASSISTANCE OFFERED AND JOBS PROMOTED IN EACH DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA (1ST APRIL 2006 TO 31ST MARCH 2011)

District Council Area	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11						
	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Business Development Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Business Development Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Business Development Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs				
Antrim	0.26	39	0.33	0.63	63	2.21	2.43	167	3.79	1.61	109	1.46	5.87	656	4.98
Ards	0.99	60	0.36	0.08	11	0.38	0.38	65	0.61	2.08	123	0.57	0.25	22	0.36
Armagh	3.11	402	0.83	0.58	84	0.57	0.67	80	1.08	0.63	74	1.00	0.17	40	0.81
Ballymena	2.38	232	1.03	3.04	56	0.40	1.03	151	0.84	1.97	33	3.62	5.40	50	0.52
Ballymoney	0.05	10	0.34	0.13	5	0.29	0.08	24	0.10	0.15	9	0.36	0.12	43	0.07
Banbridge	0.08	21	0.25	0.23	19	0.47	0.07	7	0.55	0.33	31	0.57	0.09	12	0.28
Belfast	19.49	1,723	16.37	17.08	931	19.20	27.70	1,547	25.37	24.02	1,370	34.53	17.77	1,624	27.26
Carrickfergus	0.07	23	0.07	0.06	13	0.11	0.14	22	0.19	0.30	29	0.47	3.90	203	0.20
Castlereagh	0.17	28	0.24	1.60	103	1.56	1.08	99	1.01	1.23	71	4.25	0.41	78	0.33
Coleraine	0.29	35	0.34	2.96	380	1.36	0.59	42	0.80	0.47	46	1.42	0.26	31	0.95
Cookstown	0.60	143	0.60	0.90	130	1.46	0.83	102	1.49	5.04	100	1.47	0.44	65	1.05
Craigavon	1.26	132	3.72	1.05	94	2.24	13.39	269	1.69	12.66	705	6.00	1.17	116	4.93

District Council Area	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11						
	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Business Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Business Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Business Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs				
Derry	6.93	875	1.55	10.20	994	1.60	1.97	217	1.86	15.09	287	3.22	1.70	370	0.94
Down	0.19	39	0.12	0.28	64	0.55	0.32	73	0.22	0.49	56	0.66	0.24	59	0.33
Dungannon	1.03	233	1.45	6.57	213	2.03	2.28	245	3.73	1.51	148	4.70	1.08	164	1.83
Fermanagh	5.32	538	0.54	1.77	191	0.92	2.08	189	0.92	1.17	60	0.88	0.33	64	0.62
Larne	0.29	23	0.25	1.67	263	1.83	3.82	18	0.83	0.09	12	1.55	0.10	19	0.13
Limavady	0.14	21	0.89	0.09	9	0.35	0.08	16	0.83	0.16	5	10.19	0.19	27	0.08
Lisburn	1.51	202	2.60	1.12	130	2.45	1.05	114	2.27	2.54	196	7.06	3.90	267	1.38
Magherafelt	0.35	78	0.53	1.62	114	0.74	1.50	217	0.89	1.15	70	1.91	0.71	82	0.97
Moyle	0.12	27	0.02	0.28	37	0.04	0.51	16	0.06	0.03	8	0.04	0.11	14	0.01
Newry & Mourne	0.38	89	0.45	5.24	377	1.00	13.82	1,409	2.80	3.46	156	3.86	5.90	637	0.58
Newtownabbey	1.51	2	9.02	0.18	13	2.12	0.40	42	2.36	2.16	122	5.14	0.23	36	1.29
North Down	1.06	252	0.27	0.41	59	1.37	0.78	91	1.19	0.99	171	1.71	0.26	22	0.22
Omagh	0.27	43	0.40	1.38	134	1.17	0.80	36	0.80	0.59	35	0.88	0.30	61	0.31

District Council Area	2006-07			2007-08			2008-09			2009-10			2010-11								
	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Total Assistance (£m)	Job-Related Total Assistance (£m)	New Jobs	Total Assistance (£m)						
Strabane	0.53	73	0.40			0.32			0.32	35	0.32			0.67	71	1.28			0.09	9	0.13
Not Yet Located														0.24	20	0.03			6.27	545	0.00
Total	48.40	5,343	45.50	59.50	4,552	51.45	78.11	5,293	62.66	4,113	80.85	98.82	57.26	5,312	50.55						

NOTES:

- 1 An additional £13.26m of assistance was offered to trade development projects between 2006-07 and 2008-09, for which this level of detail is not available.
 - 2 Invest NI revises performance data on a regular basis to ensure that it reflects implemented projects; therefore, the data above may differ to previously published information.
- In addition, Invest NI supported over 8,500 new locally-owned jobs indirectly through its Enterprise Development Programme (EDP) – formerly the Start A Business Programme. Between 2006-07 and 2008-09 almost £2.9m was offered to participants on this scheme; however, in 2009-10 the programme was amended to offer only advice and guidance and no monetary support. Table 2 shows the breakdown of these jobs by financial year and District Council Area.

TABLE 2: INVEST NI ESTIMATED NUMBER OF JOBS SUPPORTED THROUGH THE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (EDP) 2006-07 TO 2010-11 BY DCA

District Council Area	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Total
Antrim	49	41	28	26	44	187
Ards	62	55	43	23	58	242
Armagh	60	61	44	50	62	278
Ballymena	49	63	36	23	37	207
Ballymoney	46	42	28	16	26	157
Banbridge	60	61	39	33	50	243
Belfast	190	235	187	196	293	1,100
Carrickfergus	29	22	21	17	18	107
Castlereagh	56	61	54	42	61	275
Coleraine	63	76	57	51	75	321
Cookstown	57	63	44	49	72	285
Craigavon	57	70	71	49	74	320
Derry	136	169	100	76	89	570
Down	75	92	55	62	67	350
Dungannon	74	79	69	79	106	408
Fermanagh	132	147	94	69	80	522
Larne	53	56	32	31	36	208
Limavady	47	69	40	34	59	249
Lisburn	87	90	63	72	101	414
Magherafelt	63	78	42	50	71	304
Moyle	31	45	19	14	19	127
Newry & Mourne	91	125	69	61	100	446
Newtownabbey	59	59	47	51	82	298
North Down	60	52	42	32	66	253
Omagh	74	93	75	63	89	393
Strabane	47	55	34	49	45	231
Unknown	0	0	0	3	7	10
Total	1,806	2,058	1,431	1,321	1,888	8,504

NOTE: Invest NI revises performance data on a regular basis to ensure that it reflects implemented projects; therefore, the data above may differ to previously published information.

Job Creation Targets in each Council Area

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the targets set by her Department for job creation in each council area in each of the last five years; and how her Department has performed against these targets.

(AQW 3934/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI does not set targets based on geographic areas, such as District Council or Parliamentary Constituency areas.

I would refer the member to my answer to his previous question, AQW 3933 11-15, for details of how many jobs were promoted by Invest NI in each District Council Area over the last five years.

Licences for Gas Exploration

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many licences for gas exploration using the fracking method have been sought in each of the last three years.

(AQW 3987/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I refer the member to the answer to AQW 2533/11-15.

Storing Natural Gas in the Salt Caverns Under Larne Lough

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what progress has been made by Northern Ireland Energy Holdings and Portland Gas in storing natural gas in the salt caverns under Larne Lough.

(AQW 3994/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The gas storage project in question is being developed by Islandmagee Storage Ltd, a joint venture between InfraStrata plc (formerly Portland Gas) and Mutual Energy (formerly Northern Ireland Energy Holdings).

This project will require a number of licences and consents from several Departments and agencies. In July 2007, Islandmagee Storage was granted an exploration consent from The Crown Estate to evaluate the suitability of salt strata below Larne Lough to create caverns to store natural gas.

On 4th March 2011, the company was awarded a Petroleum Licence by my Department. The licence, initially for a five-year period, is for exploring the petroleum resources of the Larne – Lough Neagh sedimentary basins.

I understand that DOE Planning Service is currently considering a planning application in respect of the project.

Tourist Board's Masterclass on Sponsorship

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why representatives of the Irish Football Association and Ulster Rugby are listed to speak at the Tourist Board's Masterclass on Sponsorship and representatives of the Gaelic Athletic Association are not.

(AQW 4010/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) employs a third party to source speakers and partners for events based on a brief provided. The brief for the Masterclass on Sponsorship outlined the need to identify strong commercial sponsorship partnerships, speakers who have delivered successful high profile corporate pitches and those who have successfully managed corporate relationships when the pitch is won.

On this occasion there was a long list of potential speakers to approach for this event. The event brief was very specific in its aims and objectives, to ensure speaker examples were provided which demonstrated the closest fit.

A large number of different companies who demonstrated best practice examples of sponsorship relationships or who were involved in “pitching” processes were approached. Some speakers were unavailable which automatically eliminated their businesses while others on the target list, after closer inspection or after verbal discussions with them, were eliminated as not fulfilling the brief.

We would be interested to learn of the GAA's experience relevant to the brief above, so that they may be considered for future events.

Tourist Board's Masterclass on Sponsorship

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether representatives of the Gaelic Athletic Association were invited to speak at the Tourist Board's Masterclass on Sponsorship; and if not, why not.

(AQW 4011/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) employs a third party to source speakers and partners for events based on a brief provided. The brief for the Masterclass on Sponsorship outlined the need to identify strong commercial sponsorship partnerships, speakers who have delivered successful high profile corporate pitches and those who have successfully managed corporate relationships when the pitch is won.

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A large number of different companies who demonstrated best practice examples of sponsorship relationships or who were involved in “pitching” processes were approached. Some speakers were unavailable which automatically eliminated their businesses while others on the target list, after closer inspection or after verbal discussions with them, were eliminated as not fulfilling the brief.

We would be interested to learn of the GAA's experience relevant to the brief above, so that they may be considered for future events.

Gaelic Athletic Association

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she will take to ensure that the Gaelic Athletic Association is not treated less equally than other sporting organisations by the Tourist Board.

(AQW 4012/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Engagement is dictated by market demand, tourism priorities and the desire of the sporting organisation to get involved in tourism.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's (NITB) Corporate Plan, 2008-2011 prioritised the development and promotion of participation sports golf, walking, adventure sports, cycling and canoeing. These were identified through market research and feedback from our visitors. The focus is on participation sports not spectator sports therefore there has been no regular engagement with any of the main sporting bodies.

Recently the GAA has expressed interest in tourism and as a result has agreed to support the tourist board by hosting tourism trade, press at matches and events.

To date there has been no such engagement with the IFA or Ulster Rugby Union, however the tourist board welcomes engagement from all sporting organisations, to create symbiotic relationships that will encourage spectators to increase their stay and spend.

Tourist Board

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many times the Tourist Board has held meetings with (i) the Gaelic Athletic Association; (ii) the Irish Football Association; and (iii) Ulster Rugby in each of the last five years.

(AQW 4013/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information requested for the period 1 January 2006 – 31 December 2009 is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB).

The following information however is readily available:

- i) NITB attended meetings with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) on 8 March 2011 and 22 July 2011.
- ii) NITB attended meetings with the Irish Football Association (IFA) on 12 April 2010 and 18 November 2010.
- iii) NITB has not held meetings with the Irish Rugby Football Union since 1 January 2010.

Tourist Board

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what engagement the Tourist Board has had with (i) the Gaelic Athletic Association; (ii) the Irish Football Association; and (iii) Ulster Rugby regarding the marketing of their organisations over the last five years.

(AQW 4014/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board is responsible for the development, promotion and marketing of Northern Ireland as a tourist destination. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board does not market sporting bodies or organisations such as the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA); Irish Football Association (IFA) or the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU).

Therefore there has been no regular engagement with the GAA; IFA or IRFU regarding the marketing of their organisations over the last five years.

Tackling Fuel Poverty During the Transition to a Low-Carbon Economy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the report 'Tackling fuel poverty during the transition to a low-carbon economy' and the recommendations within the report.

(AQW 4020/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I understand the report was produced in response to concerns over whether a low carbon society can co-exist with a socially just approach that protects low-income consumers from higher energy bills. Against the current likelihood of ongoing rising energy prices, the report calls for an intensified focus on the two other primary drivers of fuel poverty, namely lower incomes and energy efficiency of homes, both of which are outside my area of responsibility.

However, as the report was only published at the end of October, I have not, as yet, had an opportunity to consider its full content and findings.

Go for It Programme

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in light of the current legal challenge by Enterprise NI against InvestNI's tendering process for the Go For It programme, and the interim service put in place by InvestNI, to detail, for the Derry City Council area for the month of October 2011, excluding referrals from the Local Enterprise Agency, (i) the number of enquiries received about starting a business; (ii) the number of business plans completed; (iii) the number of start-ups

from Neighbourhood Renewal Areas; and (iv) the number of start-ups by people not in education, employment or training.

(AQW 4044/11-15)

Mrs Foster: During October 2011, Invest NI Regional Offices dealt with over 400 new enquiries from individuals wishing to establish their own business. The North West Regional Office received over 70 new enquiries in October 2011, 20 of which related to Derry City Council Area. The North West Regional Office is awaiting postcode verification for 22 of its enquiries and it is likely that a number of these also relate to Derry City Council Area.

3 Business Plans were completed by individuals from Derry City Council Area during October, all of which related to individuals from Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, and none from individuals not in education, employment or training.

Broadband UK

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the meetings she or her officials had with Broadband UK prior to the recent funding award of £4.4 million from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

(AQW 4094/11-15)

Mrs Foster: During the period between submitting a bid for Broadband UK funding (13 April 2011) and the announcement of the Northern Ireland allocation (15 August 2011), my officials have held meetings with Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Broadband UK (BDUK) officials on at least six occasions. On each occasion the meetings took place via teleconferencing facilities. In addition, on 26 May 2011, DETI officials hosted a visit by the BDUK Chief Executive, Mr Rob Sullivan, during which he was fully briefed on the status of the Northern Ireland telecommunications infrastructure and urged to ensure that the Northern Ireland bid for support was given full and proper consideration.

In further support of these efforts, I also wrote on two occasions to Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport and Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries (16 June and 22 July) and on one occasion to Owen Patterson, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (16 June) to elicit their support in ensuring that Northern Ireland was not disadvantaged by adopting early-mover status in terms of next generation broadband roll-out and that we received a significant allocation under the BDUK initiative. Furthermore, I spoke personally to Ed Vaizey on 20 July to reinforce the Northern Ireland case.

As I have stated in previous responses to assembly questions, the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport has advised that he is considering allocating further funding to Northern Ireland in support of a pilot project to explore ways of taking superfast broadband to all homes and businesses. My officials are continuing to engage with their counterparts in DCMS on this issue. It is also my intention to ensure that this and the £4.4m allocation announced in August remain high on the Whitehall agenda through my quarterly meetings with Hugo Swire, Minister of State for Northern Ireland, the first of which is due to take place towards the end of November.

Former Army Barracks at Ballykelly

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail her involvement in compiling and putting into action a strategy and masterplan for the future development of the former army barracks at Ballykelly, which was recently acquired by the Office of the First and deputy First Minister.

(AQW 4098/11-15)

Mrs Foster: To date I have had no involvement in the compilation or implementation of any masterplan for the redevelopment of the Ballykelly site.

Growth in the Gas Industry

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action her Department is taking to promote growth in the gas industry.

(AQW 4113/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Natural gas is the least polluting fossil fuel and is now available to some 150,000 energy consumers in Northern Ireland, mostly in the Greater Belfast area.

You will be aware that my Department has recently consulted on extension of the natural gas network. Any extension of the gas network, e.g. to towns in the west of Northern Ireland and in East Down, would support the development of a more secure, sustainable and diverse heat market which would provide greater energy choice for consumers and businesses.

Over the coming months my Department will be engaging further with the Utility Regulator and the natural gas industry in relation to how the gas network extension may be progressed. I am also keen to explore how gas infrastructure can also be utilised for bio-gas.

Report by the Committee for Climate Change 'The Appropriateness of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act'

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of recent report by the Committee for Climate Change 'The Appropriateness of a Northern Ireland Climate Change Act' which recommends that efforts to cut emissions and reduce fuel poverty should be focused on switching from fossil fuels to renewable heating.

(AQW 4115/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Strategic Energy Framework 2010 already commits Northern Ireland to switching from its reliance on imported fossil fuels to a more sustainable energy future and includes challenging targets aimed at achieving 40% of our electricity consumption from renewable sources and 10% renewable heat, both by 2020.

Furthermore, the Framework seeks, where economically feasible, to encourage extension of the natural gas network. Natural gas is the least polluting fossil fuel and, as such, further extension of the network will result in displacement of oil and coal usage and will therefore bring about reductions in CO₂ emissions contributing to Northern Ireland's low carbon energy strategy.

Projections for Unemployment Rates

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her Department's projections for unemployment rates in each of the next five years.

(AQW 4142/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department does not produce projections for unemployment.

Broadband UK Fund

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the allocation of £4.4 million from a total Broadband UK fund of £530 million.

(AQW 4143/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Pursuant to my response to Assembly Question AQW 2206/11-15, I would re-iterate that, with the completion of my Department's Next Generation Broadband Project and the roll-out of BT's own superfast broadband investment programme, by March 2012 approximately 89% of premises in Northern Ireland will be connected to a fibred access point. This leaves around 11% of premises, which will tend to be located in the most expensive to reach areas, to which it will be necessary to find alternative means of deploying broadband services with speeds that are in line with the commitments of the UK Broadband Strategy.

In August, when the announcement of funding from BDUK was made, I issued a press statement in which I registered my disappointment that Northern Ireland had been allocated only £4.4m, which is considerably less than the £10m bid that we submitted. At the same time, I wrote to the Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, to voice my concern. In his response, I was advised that Northern Ireland could potentially benefit from additional funding to be used in support of a pilot project exploring other ways of taking superfast broadband to all homes and businesses. My officials are continuing to engage with their counterparts in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and officials within BDUK on this issue.

Mobile Phone Coverage and Broadband Provision

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the representations she has made to the British Government regarding the current gaps in mobile phone coverage and broadband provision.

(AQW 4145/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There are no gaps in broadband provision in Northern Ireland.

The continuing importance of mobile communication services has again been recognised by my Department, with mobile coverage one of the key themes in our recently closed consultation on telecoms investment priorities for period 2011-2015.

In the last 12 months I have made a number of representations to Ministers in the UK Government regarding telecommunications issues in Northern Ireland, including that of poor mobile coverage.

This includes the provision of briefing to Hugo Swire, Minister of State for Northern Ireland whose appointment to the Whitehall Ministerial Group on Broadband I endorsed in September 2010 to represent Northern Ireland interests. I have also taken part in meetings with Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries and Owen Patterson, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at which the challenges faced by Northern Ireland consumers in accessing mobiles services, particularly in rural areas, have been highlighted.

Most recently, when pursuing the Northern Ireland allocation under the BDUK initiative, I have also written to Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport, Ed Vaizey and Owen Patterson to secure their support in ensuring that Northern Ireland received a suitable allocation that would allow my Department to take forward initiatives addressing the key themes established under the 2011-2015 Action Plan. This has also been a feature of meetings with the aforementioned Ministers, together with access to funds under the £150m recently announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as being available for improvements to mobile communications coverage across the UK.

Friends of the Earth 'Reckless Gamblers' Report

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 4021/11-15, (i) for her assessment of the comments by the Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research that the 'Reckless Gamblers' report is "essential reading for all policy makers"; (ii) whether she has read this report; and (iii) whether the release of this report warrants an update of the 2010 Strategic Energy Framework.

(AQW 4201/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Several of my Energy Division officials have read the report.

I am confident that the Strategic Energy Framework remains the right framework for Northern Ireland and I have no plans to update the SEF.

InterTradelreland's Report 'Agri-Food: A Study for Cross-Border Cooperation'

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why she has yet to publish InterTradelreland's report 'Agri-Food: A Study for Cross-Border Co-operation'.

(AQW 4237/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I refer the Member to the answer I gave to AQO 681/11-15.

O2 Mobile Phone Coverage in Cloughmills

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what her Department is doing to restore O2 mobile phone coverage in Cloughmills which was reduced as a result of last year's severe winter weather.

(AQW 4239/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The telecoms market is fully privatised and independently regulated by the Office of Communications. It is a matter for the telecoms companies to decide how best to operate and run their networks. DETI has no contracts currently with O2 or any of the mobile phone companies and has no powers to compel or direct them to provide services to any specific locations across Northern Ireland. If consumers are unhappy with the services being provided they should in the first instance take it up with the company. If they continue to remain unhappy they should then seek advice from OFCOM. Ultimately if they are dissatisfied with the service they can opt to switch to another provider with services in the area.

O2 Mobile Phone Coverage in Cloughmills

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of why O2 mobile phone coverage in the Cloughmills area was reduced as a result of last year's severe winter weather; and how O2 has responded to this problem.

(AQW 4240/11-15)

Mrs Foster: As mentioned in reply to AQW 4239/11-15 the telecoms market is fully privatised and independently regulated by the Office of Communications. It is a matter for the telecoms companies to decide how best to operate and run their networks. The companies are not compelled to inform DETI of faults across their networks. To date DETI has not been informed of this specific issue and no assessment has been made.

Energy Regulator

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with the Energy Regulator about the introduction of social tariffs; and whether such initiatives will form part of any strategy for addressing fuel poverty included in the Programme for Government.

(AQW 4271/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I have not had any recent discussions with the Utility Regulator regarding the introduction of social tariffs. As I have stated previously, the introduction of a social tariff would be extremely complex and unlikely to solve the hardships caused by fuel poverty.

InterTradelreland's Report 'Agri-Food: A Study for Cross Border Cooperation'

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment when she will publish InterTradelreland's report 'Agri-Food: A Study for Cross Border Cooperation'.

(AQW 4309/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I refer the Member to the answer I gave to AQO 681/11-15.

Department of the Environment

Endangered Wildlife Species

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has undertaken, or plans to undertake, a study on endangered wildlife species.

(AQW 423/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): The Natural Heritage Directorate of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency has a long record of undertaking and commissioning studies on endangered wildlife species.

Officials can be directly involved in such studies, such as surveys or monitoring for rare species or regular monitoring of protected species. On occasions where specialist evidence or research is required NIEA will commission or procure a specific study. For example, in recent years there have been studies to determine population size of hares; recording projects to establish population distribution of dragonflies, and various surveys of sublittoral marine species.

Currently there is a range of projects ongoing, including a study into the factors contributing to declining populations of nesting seabirds on Rathlin Island.

Future projects are also planned, which include restoration and long term monitoring of Horse mussel (*Modiolus modiolus*) reefs in Strangford Lough; and a study into 'Squirrelpox' virus in Northern Ireland which will help to quantify the risk the invasive grey squirrels pose to the native red squirrel population.

Reports detailing the findings of such studies can be found on the NIEA web pages.

Revenue Generated from Motor Tax

Mr Craig asked the Minister of the Environment how much revenue has been generated from motor tax in each of the last three years.

(AQW 662/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Motor tax collected in each of the last three years is outlined below –

2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
£163m	£164m	£167m

Vehicle Licensing is an excepted matter which is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Transport. It is administered in Northern Ireland by the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) under a formal agreement between DoE and the Department for Transport. Motor Tax in Northern Ireland is collected by DVA on behalf of the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA GB), an executive agency of the Department for Transport.

Herds of Wild Deer

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the areas that have herds of wild deer, including the estimated numbers and the different species.

(AQW 1018/11-15)

Mr Attwood: NIEA commissioned a desk top study in 2002 of all available records of wild deer. The resulting report did not give an overall estimate of the deer population in Northern Ireland but listed specific areas within each county which were attributed population estimates.

The report concluded that there had been an increase in the rate of spread of deer in Northern Ireland over the preceding ten years.

The three resident deer species i.e.Red Deer, Fallow and Sika were recorded in each county in Northern Ireland except Down and Armagh which had no records for Sika.

Muntjac Deer, an introduced species, have recently been reported from several locations in Northern Ireland but are only confirmed present in the ArdsPeninsula area in CountyDown where the species is thought to be present in very low numbers.

Planning Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment (i) how many decisions of the Planning Service have been the subject of judicial review in each of the last five years, broken down by planning office; (ii) of these, how many found in favour of the applicant; and (iii) the total cost to his Department of these judicial reviews.

(AQW 2377/11-15)

Mr Attwood:

(i) how many decisions of the Planning Service have been subject of judicial review in each of the last five years, broken down by planning office;

The table below details the number of judicial reviews on decisions on planning applications held in the last 5 years.

Area Office	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total number of cases
Ballymena	0	0	1	1	0	2
Belfast	0	0	2	1	0	3
Downpatrick	0	1	0	3	1	5
Headquarters	0	0	1	2	1	4
Omagh	1	0	2	3	0	6

(ii) of these, how many found in favour of the applicant

The information in the table below relates to the total number of cases in the table above.

Area Office	Decisions in favour of applicant
Ballymena	1
Belfast	1
Downpatrick	0
Headquarters	0
Omagh	4

(iii) the total cost to the Department of these judicial reviews

The total cost paid by the Department as recorded in the Annual Report and Accounts in relation to these reviews in the last four years is £107,986.20 as of end of March 2011. This includes costs awarded and legal costs.

Illegally Dumped Waste

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the sites which have been identified as containing illegally dumped waste originating in the Republic of Ireland.

(AQW 2492/11-15)

Mr Attwood: NIEA cannot release the locations of the repatriation sites, as legal proceedings are still ongoing in some cases, and there is a need to protect the confidentiality of the landowners etc. They will however publicise the locations of specific sites close to the time when work commences. To date NIEA have repatriated waste from sites at Slattinagh in County Fermanagh, Trillick in County Tyrone and work is nearing completion at a third site in Ballymartin County Down.

Theft of Metals from Buildings

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of the Environment given the increase in the theft of metals from buildings, what plans his Department has to introduce safeguards for legitimate dealers in scrap metal, such as introducing a requirement for people selling scrap metal to produce identification.

(AQW 2540/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The theft of metal is an international problem with unprecedented demand from the Far East pushing up worldwide prices of metals to an all time high. Whilst the big majority of scrap metal dealers are legitimate and law-abiding, there are a few unscrupulous dealers who are facilitating the theft of metals.

In Great Britain, the Home Office has set up a working group tasked with recommending how metal theft can be tackled effectively. The Group is chaired by British Transport Police and comprises representatives from law enforcement, the utilities sector and government departments.

In the first instance, the working group will focus on the prevention of metal theft. However, it is accepted that resolution of the problem may also require amendment of waste management legislation. The option to amend legislation to require the production of photographic identification is one of the proposals under consideration.

I have asked Departmental officials to keep me informed of developments; I can then assess whether existing NI waste management legislation needs to be changed.

Scrap Metal Dealers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment what plans he has to introduce or amend legislation which will make legally binding checks on suppliers and sources mandatory for scrap metal dealers.

(AQW 2604/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The theft of metal is an international problem with unprecedented demand from the Far East pushing up worldwide prices of metals to an all time high. Whilst the big majority of scrap metal dealers are legitimate and law-abiding, there are a few unscrupulous dealers who are facilitating the theft of metals.

In Great Britain, the Home Office has set up a working group tasked with recommending how metal theft can be tackled effectively. The Group is chaired by British Transport Police and comprises representatives from law enforcement, the utilities sector and government departments.

In the first instance, the working group will focus on the prevention of metal theft. However, it is accepted that resolution of the problem may also require amendment of waste management legislation. The option to amend legislation to require the production of photographic identification is one of the proposals under consideration.

I have asked Departmental officials to keep me informed of developments; I can then assess whether existing NI waste management legislation needs to be changed.

Commission Directive 2009/113/EC

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of the Environment how rigorously he plans to implement the Commission Directive 2009/113/EC in relation to driving regulations for people with diabetes.

(AQW 2824/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Commission Directives 2009/112/EC and 2009/113/EC (“the Directives”) - which amend the 2nd and 3rd Directives on Driving Licences respectively - introduce revised minimum medical standards in relation to diabetes mellitus (as well as eyesight and epilepsy) for applicants for driving licences or for the renewal of such licences. The Directives allow Member States to have higher than the minimum EU standard.

NI was included in a UK-wide consultation on changes resulting from the Directives carried out by the Driver and Vehicle Agency in Swansea earlier this year. The consultation covered various options to relax some existing standards based on medical expert opinion that there would be no risk to road safety and to clarify other standards.

Following completion of the consultation process, I have agreed to remove the existing blanket ban in NI on insulin treated diabetics holding taxi driver licences. The necessary amending legislation is currently being drafted and it is expected that it will come into operation in January 2012. Once the new arrangements are in place insulin treated diabetics will be able to be considered for taxi driver licences provided that the standards in the Directives are met.

In addition, it is planned to introduce other changes in relation to diabetes mellitus resulting from the Directives to ensure a consistent implementation approach across the UK. This will involve amending the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1996 to make changes to the circumstances in which diabetes is a prescribed disability and to the prescribed conditions under which a licence can be granted to a diabetic. The amendments will implement the Directives by either providing additional legal certainty in giving legislative effect to standards previously applied by administrative guidance or introducing options to relax existing standards in the 1996 Regulations for Group 2 (buses and lorries) licences.

More specifically, the amending legislation will include setting out the circumstances in which a Group 1 (cars and motorcycles) licence must be refused in the case of diabetes treated with medication other than insulin. The circumstances where a licence may be granted to such persons provided the disability is controlled will continue to be set out in guidance rather than in legislation as this will permit greater flexibility in the duration of licence granted, commensurate with the road safety risk.

In the case of Group 2 licences, the amending legislation will open up the possibility of licences for insulin treated diabetics where the condition is appropriately controlled and provided the standards in the Directives are met.

The Department currently expects the necessary legislation for these other changes in relation to diabetes mellitus to be made in 2012.

European Directive 2009/113/EC

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of the Environment, following the adoption of the European Directive 2009/113/EC, to outline his Department’s plans for implementation and any deviation.

(AQW 2855/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Commission Directives 2009/112/EC and 2009/113/EC (“the Directives”) - which amend the 2nd and 3rd Directives on Driving Licences respectively - introduce revised minimum medical standards in relation to diabetes mellitus, eyesight and epilepsy for applicants for driving licences or for the renewal of such licences. The Directives allow Member States to have higher than the minimum EU standard.

NI was included in a UK-wide consultation on changes resulting from the Directives carried out by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea earlier this year. The consultation covered various

options to relax some existing standards based on medical expert opinion that there would be no risk to road safety and to clarify other standards.

Following completion of the consultation process, I have agreed to remove the existing blanket ban in NI on insulin treated diabetics holding taxi driver licences. The necessary amending legislation is currently being drafted and it is expected that it will come into operation in January 2012. Once the new arrangements are in place, insulin treated diabetics will be able to be considered for taxi driver licences provided that the standards in the Directives are met.

In addition, it is planned to introduce other changes in relation to diabetes mellitus resulting from the Directives to ensure a consistent implementation approach across the UK. This will involve amending the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1996 to make changes to the circumstances in which diabetes is a prescribed disability and to the prescribed conditions under which a licence can be granted to a diabetic. The amendments will implement the Directives by either providing additional legal certainty in giving legislative effect to standards previously applied by administrative guidance or introducing options to relax existing standards in the 1996 Regulations for Group 2 (buses and lorries) licences.

More specifically, the amending legislation will include setting out the circumstances in which a Group 1 (cars and motorcycles) licence must be refused in the case of diabetes treated with medication other than insulin. The circumstances where a licence may be granted to such persons provided the disability is controlled will continue to be set out in guidance rather than in legislation as this will permit greater flexibility in the duration of licence granted, commensurate with the road safety risk.

In the case of Group 2 licences, the amending legislation will open up the possibility of licences for insulin treated diabetics where the condition is appropriately controlled and provided the standards in the Directives are met.

The Department currently expects the necessary legislation for these other changes in relation to diabetes mellitus to be made in 2012.

European Directives are normally transposed uniformly across the UK Member State and it is my intention to do so in this instance by implementing fully the minimum standards of medical fitness for diabetes as specified in the Directives.

In the case of eyesight and epilepsy, it is the intention in Britain to make legislative changes next year. The Department, in considering the way forward in NI in relation to these aspects of the Directives, will continue to liaise closely with colleagues in Britain on developments.

Taxi Enforcement

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what additional measures are being implemented to ensure improved and increased taxi enforcement.

(AQW 2872/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Driver and Vehicle Agency is continuously seeking to improve taxi enforcement on Northern Ireland roads and it uses intelligence led and targeted approach to pursue the habitual and high risk offenders at the roadside.

The Agency has recently increased its taxi enforcement staffing resource to 15 officers which has allowed it to establish a new dedicated taxi enforcement team in Londonderry. This is comprised of five officers (one Team Manager and four temporary Enforcement Officers pending the appointment of four permanent officers).

The Agency also anticipates the introduction of the second phase of the Graduated Fixed Penalty and Deposit Scheme which will enable a more comprehensive range of Fixed Penalty Notices to be issued for taxi related offences.

Introduction of new legislation under the Taxis Act (NI) 2008 is also planned which will change how taxi operator licensing is regulated. It is anticipated that new initiatives such as single tier licensing will change on-street licensing restrictions allowing additional enforcement resources to be redirected towards the investigation of more serious types of illegal activity.

Taxi Ranks

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what action his Department is taking to ensure that there is no queue jumping by taxis at taxi ranks.

(AQW 2886/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Driver and Vehicle Agency has primary responsibility for taxi enforcement however the regulation of taxis at taxi ranks including their orderly queuing is the responsibility of the Department of Regional Development.

Local Councils

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment (i) whether it is possible for local councils to borrow money; (ii) if so, how much each council has borrowed and at what interest rates, in each of the last three years; and (iii) how much debt each council has outstanding.

(AQW 2971/11-15)

Mr Attwood:

- (i) Councils can borrow money from the Consolidated Fund under Section 61 (1) of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.
- (ii) The level of council borrowing is provided in the table below. It has proven difficult to obtain all the interest rates for the considerable number of loans involved. It might be helpful for you to know that interest rates for the loans, which are all arranged through the Department of Finance and Personnel, vary due to a number of factors, including the day of borrowing and the length of the loan. All loans, however, are approved by DFP which has a uniform handling process, and which is recognised as providing loans at lower than commercial rates, thus representing best value. If you are interested in specific loans and rates, I would be happy to provide these.
- (iii) The amount of outstanding debt for each council as of 30 September 2011 is also provided in the table below.

District Council	Amounts borrowed	Amounts Borrowed	Amounts Borrowed	Amounts Borrowed	Total Outstanding
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	@ 30 Sept 2011
Antrim	0.00	750,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,182,480.52
Ards	0.00	0.00	695,886.00	0.00	6,196,248.70
Armagh	5,320,000.00	760,000.00	3,650,000.00	0.00	27,605,116.79
Ballymena	5,345,721.00	2,092,422.00	0.00	0.00	24,436,385.82
Ballymoney	0.00	1,224,793.00	0.00	317,000.00	9,454,076.92
Banbridge	5,012,000.00	1,723,500.00	1,742,700.00	1,601,100.00	20,428,518.04
Belfast	0.00	11,152,000.00	0.00	0.00	25,852,529.89
Carrickfergus	7,031,784.00	1,842,567.00	136,000.00	368,876.00	19,817,045.80
Castlereagh	1,931,411.00	0.00	922,165.75	0.00	18,612,584.59
Coleraine	2,780,500.00	2,340,000.00	0.00	0.00	20,917,451.14
Cookstown	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,487,123.18
Craigavon	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,492,591.21
Derry	4,174,350.00	1,274,400.00	4,088,600.00	0.00	26,149,593.74
Down	0.00	1,410,000.00	3,337,000.00	0.00	16,928,145.10
Dungannon	2,287,864.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,481,440.08

District Council	Amounts borrowed	Amounts Borrowed	Amounts Borrowed	Amounts Borrowed	Total Outstanding
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	@ 30 Sept 2011
Fermanagh	0.00	1,800,000.00	0.00	0.00	3,505,713.14
Larne	2,891,202.00	1,675,148.00	3,539,948.00	1,396,711.50	14,053,955.81
Limavady	1,200,361.00	1,868,000.00	1,200,000.00	0.00	12,395,920.09
Lisburn	0.00	284,054.00	516,465.00	0.00	18,525,881.50
Magherafelt	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Moyle	524,295.00	677,550.00	330,500.00	0.00	8,754,809.44
Newry	2,026,713.00	877,000.00	1,981,000.00	0.00	18,800,273.56
N'abbey	8,650,000.00	10,357,500.00	4,223,144.00	58,500.00	46,043,447.33
North Down	3,644,479.00	1,210,300.00	3,320,095.00	0.00	28,449,132.10
Omagh	453,500.00	2,000,000.00	0.00	0.00	10,213,976.91
Strabane	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,309,732.35
Council Totals	53,274,180.75	45,319,234.00	29,683,503.75	3,742,187.50	401,094,173.75

Local Council Staff

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of staff employed by each local council, broken down by post.

(AQW 2972/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The total number of staff employed by each local council is provided in the tables below. The information has been obtained from individual councils.

Unfortunately, two of the councils, Derry City Council and North Down Borough Council, use the Hodgson pay scale system and thus the information is not readily comparable. Separate tables have been provided.

Council	Chief Exec	CO/DIR	PO 12-13	PO 11	PO 10	PO 9	P08	P07	P06	P05	P04	P03
Antrim	1	2						9		2	6	10
Ards	1	4						3	5	6	4	4
Armagh	1	5			3		1	3	1	6	4	9
Ballymena	1	4					4	6	2	6	6	12
Ballymoney	1	2						1	1	6		
Banbridge	1	4				1		2	1	4	2	5
Belfast	1	17	6	4	11	15	22	43	30	17	161	80
Carrickfergus	1			3					2		3	4
Castlereagh	1	5					1	1	7	2	7	7
Coleraine	1	2	1		2			3	3	1	6	3
Cookstown	1	3	1		1				3	2	5	5
Craigavon	1	5		1				5	1	4	14	5
Derry												

Council	Chief Exec	CO/DIR	PO 12-13	PO 11	PO 10	PO 9	P08	P07	P06	P05	P04	P03
Down	1	5							11	2	8	6
Dungannon	1	2	1	2				4		5	5	3
Fermanagh	1	4						1	1		6	7
Larne	1	2								5	3	2
Limavady	1	2			2				5	2		
Lisburn	1	3				*13				*29		
Magherafelt	1	5							2	2	1	4
Moyle	1	2			1			4		2	1	3
Newry/Mourne	1	5			1		1	2	1	13	2	5
Newtownabbey	1	4					1	1	3	11	3	11
North Down												
Omagh	1	8						3	2	5	10	1
Strabane	1	5							1	1	2	6

Council	P02	P01	S02	S01	Scale 6	Scale 5	Scale 4	Scale 3	Scale 2	Scale 1	Other	Total
Antrim	5	20	6	27	16	20	25	119	59	66	12	405
Ards	16	8	12	29	22	14	45	101	50	75	1	400
Armagh	8	22	27	17	23	15	71	30	51	29		326
Ballymena	11	26	15	12	26	22	32	73	31	27	9	325
Ballymoney	2	8	4	6	8	7	16	48	10	18		138
Banbridge	10	10	15	11	13	16	25	64	40	27		251
Belfast	57	105	68	147	185	177	285	561	433	97		2,522
Carrickfergus	6	11	9	17	6	15	29	60	15	26		207
Castlereagh	10	14	18	22	27	37	31	30	46	235		501
Coleraine	7	25	12	19	14	25	17	71	36	58	13	319
Cookstown	6	11	13	12	21	23	40	48	55	20		269
Craigavon	24	23	13	24	44	27	87	130	132	33	27	600
Derry												565
Down	9	20	12	22	20	27	37	56	86	41	17	380
Dungannon	8	16	9	18	8	14	25	138	65	13	8	345
Fermanagh	4	20	2	14	18	13	50	52	55	50		298

Council	P02	P01	S02	S01	Scale 6	Scale 5	Scale 4	Scale 3	Scale 2	Scale 1	Other	Total
Larne	6	6	5	11	9	10	7	25	10	67	6	175
Limavady	5	9	5	14	10	15	36	32	25	11		174
Lisburn			*83		*34	14	37	16	60	61	161	512
Magherafelt	3	7	1	4	6	10	5	18	8	81	9	167
Moyle	5	6	4	6	3	7	10	4		1		60
Newry/Mourne	9	24	9	51	35	24	83	148	73	7		494
Newtownabbey	6	11	25	27	26	28	24	129	53	52	1	417
North Down												456
Omagh	9	23	13	32	17	35	28	85	89	101		462
Strabane	5	12	4	10	16	23	35	125	32	30		308

*Cannot differentiate further

CO – Chief Officer/Directors

PO – Principal Officer

SO – Senior Officer

Derrycity Council Grade's	NO
Chief Executive	1
Strategic Director	2
Senior Assistant Chief Officer	8
Instructor	1
Assistant Chief Officer	10
Chief Officer	5
Scale Point 38-46	36
Scale Point 29-37	93
Scale Point 22-28	37
Scale Point 14-25	27
Scale Point 14-21	22
Scale Point 4-17	34
Scale Point 8	14
Scale Point 7	19
Scale Point 6	154
Scale Point 5	26
Scale Point 4	63

Derrycity Council Grade's	NO
Other – craft, fitter, mechanic, electrician	13
Total	565

North Down Council Grade's	NO
Chief Executive	1
Chief Officer	2
P012	2
P010	1
P06	2
P05	1
P04	2
P02	1
S02	1
Senior Management	3
Middle Management	11
Junior Management	45
Salary Scale 6	1
Salary Scale 5/6	55
Salary Scale 3/5	45
Salary Scale 1/3	34
SinglePointSCP 16	6
SinglePointSCP 14	1
SinglePointSCP 13	3
SinglePointSCP 9	8
SinglePointSCP 8	40
SinglePointSCP 7	5
SinglePointSCP 6	75
SinglePointSCP 5	54
SinglePointSCP 4	47
Other	10
	456

Planning Applications

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the average length of time taken to process (i) a planning application; and (ii) a streamlined planning application, in each of the last three years, broken down by council area.

(AQW 3010/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The average length of time taken to process (i) a planning application; and (ii) a streamlined planning application, in each of the last three years, broken down by council area is set out in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: AVERAGE LENGTH OF TIME TAKEN TO PROCESS (I) A PLANNING APPLICATION; AND (II) A STREAMLINED PLANNING APPLICATION, IN EACH OF THE LAST THREE YEARS, BROKEN DOWN BY COUNCIL AREA.

Table 1	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11	
	Time to process planning application (days)	Time to process streamlined application (days)	Time to process planning application (days)	Time to process streamlined application (days)	Time to process planning application (days)	Time to process streamlined application (days)
Antrim	68	25	43	25	38	29
Ards	106	31	94	43	92	73
Armagh	91	29	81	46	133	100
Ballymena	85	30	56	32	68	51
Ballymoney	76	29	68	48	84	65
Banbridge	117	30	61	29	82	53
Belfast	85	20	60	27	80	55
Carrickfergus	74	N/A	48	26	47	31
Castlereagh	77	N/A	54	31	90	71
Coleraine	99	24	56	30	61	38
Cookstown	104	23	78	34	74	54
Craigavon	92	25	66	33	79	52
Derry	69	36	65	49	78	57
Down	116	28	94	38	92	70
Dungannon	70	25	53	30	53	42
Fermanagh	85	25	57	28	45	31
Larne	96	N/A	63	27	70	46
Limavady	78	25	60	36	87	56
Lisburn	141	30	98	46	101	71
Magherafelt	125	25	58	32	54	36
Moyle	113	25	102	52	100	66

Table 1	2008/09		2009/10		2010/11	
	Time to process planning application (days)	Time to process streamlined application (days)	Time to process planning application (days)	Time to process streamlined application (days)	Time to process planning application (days)	Time to process streamlined application (days)
Newry And Mourne	124	31	82	44	102	70
Newtownabbey	97	21	77	28	92	70
North Down	109	30	69	39	61	41
Omagh	91	26	83	46	75	50
Strabane	69	29	54	36	59	44

Note: Average is the median

Waste Management Schemes

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the proposed waste management schemes for (i) SWaMP2008; (ii) Arc 21; and (iii) the North West Region Waste Management Group.

(AQW 3117/11-15)

Mr Attwood: All three Waste Management Groups successfully completed external assessments of their projects in the period January to June 2011. Each of them continues to advance the public procurement process in which it invited bidders to apply for the contract to provide the facilities and services required.

While much of the detailed information pertaining to the procurements is subject to restrictions imposed by public procurement law and commercial confidentiality requirements, I can confirm the current position of each procurement to be as follows:

North West Region Waste Management Group closed dialogue on 19 July 2011 and is now evaluating the bidder's final tender. The programme timeline for NWRWMG schedules Contract Award for Jan/Feb 2012, commencement of interim diversion for April 2012, commencement of main construction by May 2012 and Plant Operational by July 2013.

SWaMP2008 expects to close dialogue shortly. Issues currently being addressed include the closure of landfill sites in line with the commissioning and subsequent operation of the Mechanical Biological Treatment facility. Planning and environmental permitting matters are being addressed in tandem with the procurement. Contract award is currently scheduled for February 2012.

Arc21 suspended dialogue with its remaining bidder in March 2011 pending resolution of governance issues around affordability and value for money. Dialogue has now re-commenced and the revised date proposed for contract award is August to November 2012.

I confirm that I have told the three procurement groups that I am being highly vigilant around the affordability and deliverability of the three projects. This is the perspective I will bring to this important issue.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the difference in the number of cases dealt with by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency between January-June 2010 and January - June 2011.

(AQW 3715/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency deals with a wide range of operational matters.

The cases listed below represent the main categories in the Agency's wide ranging operational activities undertaken to protect the environment and safeguard legitimate industry. More detail on the Agency's extensive work is set out in the most recent Annual Report published in July 2011. A copy of which is available at <http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/information/foi/recent-releases/publications-details.htm?docid=8345>

	January – June 2010	January – June 2011
Environmental Crime Unit prosecutions	25	17
Conservation, Design and Protection prosecutions	0	1
Water Management Unit prosecutions	25	15
Industrial Pollution and Radio Chemical Inspectorate prosecutions	2	4
Total prosecutions	54	37
Ministerial cases	439	294
Total Planning consultations	3047	3372
WMU pollution	1225	1118
IPRI pollution	2	6
Total Pollution	1227	1124

Fly-Posting

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the effectiveness of current legislation to deal with the problem of fly-posting.

(AQW 3759/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Currently the Department has power under Article 84 of the Planning (Northern Ireland) Order 1991 to take proceedings against any person displaying an advertisement in contravention of the Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations (NI) 1992 (the 'Advertisement Regulations'). Under Article 84 of the 1991 Order, any person found displaying an advertisement in contravention of the Advertisement Regulations is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine of up to £2500 and, in the case of continuing offences, of up to £250 for each day during which the offence continues.

However, while the Department can take action against the landowner, occupier or person benefiting from the advertisement, it must be in a position to identify the person responsible and have sufficient evidence to prove that they displayed the poster. It is a defence for an alleged offender to prove that the poster was displayed without their knowledge or consent. Also, in many cases the Department only becomes aware that fly-posting has taken place after the event, and it has proved difficult to obtain the required evidence to pursue a prosecution, particularly in tracing the person who posted the advertisement.

Under Article 18 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, district councils have powers to remove or obliterate any placard or poster displayed in contravention of the Advertisement Regulations and, in certain circumstances, to recover the costs they incur in doing so. District councils have, however, encountered practical difficulties with using these powers.

I acknowledge that there are difficulties with the current powers available to tackle the scourge of fly-posting. That is why in taking forward the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland)

2011 (“the 2011 Act”), I believe the Department has responded positively to calls made by district councils to give them a robust set of powers to tackle fly-posting more effectively.

The 2011 Act strengthens the law in relation to fly-posting by:-

- providing councils with the power to issue fixed penalty notices in respect of certain fly-posting offences;
- enabling councils to serve Defacement Removal Notices on statutory undertakers and the other owners of street furniture requiring them to remove fly-posters from their property;
- amending existing powers available to district councils to remove fly-posters to ensure that –
 - the council can act more quickly to remove the fly-poster;
 - the landowner or occupier, who in all likelihood is the victim of the defacement, is not responsible for the cost of removing it and that the cost is borne, where possible, by the person who committed the act of defacement or the person whose goods, trade, business or other concerns are publicised by it; and
 - existing loopholes, which allow the beneficiaries of fly-posting to avoid liability and to continue to benefit from free illegal advertising, are closed;
- amending the defence currently available to the beneficiaries of fly-posting to make it more difficult for them to escape prosecution; and
- providing councils with additional powers to gather information in relation to fly-posting offences.

It is the Department’s intention to introduce the 2011 Act in April 2012 and I trust this will provide councils with a more timely and effective solution to the problem of fly-posting.

Driver and Vehicle Agency Testing Centres

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the ratio of the vehicles which required re-testing at each Driver and Vehicle Agency testing centre between 2005 and 2010.

(AQW 3773/11-15)

Mr Attwood: For the purpose of this response the ratio of vehicles which required retesting is taken to mean the total number of vehicles that undertook a retest as a percentage of the total number of vehicle tests conducted in each of the test centres for the financial years 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08, 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.

The details for the requested period are included in the following table.

Test Centre	% 2005/06	% 2006/07	% 2007/08	% 2008/09	% 2009/10	% 2010/11
Armagh	22.53	22.23	21.56	18.60	17.90	17.18
Ballymena	17.83	18.36	18.23	17.76	17.68	17.78
Belfast	20.81	18.54	18.60	17.29	17.52	18.17
Coleraine	19.01	16.97	16.70	16.40	17.01	17.01
Cookstown	24.25	22.88	21.82	19.05	19.25	19.66
Craigavon	22.06	20.59	20.22	19.03	19.39	18.25
Downpatrick	17.69	17.20	16.08	15.19	15.84	15.69
Enniskillen	18.74	17.87	18.23	17.61	17.78	18.78
Larne	14.66	13.64	13.92	14.88	17.61	15.97
Lisburn	20.81	16.19	15.21	14.86	14.25	14.30

Test Centre	% 2005/06	% 2006/07	% 2007/08	% 2008/09	% 2009/10	% 2010/11
Londonderry	20.79	19.63	19.11	18.72	19.57	19.19
Mallusk	21.65	19.45	19.00	17.40	16.97	17.36
Newry	19.78	16.79	16.18	15.75	16.92	18.26
Newtownards	19.82	19.22	19.88	19.82	18.06	16.90
Omagh	22.63	18.90	19.23	19.38	18.91	19.48
Total	20.31	18.66	18.38	17.57	17.66	17.65

Department of Finance and Personnel

Land and Property Services

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel why Land and Property Services will not release house price sale information, as is done in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 3995/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): In England and Wales house price sale information is released by Land Registry. Land registration legislation in Northern Ireland and supporting processes differ from the rest of the UK. As a result the Land Registry in Northern Ireland does not hold a comprehensive record of all house sales and therefore the information is not available for release in the same manner. However, details of property ownership are available to all as the Register is open to examination by the public.

Land & Property Services (LPS) also receives house price sales information for Northern Ireland from Stamp Duty Land Tax returns supplied by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) under a statutory authority which precludes onward release of that information without HMRC consent. HMRC has recently confirmed that such consent would not be granted under any circumstances.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Kinship Care NI

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he intends to implement any of the recommendations contained within the report by Kinship Care NI 'Moving Forward with Kinship Care in Northern Ireland', which include; (i) the development of a Kinship Care Strategy; (ii) statutory guidance on family and friends care within the Health and Social Care Trusts; (iii) funding to help kinship carers meet the needs of children in their care; and (iv) funding for research into Kinship Care over a three year period to establish a baseline for the positive outcomes of Kinship Care in comparison with other provision.

(AQW 4071/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): Kinship Care in Northern Ireland has only recently submitted its policy document to my Department. My officials are currently considering the document and it will be discussed at a meeting with Kinship Care scheduled for 23 November.

Kinship Care

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children have lived in Kinship Care in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) constituency.

(AQW 4082/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to how many children have lived in Kinship Care or short-term (3 months or less) Kinship Care in each of the last three years. The nearest available figures to those you have requested are detailed below for your information.

The numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by Health and Social Care Trust, are detailed in Table 1. Aggregation of the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, at 31 March 2011, by those living with grandparents, siblings or other Kinship Carers' requires an extensive clerical exercise and could only be provided at disproportionate costs. The figures reported in Table 1 are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 1

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	151	208	206
Northern	N/A	102	166
South Eastern	144	157	165
Southern	109	99	104
Western	63	52	76
Northern Ireland	467	618	717

Source: HSC Board end of year Corporate Parenting Reports.

Data are Not Available for the Northern Trust for 2009.

My Department has recently consulted on Guidance on the Assessment and Support of Kinship Foster Carers', the aims of which are to ensure a regional approach by Trusts to the assessment and support of Kinship Carers' which recognises their unique situation whilst safeguarding the child. For the purposes of the guide 'Kinship Carers' means relatives (as defined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 Article 2.2 refers) and friends who are caring for a child or young person full time. Friends may include other people with a prior connection to the child e.g. someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a child minder, teacher or youth worker although these are not exclusive categories.

Residence Orders and Supervision Orders do not confer 'looked after' status on a child, and so children subject to these Orders could not be in any form of 'looked after' Kinship Care placements.

Table 2 below details the numbers of looked after children subject to Care Orders at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by HSC Trust. These figures are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 2

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	389	390	395
Northern	359	355	372
South Eastern	265	279	281
Southern	257	291	304

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Western	297	294	245
Northern Ireland	1270	1609	1597

Source: HSC Board Delegated Statutory Functions end of year Monitoring Returns.

Care Orders includes Interim and Deemed Care Orders.

Data Western Trust for 2009 sourced from LA1 Children Order Community Return

Kinship Care

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children who have lived in Kinship Care in each of the last three years were subject to (i) Care Orders; (ii) Residence Orders; and (iii) Supervision Orders, broken down by (a) Health and Social Care Trust area; and (b) constituency.

(AQW 4088/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to how many children have lived in Kinship Care or short-term (3 months or less) Kinship Care in each of the last three years. The nearest available figures to those you have requested are detailed below for your information.

The numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by Health and Social Care Trust, are detailed in Table 1. Aggregation of the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, at 31 March 2011, by those living with grandparents, siblings or other Kinship Carers' requires an extensive clerical exercise and could only be provided at disproportionate costs. The figures reported in Table 1 are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 1

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	151	208	206
Northern	N/A	102	166
South Eastern	144	157	165
Southern	109	99	104
Western	63	52	76
Northern Ireland	467	618	717

Source: HSC Board end of year Corporate Parenting Reports.

Data are Not Available for the Northern Trust for 2009.

My Department has recently consulted on Guidance on the Assessment and Support of Kinship Foster Carers', the aims of which are to ensure a regional approach by Trusts to the assessment and support of Kinship Carers' which recognises their unique situation whilst safeguarding the child. For the purposes of the guide 'Kinship Carers' means relatives (as defined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 Article 2.2 refers) and friends who are caring for a child or young person full time. Friends may include other people with a prior connection to the child e.g. someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a child minder, teacher or youth worker although these are not exclusive categories.

Residence Orders and Supervision Orders do not confer 'looked after' status on a child, and so children subject to these Orders could not be in any form of 'looked after' Kinship Care placements.

Table 2 below details the numbers of looked after children subject to Care Orders at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by HSC Trust. These figures are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 2

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	389	390	395
Northern	359	355	372
South Eastern	265	279	281
Southern	257	291	304
Western	297	294	245
Northern Ireland	1270	1609	1597

Source: HSC Board Delegated Statutory Functions end of year Monitoring Returns.

Care Orders includes Interim and Deemed Care Orders.

Data Western Trust for 2009 sourced from LA1 Children Order Community Return

Cost of Providing Services to Children in Care

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the total cost of providing services to children in (i) Residential Care; (ii) Foster Care; and (iii) Kinship Care in each of the last three years, broken down by (a) Health and Social Care Trust area; and (b) constituency.

(AQW 4091/11-15)

Mr Poots: The total costs of providing services to children in (i) Residential Care and (ii) Foster Care, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area, in each of the last three years, are set out in the tables below.

Children's Residential Care Costs	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
HSC Trust	Costs £m	Costs £m	Costs £m
Belfast HSC Trust	5.6	5.4	5.0
Northern HSC Trust	4.1	4.5	4.6
South Eastern HSC Trust	3.7	4.5	3.8
Western HSC Trust	6.0	6.3	6.3
Southern HSC Trust	6.3	5.9	6.1
Total	25.7	26.6	25.8

Foster Care Costs (inc Kinship Costs)	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
HSC Trust	Costs £m	Costs £m	Costs £m
Belfast HSC Trust	7.8	8.1	6.8
Northern HSC Trust	6.7	6.9	6.5
South Eastern HSC Trust	6.0	5.2	4.7

Foster Care Costs (inc Kinship Costs)	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
HSC Trust	Costs £m	Costs £m	Costs £m
Western HSC Trust	4.4	4.4	3.7
Southern HSC Trust	4.6	4.4	4.0
Total	29.5	29.0	25.7

Costs for Kinship Care are included in Foster Care costs, as it is only possible to separately identify these at disproportionate cost. This Department does not track monies by Parliamentary Constituency area and it is not therefore possible to break down costs by constituency.

Kinship Care

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children in each of the last three years have lived in short-term (3 months or less) Kinship Care, broken down by (i) Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) constituency.

(AQW 4092/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to how many children have lived in Kinship Care or short-term (3 months or less) Kinship Care in each of the last three years. The nearest available figures to those you have requested are detailed below for your information.

The numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by Health and Social Care Trust, are detailed in Table 1. Aggregation of the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, at 31 March 2011, by those living with grandparents, siblings or other Kinship Carers' requires an extensive clerical exercise and could only be provided at disproportionate costs. The figures reported in Table 1 are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 1

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Northern Ireland	467	618	717

Source: HSC Board end of year Corporate Parenting Reports.

Data are Not Available for the Northern Trust for 2009.

My Department has recently consulted on Guidance on the Assessment and Support of Kinship Foster Carers', the aims of which are to ensure a regional approach by Trusts to the assessment and support of Kinship Carers' which recognises their unique situation whilst safeguarding the child. For the purposes of the guide 'Kinship Carers' means relatives (as defined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 Article 2.2 refers) and friends who are caring for a child or young person full time. Friends may include other people with a prior connection to the child e.g. someone who knows the child in a more professional capacity such as a child minder, teacher or youth worker although these are not exclusive categories.

Residence Orders and Supervision Orders do not confer 'looked after' status on a child, and so children subject to these Orders could not be in any form of 'looked after' Kinship Care placements.

Table 2 below details the numbers of looked after children subject to Care Orders at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by HSC Trust. These figures are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 2

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	389	390	395
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Northern Ireland	1270	1609	1597

Source: HSC Board Delegated Statutory Functions end of year Monitoring Returns.

Care Orders includes Interim and Deemed Care Orders.

Data Western Trust for 2009 sourced from LA1 Children Order Community Return

2001 Munby Ruling

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) whether the 2001 Munby Ruling is currently being adhered to by each Health and Social Care Trust; and (ii) how many complaints have been made about non-compliance to the ruling in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 4095/11-15)

Mr Poots: All five Health and Social Care Trusts have indicated that they are complying with the 2001 Munby ruling. No complaints have been received by the Health and Social Care Trusts in relation to non-compliance with the Munby ruling.

Intensive Care Units and Neo-Natal Units: Staff

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of staff employed in (i) intensive care units; and (ii) neo-natal units between 1 April 2009 and 1 October 2009, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 4121/11-15)

Mr Poots: Trusts record staff information on a live administrative system from which they extract snapshots of data at particular points in time. Therefore it has not been possible to provide cumulative staffing figures for April 2009-October 2009 or from April 2009 to present day.

Instead, snap-shot figures of staffing levels as at 1 April 2009, 2010 and 2011 have been provided.

All staff employed in both the Intensive Care and Neo Natal Units are trained to meet the requirements of their post and grade. Qualified nursing staff are Band 5 and above.

The number of medical and nursing staff employed within intensive care units and neo-natal units is given in the tables below. It should be noted that these units are supported by other staff members, including allied health professions, scientific/technical, administration and support services staff.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	19	15.98	15	13.12	16	13.92
Nurse Band 5	219	178.04	216	181.13	209	175.54
Nurse Band 6	21	18.90	21	18.24	21	18.17
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	16	15.34	14	13.14	13	12.34
Consultants	-	-	-	-	44	43.67

Source: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. Consultant job plans for 2011 have a split between Intensive Care and Operating Theatres and are therefore included, although only a proportion of their time will be spent in Intensive Care.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 4	11	9.30	9	6.94	7	5.73
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	14	13.27	21	19.59	24	22.01
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	53	44.56	60	49.70	54	42.42
Nursing / Midwifery Bands 7 & 8	15	13.90	14	13.60	13	12.60
Consultants	6	6.00	6	6.00	6	6.00

Source: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE=Whole-time equivalent

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Band 2	7	6.26	7	6.26	5	4.72
Nurse Band 5	72	59.41	70	61.30	70	62.13
Nurse Band 6	7	6.20	7	6.20	8	7.20

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Band 7	3	3.00	3	3.00	3	3.00

Source: Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. The Intensive Care Unit has designated cover provided by Consultant Anaesthetists on a rotational basis 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday with on-call cover available outside these hours. The Intensive Care Unit also has designated Junior Doctor cover.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	3	2.30	3	2.30	3	2.30
Nurse Band 5	31	28.44	31	28.44	31	28.44
Nurse Band 6	6	6.00	6	6.00	6	6.00
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	9	9.00	9	9.00	9	9.00
Consultants	3	1.20	3	1.20	3	1.20
Associate Specialist / Specialist Registrar	2	0.80	2	0.80	2	0.80

Source: Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. The Neo Natal Unit also has on-call cover from another 5 Consultant Paediatricians and 8 Specialist Registrars.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	n/a	5.44	n/a	4.40	n/a	4.40
Nurse Band 5	n/a	44.07	n/a	41.23	n/a	44.59
Nurse Band 6	n/a	7.63	n/a	4.55	n/a	5.05
Nurse Band 7	n/a	2.93	n/a	2.93	n/a	2.93

Source: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent, n/a = not available in the timescale provided.

2. In addition, one consultant works in Intensive Care between the hours of 8am and 5.30pm, with on-call cover outside these hours.
3. There is 24/7 cover provided by a Specialist Registrar with airway skills in Theatres / Intensive Care.
4. There are also 3 Junior Doctors providing medical cover during core hours and one outside these hours.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 3	7	7.89	6	6.00	5	4.20
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	20	15.92	16	14.86	15	14.06
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	18	13.22	19	12.88	17	12.79
Nursing / Midwifery Band 7	5	5.44	6	5.44	6	5.64

Source: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. Information on medical staff cover for Neo Natal units in the South Eastern Trust could not be provided within the specified timescale.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Band 2	4	3.40	4	3.40	2	1.60
Nurse Band 5	58	49.22	60	49.32	45	38.90
Nurse Band 6	7	5.37	7	5.37	23	16.63
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	3	2.93	3	2.93	4	3.93

Source: Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 3	6	4.31	5	3.75	12	10.25

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	33	24.72	44	34.81	45	35.89
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	16	12.01	10	6.73	16	11.22
Nursing / Midwifery Bands 7 & 8	4	3.64	8	7.36	8	7.49
Consultants	2	2.00	5	5.00	5	5.00
Other Medical	10	9.00	16	11.30	13	9.60

Source: Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. The Neo Natal Unit also has on-call cover from other medical staff.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	11	9.97	11	9.97	11	9.97
Nurse Band 5	44	40.02	48	52.39	51	48.43
Nurse Band 6	54	44.60	56	47.51	56	45.95
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	3	3.00	6	5.86	6	5.86

Source: Western Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. Information on medical staff cover for Intensive Care Units in the Western Trust could not be provided within the specified timescale.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 3	12	9.64	12	9.64	11	8.64
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	19	17.42	20	18.44	19	17.44
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	22	16.69	18	14.41	18	14.41

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Band 7	10	9.19	7	6.44	7	6.44

Source: Western Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

1. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
2. The Neo Natal Unit also has on-call cover from other medical staff.

Intensive Care Units and Neo-Natal Units: Staff

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number and grade of staff employed in (a) intensive care units; and (b) neo-natal units since 1 April 2009, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) how many of the staff were or are fully trained.

(AQW 4122/11-15)

Mr Poots: Trusts record staff information on a live administrative system from which they extract snapshots of data at particular points in time. Therefore it has not been possible to provide cumulative staffing figures for April 2009-October 2009 or from April 2009 to present day.

Instead, snap-shot figures of staffing levels as at 1 April 2009, 2010 and 2011 have been provided.

All staff employed in both the Intensive Care and Neo Natal Units are trained to meet the requirements of their post and grade. Qualified nursing staff are Band 5 and above.

The number of medical and nursing staff employed within intensive care units and neo-natal units is given in the tables below. It should be noted that these units are supported by other staff members, including allied health professions, scientific/technical, administration and support services staff.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	19	15.98	15	13.12	16	13.92
Nurse Band 5	219	178.04	216	181.13	209	175.54
Nurse Band 6	21	18.90	21	18.24	21	18.17
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	16	15.34	14	13.14	13	12.34
Consultants	-	-	-	-	44	43.67

Source: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. Consultant job plans for 2011 have a split between Intensive Care and Operating Theatres and are therefore included, although only a proportion of their time will be spent in Intensive Care.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 4	11	9.30	9	6.94	7	5.73
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	14	13.27	21	19.59	24	22.01
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	53	44.56	60	49.70	54	42.42
Nursing / Midwifery Bands 7 & 8	15	13.90	14	13.60	13	12.60
Consultants	6	6.00	6	6.00	6	6.00

Source: Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

2. HC = Headcount, WTE=Whole-time equivalent

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Band 2	7	6.26	7	6.26	5	4.72
Nurse Band 5	72	59.41	70	61.30	70	62.13
Nurse Band 6	7	6.20	7	6.20	8	7.20
Nurse Band 7	3	3.00	3	3.00	3	3.00

Source: Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. The Intensive Care Unit has designated cover provided by Consultant Anaesthetists on a rotational basis 9am – 5pm Monday – Friday with on-call cover available outside these hours. The Intensive Care Unit also has designated Junior Doctor cover.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	3	2.30	3	2.30	3	2.30
Nurse Band 5	31	28.44	31	28.44	31	28.44
Nurse Band 6	6	6.00	6	6.00	6	6.00

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	9	9.00	9	9.00	9	9.00
Consultants	3	1.20	3	1.20	3	1.20
Associate Specialist / Specialist Registrar	2	0.80	2	0.80	2	0.80

Source: Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. The Neo Natal Unit also has on-call cover from another 5 Consultant Paediatricians and 8 Specialist Registrars.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	n/a	5.44	n/a	4.40	n/a	4.40
Nurse Band 5	n/a	44.07	n/a	41.23	n/a	44.59
Nurse Band 6	n/a	7.63	n/a	4.55	n/a	5.05
Nurse Band 7	n/a	2.93	n/a	2.93	n/a	2.93

Source: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

5. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent, n/a = not available in the timescale provided.
6. In addition, one consultant works in Intensive Care between the hours of 8am and 5.30pm, with on-call cover outside these hours.
7. There is 24/7 cover provided by a Specialist Registrar with airway skills in Theatres / Intensive Care.
8. There are also 3 Junior Doctors providing medical cover during core hours and one outside these hours.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 3	7	7.89	6	6.00	5	4.20
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	20	15.92	16	14.86	15	14.06
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	18	13.22	19	12.88	17	12.79

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Band 7	5	5.44	6	5.44	6	5.64

Source: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. Information on medical staff cover for Neo Natal units in the South Eastern Trust could not be provided within the specified timescale.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Band 2	4	3.40	4	3.40	2	1.60
Nurse Band 5	58	49.22	60	49.32	45	38.90
Nurse Band 6	7	5.37	7	5.37	23	16.63
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	3	2.93	3	2.93	4	3.93

Source: Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

2. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 3	6	4.31	5	3.75	12	10.25
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	33	24.72	44	34.81	45	35.89
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	16	12.01	10	6.73	16	11.22
Nursing / Midwifery Bands 7 & 8	4	3.64	8	7.36	8	7.49
Consultants	2	2.00	5	5.00	5	5.00
Other Medical	10	9.00	16	11.30	13	9.60

Source: Southern Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. The Neo Natal Unit also has on-call cover from other medical staff.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN INTENSIVE CARE UNITS AT WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nurse Support Bands 2 & 3	11	9.97	11	9.97	11	9.97
Nurse Band 5	44	40.02	48	52.39	51	48.43
Nurse Band 6	54	44.60	56	47.51	56	45.95
Nurse Bands 7 & 8	3	3.00	6	5.86	6	5.86

Source: Western Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. Information on medical staff cover for Intensive Care Units in the Western Trust could not be provided within the specified timescale.

STAFF EMPLOYED WITHIN NEO NATAL UNITS AT WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST BY GRADE AS AT 1 APRIL

Grade	2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Nursing / Midwifery Support Bands 2 & 3	12	9.64	12	9.64	11	8.64
Nursing / Midwifery Band 5	19	17.42	20	18.44	19	17.44
Nursing / Midwifery Band 6	22	16.69	18	14.41	18	14.41
Nursing / Midwifery Band 7	10	9.19	7	6.44	7	6.44

Source: Western Health and Social Care Trust

Notes:

3. HC = Headcount, WTE = Whole-time equivalent
4. The Neo Natal Unit also has on-call cover from other medical staff.

Fines for Smoking in Work Vehicles

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of fines issued for smoking in work vehicles since the introduction of the relevant legislation, broken down by council area.

(AQW 4162/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information held by the Department in relation to enforcement of the smoke-free legislation is not classified as fines. Rather, information is available on the number of written warnings, fixed penalty notices and prosecutions. In answer to the question asked, the most appropriate category would be fixed penalty notices. The table on the following page outlines the number of fixed penalty notices issued for smoking in a smoke-free vehicle for each financial year since the legislation was introduced on 30th April 2007.

FIXED PENALTY NOTICES ISSUED FOR SMOKING IN A SMOKE-FREE VEHICLE

	2007/08 ¹	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Belfast	38	160	244	205
Eastern group	-	66	298	241
Ards	-	13	30	19
Castlereagh	-	13	57	32
Down	0	0	31	24
Lisburn	0	22	153	142
North Down	-	18	27	24
Northern group	-	52	70	109
Antrim	-	0	-	0
Ballymena	-	8	14	20
Ballymoney	0	0	0	0
Carrickfergus	-	7	6	0
Coleraine	0	-	14	33
Cookstown	0	0	0	0
Larne	11	11	-	13
Magherafelt	0	0	0	0
Moyle	0	-	8	8
Newtownabbey	-	16	21	35
Southern group	33	161	169	202
Armagh	-	15	31	53
Banbridge	9	17	5	7
Craigavon	17	64	64	46
Dungannon & South Tyrone	0	6	23	41
Newry & Mourne	-	59	46	55
Western group	-	44	42	63

	2007/08 ¹	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Derry	0	7	-	35
Fermanagh	0	-	0	-
Limavady	0	-	-	-
Omagh	-	18	0	-
Strabane	-	14	23	21
Northern Ireland total	96	483	823	820

- 1 Smoke-free legislation was introduced in Northern Ireland on 30th April 2007, thus this is not a complete financial year.
- 2 Some cells have been masked (-) to hide counts of less than five and some (with cell counts of more than five) to prevent the value in another cell from being calculated; this is to ensure individuals cannot be identified.

Kinship Care

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of children currently in Kinship Care who live with (i) their grandparents; (ii) their siblings; or (iii) other Kinship carers.

(AQW 4166/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to how many children have lived in Kinship Care or short-term (3 months or less) Kinship Care in each of the last three years. The nearest available figures to those you have requested are detailed below for your information.

The numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by Health and Social Care Trust, are detailed in Table 1. Aggregation of the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, at 31 March 2011, by those living with grandparents, siblings or other Kinship Carers' requires an extensive clerical exercise and could only be provided at disproportionate costs. The figures reported in Table 1 are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 1

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	151	208	206
Northern	N/A	102	166
South Eastern	144	157	165
Southern	109	99	104
Western	63	52	76
Northern Ireland	467	618	717

Source: HSC Board end of year Corporate Parenting Reports.

Data are Not Available for the Northern Trust for 2009.

My Department has recently consulted on Guidance on the Assessment and Support of Kinship Foster Carers', the aims of which are to ensure a regional approach by Trusts to the assessment and support of Kinship Carers' which recognises their unique situation whilst safeguarding the child. For the purposes of the guide 'Kinship Carers' means relatives (as defined in the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 Article 2.2 refers) and friends who are caring for a child or young person full time. Friends may include other people with a prior connection to the child e.g. someone who knows the child in a

more professional capacity such as a child minder, teacher or youth worker although these are not exclusive categories.

Residence Orders and Supervision Orders do not confer 'looked after' status on a child, and so children subject to these Orders could not be in any form of 'looked after' Kinship Care placements.

Table 2 below details the numbers of looked after children subject to Care Orders at 31 March each year from 2009 to 2011, by HSC Trust. These figures are not available by Parliamentary Constituency.

TABLE 2

HSC Trust	2009	2010	2011
Belfast	389	390	395
Northern	359	355	372
South Eastern	265	279	281
Southern	257	291	304
Western	297	294	245
Northern Ireland	1270	1609	1597

Source: HSC Board Delegated Statutory Functions end of year Monitoring Returns. Care Orders includes Interim and Deemed Care Orders. Data Western Trust for 2009 sourced from LA1 Children Order Community Return

Kinship Carers

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Kinship carers received training in each Health and Social Care Trust area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 4167/11-15)

Mr Poots:

STATISTICS PROVIDED BY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS*

Trust	2009		2010		2011	
	Foster Carers	Kinship Carers	Foster Carers	Kinship Carers	Foster Carers	Kinship Carers
Belfast	83	31	180	22	99	2
South Eastern	94	13	121	11	135	10
Northern	154	21	177	23	209	46
Southern**	193		162		91	
Western	447	60	400	78	350	95

* This table does not include training available on a regional basis to all carers, including kinship carers.

** The Southern Health and Social Care Trust does not collate statistics separately for foster carer and kinship carer training unless the course is specifically aimed at kinship carers. In 2009 and 2010, 16 kinship carers (8 in 2009 and 8 in 2010) availed of specific regional training.

Health and Social Care Trusts ensures that all foster carers/kinship foster carers are offered training in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child or young person placed in their care.

Fosters Carers

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many fosters carers received training in each Health and Social Care Trust area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 4168/11-15)

Mr Poots:

STATISTICS PROVIDED BY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUSTS*

Trust	2009		2010		2011	
	Foster Carers	Kinship Carers	Foster Carers	Kinship Carers	Foster Carers	Kinship Carers
Belfast	83	31	180	22	99	2
South Eastern	94	13	121	11	135	10
Northern	154	21	177	23	209	46
Southern**	193		162		91	
Western	447	60	400	78	350	95

* This table does not include training available on a regional basis to all carers, including kinship carers.

** The Southern Health and Social Care Trust does not collate statistics separately for foster carer and kinship carer training unless the course is specifically aimed at kinship carers. In 2009 and 2010, 16 kinship carers (8 in 2009 and 8 in 2010) availed of specific regional training.

Health and Social Care Trusts ensures that all foster carers/kinship foster carers are offered training in the skills required to provide high quality care and meet the needs of each child or young person placed in their care.

Kinship Care Pupils: GCSEs

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the average number of GCSE grades A-C obtained by pupils living in Kinship Care compared to pupils who are in the care of their parents, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 4169/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally in the format you have requested. The nearest available figures are detailed in Table 1 below for your information.

Table 1 details the average number of GCSE grades A-C (including equivalents) obtained by looked after children in Kinship Care placements and in care for 12 months or longer at 30 September for the years detailed, compared with those obtained by pupils in the care of their parents.

TABLE1

Placement	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
Kinship Care	2.0	2.6	2.5
With Parents	5.9	6.2	6.4

Sources: Kinship Care from Community Statistical return OC2, and With Parents data from the Department of Education for Northern Ireland.

Knockmore Primary School

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the consultation that took place with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust, prior to the draft consultation by the South Eastern Education and Library Board on closing Knockmore Primary School, Lisburn.

(AQW 4203/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Trust became aware of the South Eastern Education and Library Board's (SEELB) intention to go to consultation regarding the potential closure of the school when the Trust Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Manager met with SEELB to discuss the withdrawal of funding from the Speech and Language Development Project.

This was then confirmed at a meeting in the school on Monday 14th October 2011.

Prospective Foster Parents

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the criteria used by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to determine the suitability of prospective foster parents.

(AQW 4204/11-15)

Mr Poots: The criteria used by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to determine the suitability of prospective foster parents are those which apply to all HSC Trusts across Northern Ireland and are set out in:

- The Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Arrangement for Placement of Children (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996
- The Foster Placement (Children) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996
- Volume 3 of the Children (NI) Order 1995 Guidance and Regulations – Family Placements and Private Fostering – Chapters 4 and 5

Promoting Foster Care

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the publications used by the Belfast Health and Social care Trust to promote foster care in (i) 2010; and (ii) 2011 to date.

(AQW 4207/11-15)

Mr Poots: The publications used by Belfast Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust to promote foster care in 2010 and in 2011 to date are those used by all HSC Trusts across Northern Ireland. Advertisements are routinely placed in: The Daily Mirror, Belfast & North West Telegraph, The Newsletter, The Irish News, Sunday Life; other regional newspapers, including the Andersonstown News, The Shankill Mirror, The South Belfast News; Belfast City Matters; NI4Kids; Northern Ireland Community Care Guide; The Fostering Issue; Ulster Tatler; GP & Community Healthcare; Options 4 Families – Schools 2010 booklet; Yell.com; and Farm Week – Balmoral show and the official show programme. Other initiatives to promote foster care include: the establishment of a Regional Fostering service in 2007; ongoing television and radio fostering campaigns; the establishment of the HSCNI website: www.fostering.hscni.net; Foster Care Fortnight, run by Fostering Network; and Public information campaigns at job fairs, coffee mornings and advice forums.

Claims for Clinical Negligence

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of outstanding claims for clinical negligence; and (ii) the number and the cost of claims settled in each of the last five years, including legal fees, court costs and other associated costs.

(AQW 4221/11-15)

Mr Poots: In June 2010, my Department introduced a new data collection system to monitor clinical / social care negligence claims open during each year (1 April – 31 March). With this in mind, it is not possible to provide the requested information for each of the last five years. However, information is available from this data collection system for the 2009/10 financial year, on (i) the number of clinical negligence claims open on 31 March 2010, and (ii) the number and cost of claims closed (including legal fees, court costs and other associated costs) during 2009/10.

- (i) At 31st March 2010, 2,383 cases of clinical / social care negligence claims remained open across Health & Social Care (HSC) Trusts (including Northern Ireland Ambulance Service) in Northern Ireland; and,
- (ii) During 2009/10, 448 cases of clinical / social care negligence were closed in Northern Ireland, of which, 124 were closed with payments (including damages and legal costs) totaling almost £8.9 million.

Kinship Care Arrangements

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number and percentage of children who are subject to a (i) Emergency Protection Order; (ii) Protection Order; (iii) Interim Care Order; or (iv) Care Order and who are cared for under (a) informal Kinship Care arrangements; (b) formal Kinship Care arrangements; and (c) non-Kinship Foster Care arrangements.

(AQW 4248/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to the legal status of looked after children by Kinship Care arrangements, or Kinship Care placements in terms of percentages living with grandparents, siblings or other relatives. Obtaining these data requires an extensive clerical exercise, and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Table 1 below, details for your information, the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, and these figures expressed as a percentage of all of looked after children, as at 31 March 2011.

TABLE 1

Health and Social Care Trust	Looked After Children in Kinship Care Placements	Children in Kinship Care placements as percentage of all Looked After Children
Belfast	206	33%
Northern	166	29%
South Eastern	165	33%
Southern	104	26%
Western	76	19%
Total	717	29%

Source: HSC Board End of Year Delegated Statutory Functions Monitoring Returns

Kinship Care

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of children living in Kinship Care are being cared for by (i) grandparents; (ii) siblings; or (iii) other relatives.

(AQW 4249/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to the legal status of looked after children by Kinship Care arrangements, or Kinship Care placements in terms of percentages living with

grandparents, siblings or other relatives. Obtaining these data requires an extensive clerical exercise, and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Table 1 below, details for your information, the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, and these figures expressed as a percentage of all of looked after children, as at 31 March 2011.

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Western	76	19%
Total	717	29%

Source: HSC Board End of Year Delegated Statutory Functions Monitoring Returns

Kinship Carers

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what standards are required to be met before an individual or family can be recognised as Kinship carers.

(AQW 4250/11-15)

Mr Poots: As its paramount consideration, the duty of a Trust must be to safeguard the welfare of the child. To this end a thorough assessment of the carer/kinship carer must be carried out to ensure their ability to meet the child's full need for stability and permanence.

To underpin this, work is near completion on the development of Standards and Guidance on the Assessment and Support of Kinship Foster Carers in Northern Ireland. It is intended that the standards will be published early in 2012.

In relation to foster Carers, we currently apply the UK National Standards for Foster Care together with the Code of Practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers.

Children in Care

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what research has been carried out to assess the cost differential of a child being placed in care and a child being placed with a Kinship carer.

(AQW 4251/11-15)

Mr Poots: There is no differential between the amounts paid to kinship and non-kinship (stranger) foster carers with whom children are placed by Health and Social Care Trust. Both groups receive exactly the same allowances. It is known that it costs more to place children in residential care than in any form of foster care. We also know that the majority of children who are 'looked after' are in foster care. Consequently, it is difficult to see the benefit of research in this area. Kinship Care

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) how many children currently live in Kinship Care; and (ii) what is this figure as a percentage of all children.

(AQW 4252/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available centrally relating to the legal status of looked after children by Kinship Care arrangements, or Kinship Care placements in terms of percentages living with grandparents, siblings or other relatives. Obtaining these data requires an extensive clerical exercise, and could only be provided at disproportionate costs.

Table 1 below, details for your information, the numbers of looked after children in Kinship Care placements, and these figures expressed as a percentage of all of looked after children, as at 31 March 2011.

TABLE 1

Health and Social Care Trust	Looked After Children in Kinship Care Placements	Children in Kinship Care placements as percentage of all Looked After Children
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Southern	104	26%
Western	76	19%
Total	717	29%

Source: HSC Board End of Year Delegated Statutory Functions Monitoring Returns

Stroke Units

Mr Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of patients spent 90 percent or more of their time in hospital in a Stroke Unit in each of the last three years.

(AQW 4264/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not readily available on the percentage of patients who spent 90 percent or more of their time in hospital in a Stroke Unit, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Royal College of Physicians' National Sentinel Stroke Audit 2010 - public report

Mr Brady asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that the Royal College of Physicians' 'National Sentinel Stroke Audit 2010 - public report' was the last of its kind, what arrangements are in place to ensure that the data continues to be collected to allow the stroke services provided to be benchmarked in Northern Ireland against the services that are provided in Britain.

(AQW 4267/11-15)

Mr Poots: At present the Health and Social Care Board is collecting relevant stroke data using the hospital Patient Administration System (PAS). However my Department has recently approved a HSC Board business case for a regional ICT stroke information system. I am advised that the planned information system, once implemented, will allow for the collection, on an ongoing basis, of more detailed monitoring of the quality of stroke care provided. This planned information system will also link with UK national audits in stroke care such as the Stroke Information National Audit Programme (SINAP) therefore allowing for benchmarking of stroke services in Northern Ireland with those in GB.

Waiting List for Speech and Language Therapy

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of people on the waiting list for speech and language therapy in each Health and Social Care Trust area. (AQW 4298/11-15)

Mr Poots: Table (a) below details the number of people awaiting an appointment with a speech and language therapist, by aggregated time bands, from the date of referral to treatment, at 31st October 2011.

TABLE (A) NUMBER OF PEOPLE AWAITING AN APPOINTMENT WITH A SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPIST AT 31ST OCTOBER 2011¹

HSC Trust	Waiting time from referral to treatment for Speech and Language Therapy (by weeks waiting)					Total
	0-3	>3 to 6	>6 to 9	>9 to 13	>13	
Belfast	244	153	152	112	148	809
Northern	212	149	59	0	0	420
South Eastern	188	134	59	12	8	401
Southern	174	144	87	51	4	460
Western	136	130	61	51	27	405
Northern Ireland	954	710	418	226	187	2,495

1 Figures detailed in reply to this question were provided on request by the HSCB and have not been validated by the DHSSPS.

Speech and Language Therapists

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of speech and language therapists employed by each Health and Social Care Trust. (AQW 4299/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of speech and language therapists employed within Northern Ireland Health and Social Care broken down by Health and Social Care Trust is given in the table below.

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE BY TRUST AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2011

Trust	HC	WTE
Belfast	120	94.58
Northern	115	94.64
South Eastern	77	64.04
Southern	71	59.26
Western	62	55.44
Total	445	367.96

Source: Human Resources Management System

Notes:

5. HC = Headcount

6. WTE = Whole-time Equivalent
7. The figures above will include some senior managers who are speech and language therapists but are working in an administrative role.

Marmot Review- Fair Society, Healthy Lives

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his Department's assessment of the six policy objectives and related priority objectives in the Marmot Review- Fair Society, Healthy Lives.

(AQW 4302/11-15)

Mr Poots: A review of the current public health strategy for Northern Ireland Investing for Health, completed last year, concluded that there is a need for a strategy based on the principles of Investing for Health but updated to take account of social, economic and legislative changes as well as new evidence and data available.

The process for development of a new public health strategic framework has begun, and, in respect of what has been shown to be effective, particular notice will be taken of the Marmot Review.

Caring for Patients with Pregnancy Loss

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what resources and training are provided for health professionals to promote sensitive practice in caring for patients with pregnancy loss, both during and after miscarriage.

(AQW 4303/11-15)

Mr Poots: All Obstetric and Gynaecology doctors undergo training relating to breaking bad news, early pregnancy problems and miscarriage. All midwives also receive training in bereavement care. In addition, the South-Eastern Trust has a dedicated bereavement midwife.

The "Careplan for women who experience a miscarriage, stillbirth or neonatal death", issued by the Department in 2004, provides principles of good practice and guidance for the loss of a pregnancy at various stages, stillbirth or loss of a neonate. In addition, it promotes a sensitive patient-focused approach and facilitates Trusts in producing locally appropriate information and guidance to supplement the careplan

I also recently launched a draft maternity strategy for public consultation, which complements the current guidance and promotes support for women suffering the loss of a baby. The draft strategy is out for consultation until 23 December; I would encourage everyone with an interest in maternity services to respond to the consultation.

Qualified Psychologists and Trainee Psychologists

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of (i) qualified psychologists; and (ii) trainee psychologists in Northern Ireland that his Department is aware of at present.

(AQW 4340/11-15)

Mr Poots: As at 30 September 2011, there were 215 (192.92 whole-time equivalent) clinical psychologists as well as 51 (50.06 whole-time equivalent) trainee psychologists employed within Northern Ireland Health and Social Care (Source: Human Resources Management System).

Cost of Air Travel

Mr McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the total cost incurred by his Department on air travel (i) between Northern Ireland and Heathrow Airport from

January to December 2010; and (ii) between Northern Ireland and all airports in Great Britain, excluding Heathrow Airport, from January to December 2010.

(AQW 4344/11-15)

Mr Poots: The travel costs incurred by my Department on air travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain from January to December 2010 are as follows:

- | | |
|---|---------|
| (i) Between Northern Ireland and Heathrow airport | £70,645 |
| (ii) Between Northern Ireland and other airports in Great Britain | £63,273 |

Children in Kinship Care

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children in Kinship care were living in (i) residential care; and (ii) foster care prior to living with extended family members in each of the last three years, broken down by (a) Health and Social Care Trust area; and (b) constituency.

(AQW 4385/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information you have requested is not available centrally, and could only be obtained by Health and Social Care Trust area at disproportionate costs.

Kinship Care Arrangements

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of placement breakdowns in Kinship Care arrangements in the last three years, broken down by (i) Health and Social Care Trust area; and (ii) constituency.

(AQW 4386/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information you have requested is not available centrally, and could only be obtained by Health and Social Care Trust area at disproportionate costs.

Kinship Care Foster Assessments

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Kinship Care foster assessments have been completed in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) Health and Social Care Trust; and (ii) constituency.

(AQW 4387/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information you have requested is not available centrally, and could only be obtained by Health and Social Care Trust area at disproportionate costs.

Kinship Care

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of children currently in Kinship Care are (i) male; and (ii) female.

(AQW 4401/11-15)

Mr Poots: The latest figures available indicate that of the 717 looked after children in Kinship Care placements at 31 March 2011, 47% were male, and 53% were female.

Ambulance Based in Ballycastle

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if there are any plans to withdraw the ambulance which is based in Ballycastle.

(AQW 4421/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service has confirmed that there are no plans to withdraw the ambulance based in Ballycastle, or change the current ambulance provision there.

Ambulance Provision in Ballycastle

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if there are any proposals being considered to change the current ambulance provision in Ballycastle.

(AQW 4423/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service has confirmed that there are no plans to withdraw the ambulance based in Ballycastle, or change the current ambulance provision there.

Foster Carers

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the standards that are required to be met before an individual or family can be recognised as foster carers.

(AQW 4428/11-15)

Mr Poots: As its paramount consideration, the duty of a Trust must be to safeguard the welfare of the child. To this end a thorough assessment of the carer/kinship carer must be carried out to ensure their ability to meet the child's full need for stability and permanence.

To underpin this, work is near completion on the development of Standards and Guidance on the Assessment and Support of Kinship Foster Carers in Northern Ireland. It is intended that the standards will be published early in 2012.

In relation to foster Carers, we currently apply the UK National Standards for Foster Care together with the Code of Practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers.

Meals on Wheels Service

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many households in the North Down area are currently receiving the Meals on Wheels Service.

(AQW 4453/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available on the number of households in the North Down area currently receiving the Meals on Wheels service. However, information is available on the number of persons receiving a Meals on Wheels service in each HSC Trust at year end 31 March.

At 31st March 2011, 573 persons were in receipt of a Meals on Wheels service in the South Eastern HSC Trust. The information cannot be disaggregated by geographical areas smaller than HSC Trust. This information is provisional and is due to be published in 'Adult Community Statistics for Northern Ireland 2010-2011' in December 2011.

Department of Justice

Conditional Discharges

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 3531/11-15, how many of the Conditional Discharges imposed were breached and resulted in an alternative or additional sentence.

(AQW 4026/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): The information requested is not available. Data on convictions and reoffending are not structured in a way that would allow the member's specific question to be answered.

Prostitution in Fermanagh

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Justice what action he is taking to address the level of prostitution in Fermanagh.

(AQW 4027/11-15)

Mr Ford: As part of the Strategy to Manage Women Offenders and Those Vulnerable to Offending Behaviour, the Department of Justice published a research paper in January 2011, on women involved in prostitution and human trafficking in Northern Ireland, which is available at:

http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/publications/research_paper_investigating_the_issues_for_women_in_northern_ireland_involved_in_prostitution_andexploring_best_practice_elsewhere.htm

As part of this initiative the Department hosted a conference on women involved in prostitution in September, bringing together key individuals from across Northern Ireland and neighbouring jurisdictions. The conference focused on four key themes:

- Preventing people from entering prostitution;
- Tackling demand for those involved in prostitution;
- Helping those involved in prostitution who want to exit to do so and providing support to those who do not wish to exit; and
- Eliminating trafficking for sexual exploitation.

We are now working with our partners to develop a suite of proposals to address the issue of prostitution across Northern Ireland.

Any enforcement action in local communities, such as Fermanagh, is an operational matter for the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Cost of Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost of legal aid, to date, for the defendants in cases (i) 11/001272; and (ii) 11/007222; and why these cases were dismissed at Dungannon Magistrates Court.

(AQW 4029/11-15)

Mr Ford: The cost of legal aid paid to date in respect of the above cases is set out in the table below along with an estimate of the likely cost of the preliminary inquiries:

	Advice provided at police station	Preliminary Enquiry Stage	Total	Case Status
Case 1	£130.86	£984.00 (estimate)	£1114.86	Case ongoing
Case 2	£168.13	£1652.75 (estimate)	£1820.88	Case dismissed
Total	£298.99	£2636.75 (estimate)	£2935.74	

No claims for payment have been received in respect of the proceedings at the Magistrates' Court for either of the defendants and therefore an estimate of the fees in each case has been provided.

Case number 11/001272 has not been dismissed and the defendant in these proceedings is currently on remand on bail before Dungannon Magistrates' Court.

Regarding case number 11/007222, the Public Prosecution Service and the judiciary operate independently from Government and do not fall within my Ministerial portfolio. I am therefore not in a position to comment on prosecutorial or judicial decisions taken in individual cases.

Prison Population

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the current population of each prison; and the average prison population of each prison in each of the last five years.

(AQW 4031/11-15)

Mr Ford: The current prison population of each prison and the average prison population in each of the last five years are set out in the table below.

Population	Current	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Maghaberry	995	770	826	833	813	773
Magilligan	516	465	413	440	413	409
Hydebank Wood (Male)	230	183	182	186	193	198
(Female)	61	42	49	47	43	39

* Current population as of 15/11/2011

Level of Force that a Householder can use against an Intruder

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister of Justice to outline the current position in respect of the level of force that a householder can use against an intruder compared to that in the position in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 4049/11-15)

Mr Ford: Further to my answer to AQW/3046/11 the common law defence of self-defence applies in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The clarification of the common law offence made by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 extends to England and Wales and Northern Ireland but not to Scotland. In each jurisdiction every case is considered taking account of its own facts and circumstances to ascertain whether a crime has been committed. Whether it is in the public interest to raise criminal proceedings is a matter for the independent prosecuting authorities.

Court Case of R-v-Haddock & Others

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, in regard to the provision of an additional court room facility in the case of R-v-Haddock & Others, (i) how much has this facility cost to date and how much it is likely to cost; (ii) how often has it been used; and (iii) for his assessment of whether the use of this facility represents value for money.

(AQW 4060/11-15)

Mr Ford: The additional courtroom facility for viewing the case of R v Haddock and others has cost £34,563.54 up to 10 November 2011. This comprises £17,524.54 for equipment and staffing and estimated additional policing costs of £17,039. The facility was used 13 times before it was closed on 24 September 2011. If required it can be re-opened should demand increase.

I am satisfied that the expenditure incurred to provide these additional facilities was both appropriate and proportionate.

Republican Separated Prisoner, Colin Duffy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether the Republican separated prisoner, Colin Duffy, has personally signed the required compact.

(AQW 4063/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that republican separated prisoner Colin Duffy has personally signed the required compact.

EU Directive 2010/64

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice, given that criminal justice is devolved and that the UK government is opted-out of European Union law in areas of criminal justice but with the right to opt-in, for his assessment of whether the Executive should be the party to the EU Directive 2010/64 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings in order to standardise the rights to a fair trial across the European Union under Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom.

(AQW 4117/11-15)

Mr Ford: The right to interpretation and translation is fundamental for a person facing a criminal charge who does not understand the language of the criminal proceedings.

In March 2010, the United Kingdom Government opted into a MemberState proposal to set minimum standards for the rights to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings. The proposal is available at:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0082:FIN:EN:DOC>

In June 2010, I confirmed my agreement with a recommendation from the UK Justice Secretary for the UK to opt out of the proposed EU Directive 2010/64. The recommendation was made on the basis that the MemberState proposal already guaranteed similar levels of protection to defendants' rights and, in addition, was at a more advanced stage of development.

The MemberState proposal was adopted by the EU Parliament on 20 October 2010. My officials continue to work closely with Whitehall colleagues to ensure implementation of this Directive.

Bench Warrants

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 3013/11-15, how many of the people subject to a bench or arrest warrant were, or are, remanded on bail.

(AQW 4130/11-15)

Mr Ford: Pursuant to my answer to AQW3013/11-15, the following table details the number of Arrest and Bench Warrants issued where a defendant was on bail.

The warrants detailed in the table relate to 3232 defendants, but it is not possible to disaggregate these by County Court Division as defendants may have more than one warrant issued against them and in more than one County Court Division.

TABLE:

County Court Division	Issued Less Than 1 Year ago	Issued More Than 1 Year ago	All Warrants
Antrim	41	288	329
Ards	26	190	216
Armagh And South Down	54	470	524

County Court Division	Issued Less Than 1 Year ago	Issued More Than 1 Year ago	All Warrants
Belfast	207	1307	1514
Craigavon	53	419	472
Fermanagh And Tyrone	70	477	547
Londonderry	51	188	239
Total	502	3339	3841

Notes:

A Bench or Arrest Warrant may also be issued other than where a defendant fails to answer bail such as failing to appear in response to a summons. These types of cases have not been included in the table.

Ilex Urban Regeneration Company's One Plan for Derry Regeneration Programme

Mr Eastwood asked Minister of Justice, with regard to Ilex Urban Regeneration Company's One Plan for Derry regeneration programme, to detail (i) the funds from his current budget that have been committed to projects under this programme; (ii) the projects that are being funded; and (iii) the start dates for these projects.

(AQW 4140/11-15)

Mr Ford: My Department currently makes a significant financial investment in all Council areas, including Derry, via funding for Community Safety Partnerships and will do likewise for Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) when they are established. Whilst my Department and the Policing Board will set high level strategic objectives, PCSPs will be expected to address local priorities and so it will be for the Partnership to consider alignment between policing and community safety priorities and the 'One Plan' in due course.

At present no funds, either directly from my Department, or indirectly from the Derry City Council's Community Safety Partnership budget have been committed to any of the projects contained in the 'One Plan'.

Changes in Sentence Tariffs at Westminster

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the recently announced changes in sentence tariffs at Westminster; and what consideration he is giving to introducing similar changes.

(AQW 4146/11-15)

Mr Ford: The proposals announced by the Justice Secretary on 26 October 2011 are intended to address the significant difficulties created by the operation of the Indeterminate Public Protection (IPP) sentence in England and Wales. The Justice Secretary also proposes to introduce mandatory custodial sentences for aggravated knife possession. I understand this is in response to a Westminster report into gang and youth violence following this summer's riots in England and Wales.

Through the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 (the 2008 Order), Indeterminate Custodial Sentences (ICSs) are available to judges in Northern Ireland in order to protect the public. These are similar in nature to the IPP, though in practice the 2008 Order operates in a different way and we have not experienced the same problems with this type of sentence in our justice system. I am satisfied that the 2008 Order provides a framework of robust protections for the public.

In addition, the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 completes a programme started in the 2008 Order, delivering tough new knife crime sentences for Northern Ireland by doubling the available penalties for a wide range of offences involving knives. It is my assessment that these measures are a vigorous and effective response to this very serious issue.

At this stage, I have no plans to introduce similar proposals; however, I will continue to keep this area under review.

Firework Attack at the Oval Football Ground

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the response of the PSNI to a firework attack during a football match at the Oval football ground in Belfast, in which two members of Glentoran Football Club's staff were injured.

(AQW 4161/11-15)

Mr Ford: The police response to this incident is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing board. 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 Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Legislation on Human Trafficking

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice whether he has any plans to introduce legislation on human trafficking, given that Northern Ireland is often a transit region for victims.

(AQW 4184/11-15)

Mr Ford: The principal offences relating to human trafficking are contained within the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The Department of Justice is working with the Home Office and the Scottish Government to consider legislative changes including those required to implement the European Union Directive on Human Trafficking. The Directive will come into force across the United Kingdom in 2013. Any legislative proposals will be brought to the Assembly.

European Union Directive

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the Executive being the party of the proposed European Union Directive establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of the victims of crime.

(AQW 4198/11-15)

Mr Ford: In August 2011, I confirmed my agreement with a recommendation from the UK Justice Secretary for the UK to opt into the Directive and, in doing so, signalled my support for the aims of the proposed Directive. These are to ensure that all victims of crime:-

- receive the appropriate protection and support,
- are able to participate in criminal proceedings, and
- are recognised and treated in a respectful, sensitive and professional manner without discrimination of any kind in all contacts with any public authority, victim support or restorative justice service.

The draft Directive is available at:

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0275:FIN:EN:DOC>

My officials will continue to work closely with Whitehall colleagues to ensure that the Northern Ireland perspective is firmly represented and considered in ongoing negotiations on the final text of the Directive with the European Commission and Parliament.

Crimes Committed Against Elderly People

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) number; and (ii) types of crimes committed against elderly people in each of the last three years.

(AQW 4334/11-15)

Mr Ford: The number and types of crimes committed against elderly people in each of the last three years is a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. 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.

Small Claims Court

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice why provisions for alternative dispute resolution in the Small Claims Court differ from the provisions in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 4356/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Small Claims Mediation Scheme in England and Wales is open to court users who have a defended small claim and offers an alternative method for resolving disputed small claims in order to reduce the number of cases going to court. In 2010 the Northern Ireland Courts & Tribunals Service (NICTS) evaluated the court based Scheme to assess what benefits it may provide if introduced in this jurisdiction.

NICTS concluded that a similar in-house mediation scheme for small claims in Northern Ireland would not provide value for money, although this will be kept under review.

Alternative Dispute Resolution is a recurring theme throughout the report of the Access to Justice Review, published in September. The report recommends greater use of mediation and other alternative dispute resolution. My department will consider the recommendations carefully together with the responses received to the report when the consultation period closes in December.

Absolute Discharge

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many convictions have been dealt with by Absolute Discharge in each court division in each of the last five years.

(AQW 4439/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below gives the number of convictions dealt with by absolute discharge, by court division, for the calendar years 2004 to 2008 (the latest year for which figures are currently available). Data for 2004 to 2006 should not be directly compared with data from 2007 to 2008 as the data sets are sourced from different systems.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE DISPOSED BY MEANS OF ABSOLUTE DISCHARGE BY COURT DIVISION 2004-2008

Court division	Year				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Antrim	17	29	23	14	33
Ards	20	16	9	13	14
Armagh and South Down	41	24	32	27	58
Belfast	67	47	38	45	32
Craigavon and Lisburn	11	8	8	11	11

Court division	Year				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Fermanagh and Tyrone	22	19	10	20	16
Londonderry	6	11	13	19	24
Total	184	154	133	149	188

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Prison Service

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice what steps he will take to prevent any efforts to remove the Prison Service of its association with the Crown and references to Her Majesty.

(AQW 4509/11-15)

Mr Ford: No decisions have been taken in relation to removing from the Prison Service any association with the Crown or references to Her Majesty and there are currently no proposals on my desk in relation to this.

As such, I have not currently planned any steps or action, preventative or otherwise in relation to this matter.

NIPS is undergoing fundamental end to end reform and this is one of a range of issues which I would expect to be considered as part of that ongoing review. Any proposals which are deemed to be controversial will be subject to approval by the Executive.

Department for Regional Development

Unadopted Sewers and Pumping Stations

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development, for each of the last five years, to detail (i) which areas in the Strangford constituency have had enforcement measures put in place to ensure that unadopted sewers and pumping stations, with outstanding agreements with NI Water, are brought up to the required standard for adoption; and (ii) the outcome or current status of these measures.

(AQW 3648/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the other party to any adoption agreement is required to provide security in the form of bond surety for the discharge by them of any obligations imposed by the agreement. NIW can call upon this bond security, should the person fail to meet the terms of the agreement. In such cases NIW would complete the work on the sewer or pumping station using the bond surety and adopt the sewerage system. Bond arrangements for agreements formerly with its predecessor Water Service, which transferred to NIW on 1 April 2007, are administered by my Department's Roads Service in conjunction with NIW.

Since the establishment of NIW on 1 April 2007, there have been no cases in the Strangford constituency where a developer has failed to meet the terms of an agreement.

Unadopted Sewers in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the unadopted sewers with an outstanding agreements with NI Water, or its predecessor, in the Strangford constituency.

(AQW 3652/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that there are currently some 322 existing agreements in place in the Strangford constituency with persons constructing or proposing to construct a sewerage system, to adopt the system at a future date provided the terms of the agreement have been met. This includes agreements formerly with its predecessor Water Service which transferred to NIW on 1 April 2007.

It is the responsibility of the persons constructing the sewerage system to advise NIW when they consider it is completed to a satisfactory standard, to enable the system to be inspected and a Certificate of Completion to be issued with a view to future adoption.

The information requested about unadopted sewers in the Strangford constituency is not readily available and could only be compiled at disproportionate cost.

Unadopted Sewers in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development which sewers in the Strangford constituency are to be adopted in the next six months.

(AQW 3670/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that there are currently some 322 existing agreements in place with persons constructing or proposing to construct a sewerage system, to adopt the system at a future date provided the terms of the agreement have been met.

It is the responsibility of the persons constructing the sewerage system to advise NIW when they consider it is completed to a satisfactory standard, to enable the system to be inspected and a Certificate of Completion to be issued with a view to future adoption. NIW is currently working with a number of developers within the Strangford constituency to potentially adopt sewers and has issued 21 Preliminary Certificates of Completion which will allow the sewerage system to be adopted within 12 months of the date of issue, when a maintenance period has expired.

Unadopted Pumping Stations in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development which pumping stations in the Strangford constituency are to be adopted in the next six months.

(AQW 3671/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that there are currently no agreements in Strangford Constituency solely for pumping stations as they are normally processed as part of a sewerage system package including sewers within a development site. There are currently some 322 existing agreements in place with persons constructing or proposing to construct a sewerage system, to adopt the system at a future date provided the terms of the agreement have been met.

It is the responsibility of the persons constructing the sewerage system to advise NIW when they consider it is completed to a satisfactory standard, to enable the system to be inspected and a Certificate of Completion to be issued with a view to future adoption. NIW is currently working with developers within the Strangford constituency to potentially adopt pumping stations in the following locations:

- Moatlands, Ballyhalbert
- Ardnavelly Park, Comber
- New Court, Portavogie
- Dunsy Way, Comber
- Off Main Street, Cloughey

Adopted Pumping Stations in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development which pumping stations in the Strangford constituency have been adopted in the last (i) twelve months; (ii) three years; and (iii) five years.

(AQW 3672/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that details of the sewage pumping stations adopted in the Strangford constituency during the past 5 years are detailed in the table below.

Year	Sewage Pumping Station
2007	None
2008	Ravara, Ballygowan The Moorings, Killyleagh Braeside, Newtownards Ballvally, Millisle Carngrave Manor, Ballynahinch Ringbuoy, Comber
2009	None
2010	Whitecherry Hill, Killinchy Long Island Drive, Kircubbin Westlands, Portavogie Greyabbey Road, Ballywalter
2011 (To date)	Fairgreen Court, Killyleagh

Traffic Calming Measures at the Blackskull Junction

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the provision of traffic calming measures at the Blackskull Junction in the Upper Bann Constituency.

(AQW 3976/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As indicated in my letter to you on 14 September 2011, I advised that Blackskull would be considered for the provision of a traffic calming scheme when future works programmes are being compiled.

My Department's Roads Service has advised that preparation of these programmes is dependent upon confirmation of the budget allocations for the incoming financial year. This process usually begins in April of each financial year.

Roads Service has further advised that the relative priority of schemes can change as new traffic calming assessments are made. Consequently, at this time, it is not possible to indicate which schemes will be brought forward for consultation or implementation in the 2012/13 works programme, however I will endeavour to keep you updated regarding this issue.

A5 Road Project

Ms Gildernew asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the mechanism by which the £22m of funding will be returned to the A5 Road project; and the timescale in which it will happen.

(AQW 4015/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As the Member will be aware, the A5 scheme has been taken forward as a result of an agreement between the Executive and the Irish Government.

The recent decision by the Irish Government will undoubtedly affect the funding available to my Department. When funding is confirmed, I will review spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the Strategic Roads Programme.

Funding for the A5 Road Scheme

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the recent announcement by the Irish Government to postpone its funding for the A5 road scheme, whether he will review any future major road upgrading projects.

(AQW 4285/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware that the A5 scheme has been taken forward as a result of an agreement between the Executive and the Irish Government.

The recent decision by the Irish Government will undoubtedly affect the funding available to my Department. When funding is confirmed, I will review spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the Strategic Roads Programme.

I am conscious that investment in roads infrastructure is an essential component in creating jobs and future prosperity. In the short term, it provides much needed jobs in the construction sector and in the longer term, particularly in the case of strategic road improvements, it facilitates the economic growth which is key to our future competitiveness.

Funding for the A5 Road Scheme

Mr Givan asked the Minister for Regional Development what impact the decision by the Irish Government to postpone its funding for the A5 road scheme will have on the project and the construction company which was identified as the preferred bidder.

(AQW 4289/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware that the A5 scheme has been taken forward as a result of an agreement between the Executive and the Irish Government.

The recent decision by the Irish Government will undoubtedly affect the funding available to my Department. When funding is confirmed, I will review spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the Strategic Roads Programme.

As I am sure you will appreciate, until this work is completed, I will not be in a position to advise you of the implications for the construction companies currently employed on the A5 project.

Funding for the A5 Road Scheme

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the recent announcement about the funding from the Irish Government for the A5 road scheme, (i) for his assessment of the proposed A5 scheme; and (ii) whether he intends to progress with the A26 road scheme ahead of schedule to relieve pressure on the construction industry.

(AQW 4354/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As you are aware, the A5 scheme has been taken forward as a result of an agreement between the Executive and the Irish Government.

Since the Irish Government has indicated it is unable to part fund the A5 and A8 projects as originally envisaged, this will undoubtedly affect the funding available to my Department. When funding is confirmed, I will review spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the Strategic

Roads Programme. In the meantime, development work on the A26 project will continue, with the aim of publishing the draft Orders and Environmental Statement in 2012.

I am conscious that investment in roads infrastructure is an essential component in creating jobs and future prosperity. In the short term, it provides much needed jobs in the construction sector and in the longer term, particularly in the case of strategic road improvements, it facilitates the economic growth which is key to our future competitiveness.

Gortcorbies Climbing Lane Project on the A37

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will seek additional funding for the Gortcorbies climbing lane project on the A37.

(AQW 4374/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As the Irish Government has indicated that it is unable to part-fund the A5 & A8, as originally envisaged, this will undoubtedly affect the funding available to my Department. When funding is confirmed, I will review spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the Strategic Roads Programme.

I am conscious that investment in roads infrastructure is an essential component in creating jobs and future prosperity. In the short term, it provides much needed jobs in the construction sector and in the longer term, particularly in the case of strategic road improvements, it facilitates the economic growth which is key to our future competitiveness.

A5 Project

Mr Irwin asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of the reduced financial commitment to the A5 project, what plans he has to expedite the infrastructure development plans that are currently being considered by Roads Service in conjunction with Armagh City and District Council, to improve the traffic flow in and around Armagh city.

(AQW 4486/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As you are aware the A5 scheme has been taken forward as a result of an agreement between the Executive and the Irish Government.

Since the Irish Government has indicated it is unable to part fund the A5 and A8 projects as originally envisaged, this will undoubtedly affect the funding available to my Department. When funding is confirmed, I will review spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the Strategic Roads Programme.

I am conscious that investment in roads infrastructure is an essential component in creating jobs and future prosperity. In the short term, it provides much needed jobs in the construction sector and in the longer term, particularly in the case of strategic road improvements, it facilitates the economic growth which is key to our future competitiveness.

Park-and-Ride Facilities

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development what action is being taken to prevent people, who are not using public transport services, from making use of park and ride facilities.

(AQO 742/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Research indicates the importance of Park and Ride in maximising modal shift away from the private car to public transport and achieving more sustainable means of travel. The Regional Transportation Strategy identifies the provision of Park and Ride and Park and Share facilities as a key element of a more integrated transport infrastructure for Northern Ireland which is more environmentally friendly.

Despite the economic downturn, 77 million passengers used public transport in the last financial year. Railway passengers have increased with a record 10.4 million railway passengers in 2010/11. This is the highest level recorded since 1967 and represents almost two thirds of customer growth since 2002.

Public Transport: Winter Services

Mr Lynch asked the Minister for Regional Development what improvements and measures have been put in place since last year to ensure the adequate provision of public transport, especially in rural areas, in preparation for the anticipated harsh winter weather.

(AQO 743/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has completed a review of winter preparedness and resilience across the organisation, including rural areas, following the period of disruption last winter due to extreme weather.

The review undertaken looked at communications plans, fleet availability, staff resources, emergency cover and associated resource plans. An action plan was drawn up following last year's review and has been progressed.

Translink has also reviewed and updated its extreme weather procedures and reviewed the distribution of salt, de-icing and snow clearing products.

The provision of bus based transport depends upon the state of the roads generally. Roads Service has already carried out a significant amount of planning for this winter. I am confident that staffing arrangements have been put in place, including stand-by arrangements and that winter service equipment is in good working order. There is also an adequate stock of salt in place to ensure main roads are salted.

Home to school transport is an especially important issue in rural areas. Translink is contracted to provide school transport services by the education authorities and has given it priority.

A27: Jackson's Corner

Mr Irwin asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans there are to improve the road layout at Jackson's Corner on the main A27 Portadown/Newry Road, to reduce the number of accidents and damage to residential property.

(AQO 744/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am aware of the lobbying from local councillors within Armagh City and District Council and I recently met with Councillor Robert Turner when we discussed this location.

I can also advise that my Department's Roads Service is fully committed to improving road safety across the whole of Northern Ireland, through the completion of improvement schemes, where required.

As a result of the problems at this stretch of the A27 Portadown/Newry Road, known as Jackson's Corner, Roads Service is currently carrying out land negotiations, detailed design work and soil investigations for a road improvement scheme at this location.

Subject to the completion of the normal procedures, and acquisition of the necessary lands, Roads Service intends to commence a scheme at Jackson's Corner later this financial year.

Parking Enforcement Officers

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to extend the powers of Parking Enforcement Officers.

(AQO 745/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the powers of Traffic Attendants who are employed by Roads Service's parking enforcement contractor, NSL Services Group, are established in primary legislation, The Traffic Management (NI) Order 2005.

The main power of a Traffic Attendant is to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) to vehicles which are detected as parked in contravention of decriminalised parking restrictions. In addition, Traffic Attendants also have the power to inspect Blue Badges, in relation to the function of parking enforcement.

At present, there are no plans to extend these powers.

Public Transport: Young People

Mr A Maskey asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of whether budget cuts will affect access to public transport for young people.

(AQO 746/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Public transport funding helps support travel on the bus and rail networks. As key users of public transport, young people are important beneficiaries of the funding.

When formulating budgets and possible budget savings, young peoples' needs for access to public transport were considered along with the needs of the other groups using services.

Rather than budget cuts, baseline revenue funding actually increased between 2010/11 and the current financial year 2011/12 which is also the first year of Budget 2010. This is largely because of additional Public Service Obligation or deficit funding of the NI Railways network. This has been supplemented by £3.1m of additional funding for Concessionary Fares recently announced in October monitoring. You will be aware that Translink fares have not increased since last year and this will clearly benefit regular users of public transport.

The Budget 2010 also included savings delivery plans for public transport. These impact mainly in 2013/14 and 2014/15. Translink's detailed plans for these years have yet to be firmed up and will be adjusted closer to the time. There are clearly challenges to be faced in delivering these savings, particularly for bus services.

Currently children under the age of 16 can avail of half fare on public transport. Translink have identified students as a very important market and user group. In addition to providing services to/from colleges and universities, Translink have delivered a comprehensive programme of promotion and engagement including discounted fares to encourage students to use its bus and rail services.

Public Transport: Students

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development what proposals Translink has to encourage students to make greater use of bus and rail travel.

(AQO 747/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has identified students as a very important market and user group. In addition Translink provides focused services to/from colleges and universities such as the Unilink service from Queens University to the Ulster University Jordanstown and Metro 26 to the new Belfast Metropolitan College.

Translink has delivered a comprehensive programme of advertising, promotion, and information distribution. Translink has also had direct engagement through road shows at third level colleges.

Translink offers discounted fares to encourage students to use their bus and rail services.

Students in full-time education can obtain up to 13 months of discounted travel with a Translink Student Discount Card costing £7.00. Reductions are also available on cross border services. Discounts include:

- special student single and return fares on many Ulsterbus routes; as well as a discount of up to a sixth (15%) on standard adult fares of £2.00 or more; and
- a discount of up to a third (33%) on Northern Ireland Railways adult single fares, with Student Day Return Tickets available, costing twice the student single fare.

This year Translink's student campaign ran from early September until the beginning of October, with all the main Fresher events covered. Translink gave trial Student Discount Cards to those who attended these events. Translink also promotes the Student Discount Card by means of outdoor, social media and radio advertising. A number of partner offers are also available to students who obtain the Translink Student Discount Card.

There is also information for students available on the Translink website which has details of the discount card and discounts which are available on Translink services.

Roads: Noise Pollution

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development what methods are currently being used to address the issue of noise pollution from traffic on road networks close to residential areas.

(AQO 748/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware that I am due to meet him and residents of Knockeen Road, Ballymena later this month to discuss the issue of noise from the A26 Ballee Road East to M2 Ballymena Bypass Dualling Scheme.

For all new road schemes, a noise assessment is undertaken for all proposals during the scheme appraisal stage. Findings from this assessment work, which will include recommendations for mitigation, will be included in the environmental impact assessment (EIA), which forms part of the Environment Statement.

There are a range of noise mitigation measures that may be considered including route realignment, using natural topography to exploit any natural screening, acoustic barriers or particular road surface materials. Where appropriate, these types of measures may be incorporated into the design of the proposed scheme.

The Noise Insulation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 provides for the insulation of certain eligible buildings or facades against noise caused, or expected to be caused, by traffic using new roads and certain altered roads. In addition, if the value of a property is depreciated as a result of a road scheme, due to specified physical factors, one of which is noise, the owner may be entitled to compensation under Part II of The Land Acquisition and Compensation (Northern Ireland) Order 1973.

My Department has also been working closely with DOE on the Environmental Noise Directive. This Directive aims to avoid, prevent or reduce the harmful effects, including annoyance, due to exposure to environmental noise.

In 2007, my Department produced road traffic noise maps for major roads and all roads in Belfast and subsequently, also prepared a Roads Noise Action Plan. This action plan seeks to manage noise issues and effects from road traffic including noise reduction, if necessary, and the protection of relatively quiet urban areas where they are identified. Consideration of any potential noise mitigation measures will be based on practicality and cost effectiveness, as well as consistency with transport objectives.

Roads: Resurfacing

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development what information sharing takes place between the Department for Regional Development, Northern Ireland Water and Power NI to ensure that road resurfacing works are carried out concurrently.

(AQO 749/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service and the utility companies, including Northern Ireland Water and Power NI, share information on proposed work programmes at Divisional Road Authority and Utility Committee meetings, which take place every six months. Further information sharing takes place when potential resurfacing works and utility company works are entered on the computerised Northern Ireland Street Works Registration and Notification System (NISRANS).

Roads: Economic Development

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development what his Department is doing to prioritise improvements to the roads infrastructure to aid economic development.

(AQO 750/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Investment in roads infrastructure is an essential component in creating jobs and future prosperity. In the short term, it provides much needed jobs in the construction sector, and in the longer term, particularly in the case of strategic road improvements, it facilitates the economic growth which is key to our future competitiveness. The prioritisation of funding towards the strategic road network will be a contributing factor towards our economic recovery.

Given that the Irish Government has indicated it is unable to part-fund the A5 and A8 schemes as originally envisaged, there will be a reallocation of funding to my Department. When this is confirmed, I will consider spending priorities across my Department, including the impact on the strategic roads programme.

Department for Social Development

Remuneration Awarded to Atos Origin

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the levels of remuneration awarded to Atos Origin personnel for carrying out work capability assessments; (ii) the targets set, within the terms of a contract, for Atos Origin personnel to reduce the number of claimants qualifying for Employment and Support Allowance; and (ii) whether Atos Origin receives a bonus for meeting any such targets.

(AQW 4118/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): Following a procurement exercise, international healthcare provider, Atos Origin IT Services (Atos Healthcare), was appointed to provide Medical Support Services to the Department for Social Development. The contract was signed on 12 January 2011 and service provision commenced on 20 June 2011.

Atos Healthcare are contracted to provide work capability assessments for Employment and Support Allowance and medical assessments for Disability Living Allowance.

There are no targets within the contract with Atos Healthcare to reduce the number of claimants qualifying for Employment and Support Allowance. All decisions in respect of entitlement to the Employment Support Allowance are made by Social Security Agency staff based on the available evidence including the outcomes from the Work Capability Assessment and the customer's completed questionnaire. As there are no targets for reducing the number of claimants qualifying for Employment and Support Allowance, there are no related bonuses.

The levels of remuneration within the Medical Support Services Agreement for individual personnel are employment related matters for Atos and their employees; my Department does not have access to this information. I can confirm that the contract with Atos Origin IT Services has been awarded for 7 years with the option to extend for a further 3 years, and the total value of the contract over 7 years is £82m.

Site of the North Street flats, Newry

Mr Brady asked the Minister for Social Development whether there are any plans to build social housing on, or develop, the site of the North Street flats, Newry.

(AQW 4165/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have recently published the Newry City Centre Masterplan. This plan identifies the site of the North Street flats as an ideal location for a mixed use scheme, incorporating residential, commercial and community uses, with car parking to the rear and a new active frontage. Officials from my Regional Development Office will now start to work with the Masterplan Implementation Board to take forward the development of this site.

Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008

Mr Hussey asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the public benefit dispute element of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

(AQO 751/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In June 2010, Senior Counsel acting for the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland identified a technical difficulty with the “public benefit” test provision of the Charities Act (NI) 2008. In short, this arises out of the inclusion in Section 3 of the 2008 Act of a combination of unrelated provisions on the “public benefit” test from both the Charities Act 2006 (which applies in England and Wales) and the Scottish Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

No resolution was reached during the previous mandate and I am now considering afresh the options available to resolve this legal issue. I have received advice from the Attorney General and officials from my Department briefed the Social Development Committee on 20 October. I have also written to the Treasury Minister with responsibility for charity tax matters to establish if changes to the public benefit provisions will have any implications for HM Revenue & Customs. Once a response is received, I will make a decision and bring forward a Charities Amendment Bill to the Executive for consideration.

Voluntary and Community Sector: Concordat with the Northern Ireland Government

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the recently published Concordat between the Voluntary and Community Sector and the Northern Ireland Government.

(AQO 752/11-15)

Mr McCausland: It is important that Government and the voluntary and community sector work in partnership to build a better society. Everyone recognises that good working relationships between Government and the Sector are vital to the public interest.

My assessment is that the Concordat creates an important framework between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector which supports opportunities for greater co-operation, increased collaboration, modernisation of service delivery arrangements, a reduction of the administrative burden and the enhancement of skills.

All signatories to the Concordat share the belief that these partnership arrangements will assist citizens and communities to empower themselves, make a significant contribution to democratic governance, bring people and politicians closer together and provide opportunities to influence decision making and resource allocation.

Like all of my Ministerial colleagues who have also signed up to the Concordat, I believe that the Concordat establishes new structures of engagement and can make a worthwhile contribution to a more cohesive society here in Northern Ireland.

Social Housing: Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Ms Lewis asked the Minister for Social Development what percentage of social housing stock is supplied with gas and what proportion within that category are fitted with carbon monoxide detectors.

(AQO 759/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Approximately 36% of Housing Executive dwellings currently have gas heating. The percentage figure within that category fitted with carbon monoxide detectors is not available as the Housing Executive does not provide carbon monoxide detectors with gas heating.

Carbon monoxide can be produced by any fuel burning heating appliance not functioning properly. If an appliance is regularly serviced (that is, annually) by a competent person and is not of unreasonable age or condition it is very unlikely to produce carbon monoxide. The Housing Executive mitigates the risk of carbon monoxide build ups in its dwellings through regular inspection and service regimes, as well as the specifications for new heating installations. For example, most gas boilers are room-sealed drawing combustion air from and discharging flue gases to outside air and therefore cannot, without major physical damage to the appliance, release carbon monoxide into a dwelling.

However, the Housing Executive earlier this year reviewed its policy on the provision of carbon monoxide detectors and as a result carbon monoxide detectors have been installed in almost all their properties that have a solid fuel glass fronted fire, any remaining such properties will have a detector installed during routine servicing. The Housing Executive is also currently installing carbon monoxide detectors in rooms where flues from gas heating appliances are concealed in a void or duct where the flues cannot be inspected.

In relation to Housing Associations, approximately 46% of their properties are supplied with gas, and of these, approximately 49% have carbon monoxide alarms fitted. Whilst most Housing Associations have detectors fitted to a number of properties, 17 Housing Associations have fitted or plan to fit carbon monoxide detectors to all their properties supplied with gas.

Whilst there is currently no statutory requirement to fit carbon monoxide detectors, there are some changes to Part L (Combustion appliances and flue storage systems) of the Building Regulations that will come into effect in the first quarter 2012 and will include a new regulation to require the provision of carbon monoxide alarms in dwellings where a combustion appliance is newly installed or replaced.

I will be writing to all Housing Associations and to the Housing Executive to request that they consider the installation of Carbon Monoxide detectors in all homes.

Welfare Reform

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the impact that the welfare reform proposals will have on people in most need.

(AQO 760/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Welfare Reform Bill currently progressing through the House of Lords at Westminster introduces a wide range of changes to our existing Social Security, Benefits' and Welfare system. As the Assembly will be aware we do have devolved responsibility for Social Security matters here in Northern Ireland but we are constrained from delivering our benefits much differently from the rest of the UK both by logistical matters such as IT support systems and most importantly by the principle of parity which dictates that where we do things differently we will bear the financial consequences.

This principle of 'parity' dictates that an individual in Northern Ireland will be subject to the same conditions by way of entitlement, and will receive the same by Social Security benefits as an individual elsewhere in the UK.

My Department has carried out a 'draft' Equality Impact Assessment on the proposals for welfare reform here in Northern Ireland and we are currently consulting on this EQIA – closing date for

comments is 30th November. Following this period of consultation I will consider all the views expressed and bring forward my proposals to this Assembly.

The proposals being advanced at Westminster represent the most radical overhaul of our Welfare system for a number of decades. Whilst the agenda for reform is wide ranging few can argue with the principles behind the need for such reform. The Coalition Government is seeking to simplify our existing benefits' system, incentivise individuals to take up employment, to ensure that work always pays and to ensure the long-term future affordability of our welfare system.

Can I say in closing that as Minister for Social Development I do not welcome proposals that will inevitably impact on household incomes here in Northern Ireland. I recognise of course that reform is necessary but I will be closely examining proposals, in the context of parity. In progressing the reform agenda here in Northern Ireland I will continue to endeavour to ensure that our future welfare system is fit for purpose and that it reflects the values of any modern democracy which seeks to provide the support necessary to protect those most in need.

Social Housing: East Londonderry

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development how he intends to increase the availability of social housing in the areas of highest social deprivation in East Londonderry.

(AQO 761/11-15)

Mr McCausland: This year I am making nearly £143m available to support the construction of 1400 new homes right across Northern Ireland. As far as East Londonderry is concerned, there are currently four schemes included in this year's Social Housing Development Programme that could provide 38 units of accommodation. Housing Associations have also expressed an interest in a further 12 sites across the constituency with the potential to deliver 112 new homes. I will ensure these are given full consideration when the Social Housing Development Programme for 2012 – 2015 is submitted for my approval next year.

Alongside the construction of these new homes, I also want to see more empty homes brought back into use. This is another avenue that can help meet housing need and I have already tasked the Housing Executive to bring forward plans to tackle the blight of empty homes.

My officials have raised concerns with me in relation to this year's housing budget and I have now written to the Chairman of the Housing Executive to stress the importance I attach, and the personal commitment I expect from him, to ensure that all monies allocated are fully utilised and deliver both in terms of the Social Housing Development programme and the maintenance programme, as well as the additional funding that was secured to support a dedicated double glazing scheme.

Social Housing: Carrickfergus

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Social Development what steps the Housing Executive is taking to reduce waiting lists for social housing in the Carrickfergus area.

(AQO 762/11-15)

Mr McCausland: This year I am making nearly £143m available to support the construction of 1400 new homes right across Northern Ireland. As far as Carrickfergus is concerned, there are currently two schemes included in this year's Social Housing Development Programme that could provide 32 units of accommodation.

However, it is clear that with a need for up to 60 new homes each year, more must be done to identify sites to support new housing in the town and reduce the waiting lists further.

The Social Housing Development Programme for 2012 - 2015 is currently being formulated by the Housing Executive and I have advised them that more must be done to meet housing need in the town. I shall expect to see evidence of this when the draft Programme is submitted to me for approval next year.

Alongside the construction of these new homes, I also want to see more empty homes brought back into use. This is another avenue that can help meet housing need and I have already tasked the Housing Executive to bring forward plans to tackle the blight of empty homes.

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DSD: Voluntary and Community Sector

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to outline how the differences between the voluntary sector and the community sector are recognised by his Department, through the development of departmental policies and programmes.

(AQO 763/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Northern Ireland benefits greatly from a vibrant and diverse voluntary and community sector. In many respects, voluntary organisations and community groups share similar principles and work towards common goals and the Executive's commitments to joint working with the sector that are enshrined in the Concordat apply equally both.

- By their nature, community groups are associations of people who come together to pursue a common concern or interest, often on a self help basis. Most typically they have as their area of interest a neighbourhood or village; they rely very heavily on volunteer effort and tend to operate from a low or no income base.
- The Department endeavours to tailor its policies, programmes and working practices to meet the needs of this wide spectrum of voluntary and community activity. Financial support is made available to both voluntary organisations and community groups through a number of programme interventions including Neighbourhood Renewal and Areas at Risk both of which recognise the centrality of community groups to neighbourhood regeneration. Officials in the Department provide a range of development support to community organisations and financial assistance is also provided to councils and to a range of infrastructure bodies to ensure that the views of small community organisations are represented in consultation processes. The Department's policy and programme support for volunteering is designed to enhance volunteering opportunities and bring benefit to both voluntary organisations and community groups.

Housing Executive: Vacant Houses

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has any plans to refurbish vacant houses within the Housing Executive stock for renting or selling.

(AQO 764/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has planned schemes for major refurbishment of 716 vacant properties. A further 617 vacant Housing Executive properties are available for letting and 828 are pending sale or demolition, as at 19 October 2011.

An empty homes working group has been established and includes representatives from Housing Division, Urban Regeneration, the Housing Executive and Land & Property Services. The previous Housing Executive empty homes strategy action plan attempted to tackle empty homes across Northern Ireland, although the measures included were limited and primarily focused on advice and didn't make use of enforcement provisions at all. The group agreed that a new action plan will contain a fuller range of methods. The aim is to have two pilots established before the end of the year.

Neighbourhood Renewal: Capital Projects

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister for Social Development whether any Neighbourhood Renewal capital projects have been identified for completion during the current budgetary period.

(AQO 765/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Yes, a number of capital projects have been identified for completion during the current budgetary period, some 36 projects have been awarded contracts to a value of £6.6 million to date.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Members' Pension Funds

Mr McKay asked the Assembly Commission for its assessment of the article in 'The Detail' on 13 October 2011 concerning Members' pension funds; and whether any action is being taken to address this issue.

(AQW 4238/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Trustees of the Assembly Members Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) appoint an Investment Manager to invest the pension fund in accordance with the Statement of Investment Principles which is available on the Pension Scheme page of the Assembly website at http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/pension/investment_principles.htm.

The Statement of Investment Principles and the appointment of the Investment Manager is a matter for the Pension Trustees. The Commission is informed that the Trustees will review the Statement of Investment Principles at its next meeting due to be held in January 2012.

The Commission is assured that the Trustees have carried out their duties in good faith and in accordance with the law as it relates to pensions, tax and trust matters.

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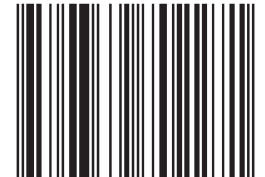
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