

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 17 February 2012**

**Volume 72, No WA2**



# Contents

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister ..... WA 195

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development ..... WA 202

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure ..... WA 210

Department of Education ..... WA 219

Department for Employment and Learning..... WA 255

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment ..... WA 263

Department of the Environment..... WA 279

Department of Finance and Personnel ..... WA 285

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety..... WA 289

Department of Justice ..... WA 311

Department for Regional Development..... WA 338

Department for Social Development ..... WA 356

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission..... WA 378

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

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

# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 17 February 2012

## Written Answers to Questions

### Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

#### **Social Investment Fund**

**Mr McKay** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how their Department intends to ensure that the Social Investment Fund assists the most deprived communities in the Moyle and Ballymoney council areas.

**(AQW 5488/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister):** The public consultation process ended on 23 December 2011; the outcome of this will inform how the Social Investment Fund will operate and how specific areas and communities here will benefit.

Areas in need should benefit from a co-ordinated and strategic approach to issues of poverty and disadvantage which will see those communities determine the priorities in their areas and develop responses in partnership with Government, the statutory sector and the voluntary and community sector.

#### **Recruitment Process for the Police Ombudsman**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) whether the criteria that will be used to recruit the new Police Ombudsman has been determined; (ii) when the post will be advertised; and (iii) what involvement the Commissioner for Public Appointments has had in relation to the recruitment process for the Police Ombudsman.

**(AQW 5637/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Criteria to be applied in the recruitment process for the office of Police Ombudsman have been determined. They were included in an information pack about the recruitment process and an application form which were provided to prospective applicants.

Advertisements inviting applications for the post were published in the press from 15 December 2011, with a closing date for applications of 20 January 2012.

The recruitment process will be subject to regulation by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, and our officials met with the Commissioner when planning the arrangements.

#### **Strategic Support Fund application by FAIR**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) when the Departmental Solicitor's Office received a request for guidance from the Community Relations Council, in relation to the Strategic Support Fund application by FAIR; and (ii) why there has been a delay in providing a response.

**(AQW 6929/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** This question relates to the provision of legal advice by the Departmental Solicitor's Office to a Public Body. The provision of such advice is confidential and privileged. Therefore it is not appropriate for us to discuss or comment on such provision.

## Planning Appeals Commission

**Mr Lunn** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the rules applied by the Planning Appeals Commission if objections that are notified at an early stage are later withdrawn.

**(AQW 7126/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Planning Appeals Commission is an independent tribunal Non-Departmental Public Body. Given its independent tribunal status, its Deputy Chief Commissioner has been asked to provide a response directly to you, and we understand that she has written to you in the following terms:

*“If an objection(s) is withdrawn in an appeal or public inquiry, the Planning Appeals Commission’s practice is to notify all parties who are directly involved in that particular appeal of the withdrawal. No further consideration is given to the objection. This procedure is followed irrespective of the stage of processing reached. I would be happy to provide any further information you require arising out of this response or to meet with you to discuss the matter if that would be more suitable”.*

## After School Clubs

**Mr Moutray** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) how many after school clubs their Department has funded in the Upper Bann area, in each of the last three years; and (ii) the level of funding allocated to each club.

**(AQW 7168/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** From 1 April 2011, in the absence of a lead department and while work progresses to develop the Childcare Strategy, OFMDFM has provided interim funding to support the PlayBoard After School Childcare Project. The PlayBoard Project administers funding to 48 after school projects, including two projects in the Upper Bann area, Kids United which received a grant of £13,889 and Zero-8-Teen which received a grant of £16,342

In the two preceding years, DHSSPS administered funding to the PlayBoard After School Childcare Project.

## Former Ballykelly Army Base

**Mr Campbell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the cost, to date, of maintaining the former Ballykelly Army Base since its transfer from the Ministry of Defence in 2011.

**(AQW 7435/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Shackleton Barracks at Ballykelly was fully transferred to the Executive on 7 October 2011, but under the transfer agreement between the Ministry of Defence and OFMDFM, costs have been incurred from 1 April 2011. The cost of maintaining the site up until 31 January 2012 is £410,975. This is broken down as follows:-

Security	£206,934
Utilities	£ 96,919
Maintenance/other costs	£107,122 (includes essential maintenance only)

## Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

**Mr Givan** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the cost and the length of time it has taken the Planning Appeals Commission to complete its consideration of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan.

**(AQW 7536/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Planning Appeals Commission is an independent tribunal Non-Departmental Public Body. Given its independent tribunal status, its Chief Commissioner has been asked to provide a response directly to you, and we understand that she has written to you in the following terms:

“The Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan was published by the Department [of the Environment] in November 2004 and is the most comprehensive Plan ever produced by the Department extending to six local government districts. It generated almost 4,300 objections which were categorised by the Department [of the Environment] into more than 7,200 elements. The Commission conducted a Public Inquiry to consider the objections to the Plan between April 2007 and the beginning of May 2008. This Inquiry was the most lengthy and complex in the history of the Commission. In addition, the Commission considered many written objections which were not heard at the Inquiry.

The Inquiry report has been provided to the Department [of the Environment] in stages. The report on strategic Retail matters was provided in January 2009 and the remainder of the Strategic Plan Framework in March 2011. The reports into site specific issues in Belfast, Lisburn and Castlereagh Districts were provided in July 2011, Lagan Valley Regional Park and North Down District in September 2011 and Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus Districts January 2012.

The total cost of the Commission’s report is estimated to be approximately £690,500. I would be happy to provide any further information you require arising out of this response or to meet you to discuss the matter if you would find that more suitable”.

### After School Clubs

**Mr Weir** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many after school clubs their Department has funded in each of the last three years; and the level of funding allocated to each club. **(AQW 7580/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** In 2011/12, OFMDFM provided £707,566 to PlayBoard to support 48 after school projects. Details of this funding, including PlayBoard’s administration and support costs, are set out in the table below:

After School Project	Funding for 2011/12 (£)
174 Trust ASC	13,128
An Droichead	11,165
Ardoyne ASC	8,066
Ballymac	11,300
Beechmount ASC	15,864
Bloomfield PlayCare	6,262
Bluegrass ASC	6,299
Carrickmore	12,181
Carryduff ASC	13,961
Chinese Welfare	13,656
Club Utd	11,500
Draperstown / Ballinasreen ASC	16,680
Drumahoe ASC	16,056
Erne East Derry Gannon ASC	9,129
Erne East Donagh ASC	6,053
Fivemiletown ASC	8,594
Funtime ASC	9,986

<b>After School Project</b>	<b>Funding for 2011/12 (£)</b>
Glencraig ASC	9,131
Glenullin ASC	12,576
Ionad Uibh Eanhach	13,577
Just Kids	17,302
Kesh ASC	7,330
Kids inn out of School	4,660
Kids United ASC	13,889
Kidsview Out of School Club	12,113
Kidz Lodge	9,323
Kilrea ASC	13,954
Laughterland OOSC	6,177
Lisbane ASC	6,455
Loughgiel OOSC	16,193
Nest / Claudy	10,225
Oakwood intergrated	8,680
Oasis ASC	9,000
Playboard Development Project	94,264
Playlinks Strangford ASC	14,576
Pomeroy ASC	16,294
Rascals	9,852
Rasharkin Women's Group	10,858
Short Strand	10,865
Sixmilecross	12,181
Skools Out Club	12,960
South Armagh CCC	29,000
St Joseph's [Cool Kids]	10,578
St Vincent (Mountainview)	14,458
Strabane OOSC	12,965
Strathroy ASC	7,078
Tullymore ASC	12,324
Zero-8-Teen	16,342
PlayBoard Admin and Support Costs	62,506
<b>Total</b>	<b>707,566</b>

In the preceding two years, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) administered the funding of the PlayBoard After School Childcare Scheme. OFMDFM funding transfers to DHSSPS, in support of this Scheme, were a significant element of the overall funding package, as shown in the table below:

Funding for 2009/10 (£)	Funding for 2010/11 (£)
OFMDFM £786k	OFMDFM £577k
DHSSPS £80k	DE £100k
DETI £60k	DETI £60k
<b>Total £926K</b>	<b>Total £737K</b>

### Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether their departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to their capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7615/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** While some revenue costs may be directly incurred as a result of capital expenditure, there is no direct correlation between the two categories of expenditure. Therefore, OFMDFM's revenue expenditure does not vary proportionately to capital budget allocations.

### Childcare Fund

**Mr Agnew** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) how much of the £3 million allocated to the Childcare Fund has been spent, or allocated, in this financial year to date; and (ii) the level and purpose of the funding allocated to (a) each Department and its arm's length bodies; and (b) non-governmental organisations in this financial year.

**(AQW 7673/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** A total of £322,000 has been allocated from the Executive's Childcare Fund in the current financial year in response to approved departmental bids for additional funding. This funding has been allocated as shown below:

Allocation from Childcare Fund	2011/12 (£)
The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety secured £250,000 from the Childcare Fund to expedite work undertaken by the Health and Social Care Board to reduce the backlog in the registration and inspections of childminding and daycare settings and to implement revised procedures to mitigate future delays.	250,000
The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister secured £20,000 from the Childcare Fund to enable PlayBoard to provide additional grant funding support to South Armagh Childcare Consortium. The additional grant funding will enable the Consortium to continue to develop towards financial sustainability.	20,000
The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure secured £52,000 from the Childcare Fund. This funding has been allocated to NI Screen to extend the after schools Film Club in extended service schools from 68 schools to 338 schools.	52,000
	<b>£322,000</b>

The remaining monies have been ringfenced into next year therefore ensuring that no funding from the £12 million total is lost.

## Social Investment Fund

**Mr Copeland** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether drug and alcohol addiction will be addressed as part of the Social Investment Fund.

**(AQW 7712/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The proposed Strategic Objectives of the Social Investment Fund are to support communities to:

- build pathways to employment;
- tackle the systemic issues linked to deprivation;
- increase community services; and
- address dereliction.

Delivery is intended to be through the development and delivery of strategic area plans which will be co-ordinated by locally established steering groups, representative of community and voluntary, business, political and statutory representatives.

Whilst drug and alcohol addiction may be considered under the strategic objective focused on tackling the systemic issues linked to deprivation, it will be for communities working with the statutory agencies and political representatives within the social investment zones to identify, prioritise and evidence needs and propose associated interventions for inclusion in the area plan.

## Child Poverty

**Mrs Dobson** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the specific actions they are taking to address child poverty.

**(AQO 1217/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Child Poverty Act 2010 required the Executive to lay a Child Poverty Strategy before the Assembly. The Act also places a statutory duty on all departments to describe the progress that they are making in contributing to meeting the target to eradicate child poverty by 2020.

To meet this statutory obligation, the Executive agreed the 'Improving Children's Life Chances' Strategy which was laid before the Assembly in March 2011. The Strategy sets out the priority action areas proposed by the Executive to address the issue of child poverty.

We continue to work with colleagues in other departments to finalise a draft action plan which will detail those key departmental initiatives and signature projects to progress the strategic priorities and priority action areas identified in the child poverty strategy.

## Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration

**Mr Hussey** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration.

**(AQO 1219/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Party leaders agreed to the establishment of the cross party working group on the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration strategy in June 2011 and representatives from each of the five main parties were nominated.

The group held its first meeting on 27 September and continues to meet on a weekly basis. The working group received a presentation from the consultation analyst at the outset of the process and this helped inform the work plan of the group.

The current priority is to establish a political consensus and agree on the strategic direction against the issues raised by the consultation.

The cross party working group will continue to work over the coming weeks with a view to publishing the final strategy and an associated action plan very shortly.

### **Age Discrimination Legislation**

**Ms Ruane** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether they are preparing any age discrimination legislation, other than the legislation to extend age discrimination to the provision of goods, facilities and services, as outlined in the Programme for Government.

**(AQO 1221/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We have no plans to introduce any age discrimination legislation, other than that intended to extend age discrimination legislation to the provision of goods, facilities and services.

### **Social Investment Fund**

**Mr Givan** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Social Investment Fund.  
**(AQO 1222/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The public consultation, on the Social Investment Fund proposals, ended on 23 December 2011. During the consultation period, six public events were held, at which initial proposals were outlined and then discussed in detail. Attendance at these public events was high, with almost 240 participants.

Our officials also met with a number of key statutory bodies and other departments. This was with a view to ensuring that the Social Investment Fund complements other area based initiatives.

There has been a significant response to the consultation with over three hundred formal consultation responses received. We are currently considering those responses.

We hope to be in a position to publish a consultation report in the coming months. In parallel, we will develop and bring final proposals to the Executive, with a view to having the Fund fully operational as soon as possible.

### **Immigrants**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister if there is a long-term policy to assist immigrants who are facing destitution.

**(AQO 1223/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** This Department remains committed to providing strategic support and funding to build capacity within our minority ethnic communities. A number of organisations which have been in receipt of funding from the 2011/12 Minority Ethnic Development Fund have been central in helping to address the hardships suffered by people without recourse to public funds.

The shared learning from this work is currently being considered along with the recommendations of the recent evaluation of the Minority Ethnic Development Fund. Together with the input of the Racial Equality Panel these findings will inform proposals for future funding in the sector and the development of the revised Racial Equality Strategy. The effective provision of support to assist those migrants who find themselves facing destitution will remain central to this work.

### **Social Investment Fund**

**Ms P Bradley** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Social Investment Fund.

**(AQO 1224/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The public consultation, on the Social Investment Fund proposals, ended on 23 December 2011. During the consultation period, six public events were held, at which initial proposals were outlined and then discussed in detail. Attendance at these public events was high, with almost 240 participants.

Our officials also met with a number of key statutory bodies and other departments. This was with a view to ensuring that the Social Investment Fund complements other area based initiatives.

There has been a significant response to the consultation with over three hundred formal consultation responses received. We are currently considering those responses.

We hope to be in a position to publish a consultation report in the coming months. In parallel, we will develop and bring final proposals to the Executive, with a view to having the Fund fully operational as soon as possible.

## Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

### Single Farm Payment

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how much her Department has spent on producing the new farm maps; (ii) how accurate these new maps are; and (iii) what responsibility her Department will take should any Single Farm Payment discrepancies arise as a result of these maps.

**(AQW 7286/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):**

- (i) The re-mapping project will develop a new Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) and so far has cost £ 9.695 m.
- (ii) The new LPIS maps will be based on the latest aerial photography available and will reflect the best information we have concerning land boundaries, as well as an assessment of ineligible items based upon this photography. It is possible that the current situation on the ground may have changed since the aerial photograph was taken. The guidance which will issue with the maps will make it clear that farmers need to examine them carefully and advise DARD of required adjustments so that their map can be amended. The accuracy will depend, therefore, on the age of the aerial photography upon which it is based and the completeness of the additional information coming from the farmer. If the farm business has been inspected, the accuracy of the map will reflect the detailed inspection results.
- (iii) The maps issued by DARD are to help farmers make accurate claims for area-based schemes and are based on the most up-to-date information available. While DARD makes every effort to ensure that these maps are as accurate as possible, there may be changes on the ground since the aerial photographs were taken. In addition, not every ineligible feature will be clearly visible on the maps. Farmers have a responsibility to report these changes to DARD. Farmers know their land best and it is their responsibility to ensure that they do not claim for ineligible areas and that they submit accurate claims. It is most important that farmers do not rely on the maps alone in completing their claims.

### Country Management Scheme

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if land is sold under the Country Management Scheme (CMS), will the scheme support the transfer to the new owner; (ii) if not, why that is the case; and (iii) whether she will consider changing this CMS policy to aid new and expanding farmers.

**(AQW 7293/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department already has a policy for transferring agreements to new landowners in agri-environment schemes that are open for applications. Although after schemes have closed there

are administrative difficulties in transferring agreements between owners, I have asked my officials to consider how we can facilitate such transfers in future.

### **Land Parcel Identification System Project**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development where the £800,000 easement resulted from in the Land Parcel Identification System project.

**(AQW 7522/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The easement of £800,000 was necessary for 2 reasons.

Firstly, plans for the retrospective adjustment of SFP entitlements have not been finalised and the work will not now take place during this financial year. The projected staffing costs associated with this work have, therefore, been eased.

Secondly, the Positional Improvement (to ensure that the Land & Property Services (LPS) and DARD maps are more consistent with modern Global Positioning System (GPS) measurements and European Standards) aspect of the work which LPS is doing as part of the Land Parcel Identification System project did not progress as quickly as had been anticipated when the budget was set.

### **Mobile Phone Applications**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by her Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7538/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:**

- (i) At present there are no mobile phone applications that have been designed by my Department for use by the general public.
- (ii) My Department is currently working on the development of a mobile phone application that will allow registered APHIS on Line users to securely register births and deaths of cattle and view herd details.

### **Fishermen in Co. Down**

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what progress has been made towards ensuring that fishermen in Co. Down are not restricted in terms of fishing effort and licences as a result of the concordat that was drawn up by the Fisheries Ministers from the devolved institutions in the UK.

**(AQW 7571/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Concordat does not put any restrictions on fishing effort and licenses. The purpose of the Concordat is to define the extent to which the four fisheries administrations can exercise local management of licensing and flexibility to administer fishing quotas.

### **Abuse of Animals**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what steps she is taking to address the abuse of animals.

**(AQW 7621/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Welfare of Animals Act 2011 replaces the Welfare of Animals Act 1972 and is a major step forward in terms of protecting the welfare of both farmed and non-farmed animals.

I take the welfare of animals very seriously and I am committed to implementing this new legislation. The majority of the provisions contained in the 2011 Act came into operation on 11 July 2011, introducing a new duty of care for all vertebrate animals and new powers to take action to prevent

animals from suffering as opposed to having to wait until suffering occurs. The PSNI also now has stronger powers to deal with animal fighting. The penalties for serious animal welfare offences have been increased and the new penalties for all animal welfare offences will become fully operational here on 2 April 2012.

The Act provides powers to regulate, through subordinate legislation, a wide range of activities involving animals. In the coming months I propose to introduce a range of subordinate legislation to protect the welfare of farmed animals and dogs in breeding establishments. We are also currently revising legislation regarding the welfare of animals at slaughter. My Department is also preparing to publish codes of practice setting out the standards of care required for cattle, sheep, broiler chickens, dogs, cats, horses, rabbits and non-human primates.

My Department will continue to work to prevent cases of cruelty and neglect concerning farmed animals and from April 2012 Councils here will have a new role in the enforcement of welfare in respect of non-farmed animals. My Department is providing annual funding to help Councils implement their new role, starting with £404k funding this year to meet their requirements as they prepare for implementation. Next year, £780k funding is available, which increases by £20k for each of the remaining 2 years in this budget period.

## Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to her capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7638/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** DARD's current expenditure budget allocations do not vary proportionately to its capital budget allocation.

Although current expenditure budget allocations do not vary proportionately to capital expenditure allocations, there may be associated ongoing current expenditure in respect of depreciation and running costs.

DARD's current and capital budget allocations are:

	<b>2011/12 £m</b>	<b>2012/13 £m</b>	<b>2013/14 £m</b>	<b>2014/15 £m</b>	<b>Total £m</b>
Current	213.0	223.3	212.9	211.5	860.8
Capital	21.2	19.5	22.6	29.7	93.0

## Fishing Industry

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what assistance her Department is giving to the local fishing industry in arriving at a selective gear which is acceptable to the industry before July 2012.

**(AQW 7677/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department is funding a gear trials project through the European Fisheries Fund which will be carried out in partnership with industry. The project team includes representatives from our 2 Producer Organisations, local net makers, AFBI scientists, and DARD policy officials.

The objective of these trials is to develop a nephrops fishing gear which is capable of reducing the cod by-catch to below 1.5%. A successful outcome will enable our vessels to fish the prawn quota in future unfettered by restrictions on the number of days they can spend at sea.

The project team has identified 5 different designs for highly selective gears for testing. The trails will take place on twin-rig and single rig vessels over a period of 20 days during February and March. The outcome of those gear trails will be reported to the Commission and its Scientific, Technical and

Economic Committee for Fisheries (STECF). STECF is responsible for assessing whether fishing gears are capable of achieving the objectives set in the Cod Recovery Plan.

## Fishing Industry

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development if she will ensure that the views of the fishing industry are respected should a new selective gear, which is acceptable to the industry, not be arrived at by July 2012.

**(AQW 7679/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The commitment made to the European Commission was that by July 2012 our prawn fleet would be using fishing gear that would enable them to be exempt from the effort control regime imposed by the cod plan. That means that the net must be capable of reducing the cod catch to below 1.5%. This is a challenging objective but I am not anticipating failure. I am optimistic that the experience and ingenuity of local fishermen can be used to come up with the very best solution - one that will contribute to the objectives of the Cod Plan but be suitable and readily used by our fleet.

## Egg Producers

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 6100/11-15, whether all egg producers had stopped using battery cages by the end of January 2012.

**(AQW 7695/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Whilst a very small minority of egg producers had not completed the necessary changes by the end of January 2012, I am very pleased that as a result of my robust enforcement policy, together with the efforts of the industry, the north of Ireland is now fully compliant with the Laying Hens Directive. The European Commission has been advised of this.

## Mill Street Coleraine

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the work which commenced on 19 September 2011 at Mill Street Coleraine, and which is advertised at the location as being completed in 11 weeks, will be finished.

**(AQW 7717/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I am pleased to say that the specialist work in the adjoining Lodge Burn River has been completed and the associated traffic restrictions to Mill Street were lifted on 8th February 2012. Other construction work in the river is programmed to finish at the end of April 2012.

## Animal Cruelty

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in light of the recent cases of animal cruelty, what plans she has to strengthen animal welfare legislation.

**(AQW 7728/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Welfare of Animals Act 2011 replaces the Welfare of Animals Act 1972 and is a major step forward in terms of protecting the welfare of both farmed and non-farmed animals.

I take the welfare of animals very seriously and I am committed to implementing this new legislation. The majority of the provisions contained in the 2011 Act came into operation on 11 July 2011, introducing a new duty of care for all vertebrate animals and new powers to take action to prevent animals from suffering as opposed to having to wait until suffering occurs.

The 2011 Act provides powers to regulate, through subordinate legislation, a wide range of activities involving animals. In the coming months I propose to introduce a range of subordinate legislation to protect the welfare of farmed animals and dogs in breeding establishments. We are also currently revising legislation regarding the welfare of animals at slaughter. My Department is also preparing to

publish codes of practice setting out the standards of care required for farmed animals, dogs, cats, horses, rabbits and non-human primates.

### **Animal Welfare Legislation**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why the offence of 'conditions likely to cause suffering to animals' is not included in animal welfare legislation; and what plans she has to provide for this in the future.

**(AQW 7729/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** It is already an offence under the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 if the actions of a person or the failure of that person to act causes an animal to suffer or is likely to cause suffering. The Act allows action to be taken if an animal is likely to suffer if its circumstances do not change; it is not necessary to wait until suffering has occurred. The powers in the Act significantly improve protection for the welfare of animals here. One of the key provisions of the Act is the introduction of a duty of care. This means that a person commits an offence if they do not take such steps as are reasonable in all circumstances to ensure that the needs of an animal for which they are responsible are met. These needs include a suitable environment and to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

### **Incidents of Dog Attacks**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether incidents of dog attacks that are dealt with through a standard reporting system in all Councils.

**(AQW 7731/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Under Article 52 of the Dogs Order 1983, each District Council is obliged to provide my Department with information relating to the operation of the Order including the number of licences issued, the number of stray dogs seized and the number of dog attacks investigated. Each Council provides a quarterly return to my Department using a standard proforma. The data is collated by my officials and an annual summary of this information is circulated to each Council.

The Dogs (Amendment) Act 2011 introduced a number of new provisions into the Dogs Order 1983 including new licence fees, compulsory microchipping and new powers for dog wardens. My Department has therefore been working with Councils to review the statistical information that the Councils provide in order to ensure a consistent approach. When this work has concluded, my Department will issue guidance to the Councils to ensure reporting consistency across all Council areas in relation to the information required.

### **Common Agricultural Policy**

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what recent discussions she has had with her counterpart for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in London regarding the implications for farmers of the proposals to reform the Common Agricultural Policy.

**(AQW 7735/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I have had a number of meetings on CAP reform with the Defra Ministers, Caroline Spelman MP and Jim Paice MP. This included meetings around the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Councils in October and November 2011 as well as a joint meeting with the other devolved Ministers on 25 October 2011 and with the EU Agricultural Commissioner, Dacian Cioloș, on 14 November 2011. Further meetings on CAP reform are envisaged as the negotiations progress.

The discussions I have had so far have given me the opportunity to raise key issues of concern, including the move to a flat rate payments system, greening, the definition of an active farmer, the need for an increased share of the EU Pillar II budget and the overall complexity of the proposals put forward by the Commission.

## Marine Organisms

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the total tonnage of marine organisms that are currently discarded by the trawl fleet annually; and for an estimate of the proportion of this discard that consists of bass, based on the data for bass bycatch.

**(AQW 7747/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Absolute information on the total discards of marine organisms by DARD administered vessels using trawl nets is not available as fishermen are not required to record the fish that they discard. However my Department can supply discard estimates based on fleet sampling and observer data obtained by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute. This is not available in the form requested at present but I will send the estimates to the Member by 31st March 2012.

## Draft Protection and Conservation of Sea Bass (NI) Regulations 2012

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that the objective of the draft Protection and Conservation of Sea Bass (NI) Regulations 2012 is to limit the mortality of bass, what consideration has been given to the suggestion that creating an exemption for trawled bass, which allows bass to enter the supply chain, may lead to the enforcement of the legislation being undermined; and whether the targeting of bass that may derive from trawl bycatch escalates, actual levels of bass mortality may increase.

**(AQW 7749/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The objective of the draft Protection and Conservation of Sea Bass (NI) Regulations 2012 is to put in place regulations that will conserve sea bass stocks and prevent over exploitation either by recreational or commercial fishers. With regard to commercial fishing the regulations seek to prevent the establishment of an unregulated and targeted sea bass fishery. Exemption is being considered for those fishing methods where catch of bass would be unavoidable but no exemption is proposed for those commercial fishing methods that most threaten sea bass.

Consideration has been given to the effects on enforcement of allowing an exemption for trawl vessels that target species other than bass.

Differentiating legally caught and illegally caught bass by the time it gets into the supply chain would be difficult even if there were no commercial landings into our ports. Wild caught sea bass could still be imported from sustainable sources elsewhere and sea bass would still enter the food chain from fish farms.

However my Department believes that we have sufficient tools in the proposed Regulations and other legislation to prevent an unregulated commercial targeted bass fishery from developing. Over the next 12 months daily electronic catch recording and reporting, and satellite monitoring will be extended to all commercial vessels over 12 metres in length. This further improves confidence in catch reporting. Buyers and sellers of fish will also be required to submit sales notes electronically and this package of measures will improve traceability. Selling fish from a boat without a commercial licence has always been illegal and the improvements in catch, landing, and sales note recording and transmission will aid detection and traceability of all illegal fish sales including sea bass.

A by-catch exemption for commercial trawls of, for example 5% by weight of landings or daily catch, will not as you suggest lead to increased targeting of sea bass. Our white fish fleet is now very small and it targets mainly haddock and hake. It is also severely limited by Days at Sea restrictions. It would therefore not be commercially viable for such vessels to go out of their way to target bass if they could only retain a small percentage of the catch. As these vessels have to report catches electronically every 24 hours they would not be able to spread a large catch of bass over a trip lasting several days. The prawn fleet is the biggest sector of our fleet and again it would not be commercially viable for these vessels to target bass for if only a small part of the catch was to be retained. In addition you should be aware that during 2012 our whole prawn fleet will have to adopt highly selective fishing gear in order to conserve cod. This will also be of benefit to sea bass or any other by-catch species as most of these fish will be able to escape from the nets as well. The final group of vessels to which

an exemption would apply are three pelagic trawlers that target mainly herring in the Irish Sea. These vessels normally fish for a relatively short period of the year and quickly take their herring quota. Once again it would not be commercially viable for these vessels to target bass under our proposals.

Finally, if as we all hope, sea bass spread into our waters and become more abundant over time, there may be a risk that the amount of bass caught in trawls could start to exceed any by-catch limit that is currently appropriate. In this scenario sea bass discards and mortality might increase as you suggest. If there is evidence that this is happening in future there would be opportunity to review the Regulations.

### Microchip Implants in Animals

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 3422/11-15, to detail the research which her Department consulted, in advance of introducing the NIA 20/09 Dogs (Amendment) Bill, which proves that microchip implants in animals are safe; and what advice her Department has provided to vets on the health risks associated with microchip implants.

#### (AQW 7752/11-15)

**Mrs O'Neill:** Prior to the introduction of the Dogs (Amendment) Bill to the Assembly in May 2010, my Department reviewed a range of consultation responses, as well as research which looked at the health risks associated with microchip implants. A list of the research papers is set out below.

As set out in my answer to AQW 3422/11-15, while some of these studies suggest the possibility of a link between microchip implantation and the development of tumours in laboratory mice and rats, there is very little evidence of a similar link in dogs. There were 2 reports in the literature regarding microchip-associated tumours in dogs; however, the authors were unable to determine if the tumours were induced by the implanted microchip or as a response to vaccine administration at the same time.

My Department also considered figures on the number of adverse reactions to microchipping provided by the British Small Animal Veterinary Association. As set out in AQW 3422/11-15, these figures show that given the large number of microchipped pets, the incidence of reported adverse reactions is extremely low.

My Department has not issued advice to veterinarians on microchipping.

Research references:

Researcher	Title	Publication
Johnson, K.	Sarcomas induced in mice by subcutaneously implanted transponders. (1996).	Toxicologic Pathology. 33: 619 Abstract 198.
Tillmann, T. et al	Subcutaneous soft tissue tumours at the site of implanted microchips in mice. (1997).	Experimental and Toxicologic Pathology 49: 197-200.
Palmer, T.E. et al	Fibrosarcomas associated with passive integrated transponder implants. (1998)	Toxicologic Pathology 26: 170.
Blanchard, K.T. et al	Transponder-induced sarcoma in the heterozygous p 53+/- mouse. (1999).	Toxicologic Pathology 27 (5): 519-527.
Elcock, L.E. et al	Tumours in long term rat studies associated with microchip animal identification devices. (2001).	Experimental and Toxicologic Pathology 52: 483-491.
Le Calvez, S. et al	Subcutaneous microchip – associated tumours in mice. (2006).	Experimental and Toxicologic Pathology. 57: 255-265.

Researcher	Title	Publication
Murasagi, E. et al	Histological reactions to microchips in dogs. (2003).	The Veterinary Record. September 13, 2003: 328.
Vascellari, M. et al	Liposarcoma at the site of an implanted microchip in a dog. (2004).	The Veterinary Journal 2004, 168: 188-190
Vascellari, M. and Mutinella, F.	Fibrosarcoma with typical features of post-injection sarcoma at the site of a microchip implant in a dog. (2006).	Veterinary Pathology 43: 545-548.

## Dairy Farmers

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department is taking to ensure that dairy farmers get a better price for the milk they produce.

**(AQW 7772/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The price that farmers receive for their milk is a commercial matter and therefore not something in which I can directly intervene. However I believe farmers should receive a fair price for the milk that they produce.

To maximise the financial return from milk production, I believe it is vital that the dairy industry follows a market-led strategy. In practice, this means that decisions on milk production should be taken by milk producers in the context of their input costs, market requirements and market returns (i.e. the milk price achievable). Therefore, to help farmers achieve better financial returns, my Department (through CAFRE and AFBI) funds education, training, technical support and research to help improve efficiency and competitiveness. In particular, good animal husbandry and grassland management skills will continue to be the solid foundation of any dairy farm and these must be updated to take account of best practice, new technologies and other developments.

To help improve returns, financial assistance is available to the dairy sector under the Regional Food Programme and Axis 1 of the Rural Development Programme. It also benefits indirectly from aid which continues to be provided under the EU School Milk Scheme and from promotional aid granted by the EU to the Dairy Council. In addition, a range of financial and non-financial support measures are available to dairy processing companies from Invest NI to help them remain competitive.

I am also working with the DETI Minister to put in place a Food Strategy Board, whose role will be to develop a longer term strategy for the agri-food sector which will of course include the dairy sector. This strategy will include challenging growth targets and, as such, its development will be important for planning future growth of the sector.

## Single Farm Payments

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when the remaining Single Farm Payments will be made.

**(AQW 7776/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** It is not possible to predict when the final application in any year will be completed because a small number are likely to take some years to bring to conclusion for reasons beyond the control of my Department. It is the case that we have a good track record in processing Single Farm Payments and endeavour to complete all claims at the earliest possible time. At 10 February 2012, some 34,627 (91.5%) of the 37,854 applications submitted under the 2011 scheme had been finalised and a total of £239 million paid out to farmers.

Many of the outstanding claims were the subject of an on-farm inspection in 2011, during which inspectors sought to ensure that ineligible areas were not included for payment. Almost all of the inspections identified land area differences effective from earlier years, often as far back as the 2005

Scheme year. As a consequence, the resultant assessments involving retrospective changes are complex and time consuming. Where such changes are identified at inspection, payment is likely to be later in the payment schedule.

Not all of the remaining cases may be due a payment because of ineligibility or the application of penalties under scheme rules.

EU regulations require Paying Agencies, including my Department, to pay out at least 95.24% of its available 2011 SFP budget by 30 June 2012 in order to avoid them incurring late payment penalties.

### **Loifa Initiative**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the rationale behind her decision to use departmental resources to promote the Loifa initiative; and (ii) the estimated (a) costs; (b) staff time that will be required; and (c) source of these additional costs.

**(AQW 8009/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** As part of the commitment given to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, all public bodies here are required to encourage the use of Irish and Ulster-Scots. As a large public service provider, DARD is also expected to take some steps to raise awareness levels too. The DCAL Líofoa initiative provides a vehicle for my Department to raise awareness of the Irish language and culture. I fully support this initiative. The Council of Europe Charter on Regional or Minority Languages is designed to protect and promote regional or minority languages. At present, the Charter obligations apply to each language differently, as Part II of the Charter applies to Irish and Ulster-Scots and Part III applies only to Irish.

There are currently no associated staff time or costs involved. My Equality Unit officials will be taking forward any agreed actions with DCAL in the future.

### **Hydraulic Fracturing**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what powers she has to limit or prevent hydraulic fracturing from taking place.

**(AQW 8011/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department has no role in regulating the process of gas exploration or extraction, other than that as a statutory consultee in the planning process.

Should planning permission be sought in future for hydraulic fracturing operations, it is likely that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required as part of the planning process. My Department, as a consultee on any planning application, would want to ensure that any potential impact on agriculture and the rural environment was fully considered and addressed through the planning process.

I have strong reservations about the process of hydraulic fracturing and its potential impact on the environment on the island of Ireland.

## **Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**

### **Library Opening Hours**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure from where, in her departmental budget, the additional £2.39 million to fund library opening hours will come; and whether any specific projects or funding will be withdrawn from elsewhere as a result.

**(AQW 7511/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure):** I have not yet made final decisions on the source of additional funding to be provided to Libraries. When I have done so and communicated my decisions to any affected business areas, I will answer your question in full.

## Mobile Phone Applications

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by her Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7539/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** In October 2011 I launched a mobile application competition to boost tourism by showcasing Irish and Ulster-Scots culture. Both applications will provide information on local accommodation, restaurants and attractions relevant to the sites and activities profiled by the applications. The applications are due to be ready by the end of March 2012.

In 2010 Armagh Observatory and Planetarium collaborated with colleagues in Dublin and Blackrock Castle Observatory (Cork Institute of Technology) in developing 'Space Brains', a quiz application aimed at attracting young people towards astronomy and related sciences. This was awarded title of 'best Gaming App' in the Appys 2011 competition.

My Department, in association with Arts Council NI, in 2012/13 are planning to commission an application which will provide users with details of all public art commissions in the North. Sport NI is in the early stages of developing an application that will provide information on the Active8 eatwell Programme.

## East-West Linkages

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action her Department is taking to promote East-West linkages.

**(AQW 7542/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** My Department, and associated arms length bodies (ALBs), promote East-West linkages in a wide range of areas.

Foras na Gaeilge and Bòrd na Gàidhlig in Scotland have responsibility for the Colmcille initiative which aims to foster support for the Gaelic language and to develop links between Gaelic Scotland and Ireland.

During the course of 2012, the Ulster-Scots Agency is planning to develop a specific initiative to address links between Ulster and Scotland in a structured way.

The Arts Council NI (ACNI) is working to coordinate a Literature Tourism Trail covering the north of Ireland and Scotland's Western region. ACNI, along with the Arts Councils of England, Scotland and Wales, contributes to a central Cross Border Touring Fund which enables the touring companies to tour outside their regions. As a result larger venues in the North have hosted performances by large scale companies such as Scottish Ballet and Opera North.

National Museums NI has a good working relationship with National Museums Scotland and the National Gallery Scotland, sharing expertise and collections and partnering in regards to exhibitions.

Sport NI in partnership with SportScotland, Sport England, Sport Wales and UK Sport have developed a new vehicle for widening access and increasing the participation and involvement in sport and physical activity by the under-represented individuals, groups and communities.

The Public Record Office of NI (PRONI) is planning to initiate a visit to their sister institution, the National Records of Scotland (NRS) in Edinburgh, to discuss areas of professional interest, including Digital Preservation for archives and the introduction of an Archive Accreditation scheme.

Furthermore, officials from my Department engage with their counterparts in Scotland on a range of issues, e.g. Salmon conservation, inland fisheries and Architecture. ALBs such as Libraries NI and Armagh Observatory have established links and regular contacts with their colleagues in Scotland encouraging joint research in their fields of expertise.

## Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether her departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to her capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7639/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Revenue expenditure does not vary proportionately with capital budget allocations. In some cases, capital expenditure will have direct consequences for future revenue budgets, e.g. where assets are created, there may be future depreciation and directly related running costs. In other cases, revenue expenditure will be incurred whether or not there are capital budget allocations, and this expenditure covers administration, running costs and revenue grants.

## Department's Equality Unit

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the (i) number; and (ii) annual cost of staff employed in her Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7662/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** There are currently 2.1 full time equivalent (FTE) staff employed in my Department's Equality Unit. Details of the grades of staff and salary ranges are contained in the table below.

Grade	FTE	Salary Range
DP	1	£34,163 - £38,893
SO	0.6	£27,115 - £30,520
E02	0.5	£21,392 - £23,250

## Civil Service Posts

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many Civil Service posts existed in her Department at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, at the beginning of (a) 2007; and (b) 2012, broken down by local Council area.

**(AQW 7692/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The information requested in respect of DCAL is contained in the tables below. The data provided reflects the position at 1 January 2007 and 1 January 2012 by local Council area, expressed as Full Time Equivalents (FTE).

Vacancies are recorded by grade level in the January 2012 table. Vacancy information by grade level is not available for January 2007 but the total reported vacancy level at that time was 49. The January 2007 table also includes 163 FTE staff employed in Ordnance Survey NI (OSNI) which was, at that time, an Executive Agency of DCAL. It transferred to Land and Property Services of DFP on 1 April 2008.

For completeness, the tables include Industrial and Senior Civil Service (SCS) posts.

### DCAL Posts by Grade and District Council – 1 Jan 2007 (i)

District Council	Grade Level (includes grades analogous to General Service)									Total (ii)
	Industrial	AA	AO	E02 / E01	SO	DP	G6 / G7	SCS	Vacancies	
Armagh	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		1
Ballymoney	5	0	1	5	1	0	0	0		12

District Council	Grade Level (includes grades analogous to General Service)									Total (ii)
	Industrial	AA	AO	E02 / E01	SO	DP	G6/ G7	SCS	Vacancies	
Belfast	0	39	64	132	67	51	27	7		387
Craigavon	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0		7
Down	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		6
Fermanagh	5	0	0	2	2	0	0	0		9
Moyle	7	0	1	1	0	0	0	0		9
Omagh	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	0		5
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>485</b>

#### DCAL Posts by Grade and District Council – 1 Jan 2012 (iii)

District Council	Grade Level (includes grades analogous to General Service)								Total (iv)
	Industrial	AA	AO	E02 / E01	SO	DP	G7	SCS	
Ballymoney	5	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	8
Belfast	0	17.42	47.32	53.95	60.62	34.42	21.72	6(v)	241.45
Craigavon	0	1.27	3	3	1	0	0	0	8.27
Down	5	0	0.6	3	1	0	0	0	9.6
Fermanagh	6	0	0.5	4	0	0	0	0	10.5
Moyle	7	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	13
<b>Total (rounded)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>291</b>

- (i) Excludes temporary posts
- (ii) Excludes statisticians on loan from DFP's NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)
- (iii) Excludes temporary posts
- (iv) Excludes statisticians on loan from DFP's NI Statistics and Research Agency
- (v) Excludes 1 Grade 3 seconded to NI Policing Board

#### Cultra Station House

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether National Museums Northern Ireland has considered the purchase of Cultra Station House, as an historic listed building closely associated with the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

**(AQW 7737/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The current CSR budget allocation presents National Museums NI with significant financial challenges for the forthcoming three-year period.

National Museums NI has a number of capital and revenue priorities agreed with DCAL. The Cultra Station House has not previously been factored into budget discussions and is unlikely to displace existing priorities which will focus on the essential maintenance of the existing museum estate.

National Museums NI is part of a group consisting of local residents and businesses including the Holywood conservation group, local councillors and business people, who are looking at ways of working with future owners to preserve the historic nature of the building.

### **Cultra Station House**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she would support a feasibility study on the incorporation of Cultra Station House into the nearby Ulster Folk and Transport Museum. **(AQW 7738/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** This matter is operationally the responsibility of National Museums NI, who would be responsible in the first instance for undertaking any supporting feasibility study.

National Museums NI has a number of capital and revenue priorities agreed with DCAL. This building has not previously factored in these discussions and it is unlikely to displace existing priorities.

### **Cultra Station House**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether Cultra Station House was ever in the ownership of National Museums Northern Ireland or its predecessors. **(AQW 7739/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Cultra Station House has never been in the ownership of National Museums NI or its predecessors.

### **Recruitment Agencies**

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the amount paid to recruitment agencies for (i) full-time; and (ii) part-time posts in her Department, and its arm's-length bodies, in each of the last three years. **(AQW 7742/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Under the terms of the NICS Framework Agreement for the Provision of Temporary/Casual Workers, DCAL has recruited a number of temporary staff to cover various posts over the last 3 financial years. This included administrative cover, support staff, a librarian and more recently accountants.

The table below details annual costs for both DCAL and its Arms Length Bodies (ALB's) for this provision:

#### **(I) FULL TIME**

<b>Source</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>Totals</b>
DCAL	162,378.73	80,180.17	88,439.86	330,998.76
ALB'S	500,449.00	475,335.00	473,851.00	1,449,635.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>662,827.73</b>	<b>555,515.17</b>	<b>562,290.86</b>	<b>1,780,633.76</b>

#### **(II) PART TIME**

DCAL	-	-	-	-
ALB's Total	85,878.00	315,828.00	311,196.00	712,902.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,878.00</b>	<b>315,828.00</b>	<b>311,196.00</b>	<b>712,902.00</b>
<b>Combined Totals</b>	<b>748,705.73</b>	<b>871,343.17</b>	<b>873,486.86</b>	<b>2,493,535.76</b>

## Salmon Stocks

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to provide details, including the agendas, of meetings she and her officials have had with her counterparts in the Republic of Ireland regarding the need to conserve salmon stocks.

**(AQW 7754/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** I have not met with my counterparts in the South of Ireland regarding conserving salmon stocks.

My Inland Fisheries Group technical staff based in the South and West area covering Tyrone and Fermanagh meet with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and Electricity Supply Board (ESB) staff on matters concerning Erne salmon management. The salmon issues discussed at these meetings concern the ongoing salmon stocking programme of the Erne system.

DCAL Inland Fisheries Group officials met Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources (DCENR) officials at Causeway Exchange in 2011 and discussed issues relating to policy and management of the wild Atlantic salmon fishery

## 100th Anniversary of the Founding of the Irish Volunteers

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 and the involvement of Roger Casement.

**(AQW 7870/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The forthcoming decade of centenaries provides all of us on this island with the opportunity to achieve a greater understanding of our past and how it shapes identities and relationships today. The key issue is not whether we remember these events but how we remember them.

The Community Relations Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund have developed a set of principles to help organisations to remember the past in the context of an inclusive and accepting society. I endorse these principles.

The arts and cultural sectors can play a key role in how the stories of our past are told and shared with a wider audience.

I am therefore continuing discussions with the Community Relations Council and Heritage Lottery Fund to support the dissemination and use of these principles. To that end I have also met with my counterpart Minister Jimmy Deenihan who is chairing the Oireachtas Consultation Group on Centenary Commemorations.

As part of a comprehensive programme to explore the period 1912-1922 and its legacy, National Museums NI will consider marking the centenary of the 1916 trial and death of Roger Casement and the 1913 founding of the Irish Volunteers and his involvement with the organisation. However as the programme is at an early stage the content has not been finalised.

## Centenary of the Trial and Death of Roger Casement

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to mark the centenary of the trial and death of Roger Casement who resided in Ballycastle, Co. Antrim.

**(AQW 7871/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The forthcoming decade of centenaries provides all of us on this island with the opportunity to achieve a greater understanding of our past and how it shapes identities and relationships today. The key issue is not whether we remember these events but how we remember them.

The Community Relations Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund have developed a set of principles to help organisations to remember the past in the context of an inclusive and accepting society. I endorse these principles.

The arts and cultural sectors can play a key role in how the stories of our past are told and shared with a wider audience.

I am therefore continuing discussions with the Community Relations Council and Heritage Lottery Fund to support the dissemination and use of these principles. To that end I have also met with my counterpart Minister Jimmy Deenihan who is chairing the Oireachtas Consultation Group on Centenary Commemorations.

As part of a comprehensive programme to explore the period 1912-1922 and its legacy, National Museums NI will consider marking the centenary of the 1916 trial and death of Roger Casement and the 1913 founding of the Irish Volunteers and his involvement with the organisation. However as the programme is at an early stage the content has not been finalised.

### **Football Association of Ireland Affiliated International Teams**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what support her Department provides for soccer players and young people who play for the Football Association of Ireland affiliated international teams.

**(AQW 7872/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Responsibility for providing support for soccer players and young people who play for Football Association of Ireland (FAI) affiliated international teams rests with the FAI. Sport NI, which is responsible for the distribution of funding for sport in the north of Ireland, provides support to soccer players and young people through two funding programmes, Investing in Performance Sport and the Athlete Investment Programme. Funding under both of these programmes is provided through the recognised governing body for soccer in the north, the Irish Football Association. However, any soccer player or young person who benefits from such support may subsequently choose to play for FAI affiliated international teams.

### **Ministerial Attendance at Soccer Games**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the soccer games she has attended since coming into office.

**(AQW 7873/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Since coming into office on 16 May 2011 I have attended 3 soccer matches as detailed below:

<b>NI vs Faroe Islands</b>	<b>Wednesday 10 August 2011</b>
NI vs Estonia	Friday 7 October 2011
ROI vs Estonia	Tuesday 15 November 2011

### **Bushmills Research Station**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) what is the current salmon ranching capacity of the Bushmills Research Station; and (ii) whether there are any plans to extend the capacity of the station, and if so, by how much and what is the timescale.

**(AQW 7911/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:**

- (i) The current DCAL Inland Fisheries Group business target is to produce 50,000 hatchery reared (ranching) salmon smolts annually.
- (ii) At this time the Department has no plans to increase the number of hatchery produced salmon smolts.

## Ranunculus Fluitans

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether *Ranunculus fluitans* has been added to any waterway by her Department in the last 25 years; and if so, what was the rationale for its addition.

**(AQW 7916/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** DCAL has not added *Ranunculus Fluitans* to any waterway in the last 25 years.

## Bushmills Research Station

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) how many salmon have been killed at the Bushmills Research Station in each of the last five years; (ii) how they were disposed of; and (iii) how the financial return of their disposal was managed.

**(AQW 7918/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:**

- (i) DCAL annually retains a sample of adult Atlantic salmon returning to the River Bush as they pass through the Bushmills Salmon Research Station. Only micro tagged fish are retained. These fish are stripped to provide ova for ongoing research and conservation programmes. The resulting kelts are culled and tags removed. Numbers of (fish) kelts culled for micro tags in last five years;
  - 2007 - 76
  - 2008 - 88
  - 2009 - 76
  - 2010 - 90
  - 2011 - 68
- (ii) All dead fish are disposed of through a licensed animal by products disposal company in line with DARD fish health regulations.
- (iii) DCAL pays for the supply of the fish disposal service. There is no financial return or benefit to the Department.

## Stationery Costs in Replying to Assembly Written Questions

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much her Department has spent on stationery costs in replying to Assembly Written Questions, including the price of the envelopes and paper used, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 7928/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** My Department does not routinely estimate the cost of answering Assembly Questions and so the information requested is not available.

## All-Island Teams

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of how organising all-island teams helps to create greater international success for local sports people.

**(AQW 7942/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The organisation of all-island teams is a matter for sports organisations and governing bodies. However, it is clear there are real benefits to organising sports on an all-island basis. One only has to look at the strength of Gaelic games, the international successes of the Irish Rugby and Cricket teams and the quality of the players from the north of Ireland on those teams to see what all Ireland organisation can and does deliver. Having a greater pool of top quality players to pick from can only improve the performance of our National Teams.

## Football Association of Ireland Affiliated International Teams

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how her Department celebrates the success of local sports people who play for Football Association of Ireland affiliated international teams.

**(AQW 7944/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The strategy for sport, Sport Matters, recognises the need for all sports stakeholders to publicly celebrate sporting success. I host an annual reception at Parliament Buildings for those local sports people who have achieved sporting excellence at either national or international level. This would include local sports people who play for Football Association of Ireland affiliated international teams should they achieve international success.

## Ranunculus Fluitans

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she is aware of the deliberate introduction of Ranunculus Fluitans to any waterway by any Government Department in the last 25 years.

**(AQW 8006/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** I am not aware of the deliberate introduction of Ranunculus Fluitans to any waterway in the DCAL jurisdiction by any Government Department in the last 25 years.

## US-Ireland Alliance Annual Hollywood Event

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how her Department and NI Screen will promote the local film industry at the US-Ireland Alliance Annual Hollywood event.

**(AQW 8027/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** My Department and NI Screen do not plan to promote the local film industry at the US-Ireland Alliance Annual Hollywood event.

NI Screen:

- Has direct contact with the major US studios and mini majors.
- Leads trade missions to key events in the US for the North of Ireland's independent television companies.
- Provides support for ministerial visits to the industry in Los Angeles.
- Attends the annual Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Showcase in Los Angeles.

We believe these activities are more effective both in terms of results and value for money than the sponsorship of a single event.

## British Isles Teams: Competing in a Range of Sports

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 7942/11-15, for her assessment of how organising British Isles teams to compete in a range of sports would help create greater international success for local athletes.

**(AQW 8127/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The organisation of teams combining athletes from these islands is a matter for sports organisations and governing bodies in their different jurisdictions. I am not personally convinced that organising sport on this basis will give local athletes as many opportunities to gain experience at international level and attain international success as organisation on a more local or all Ireland basis has the potential to provide.

# Department of Education

## Teacher Redundancies

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Education whether he plans to issue guidance to teachers in relation to the funding that will be available to allow employing authorities to offer compensation of up to 90 weeks' salary for teachers made redundant by August 2012.

**(AQW 6876/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** On 27 January the Department issued guidance to the Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools on the use of funding set aside to assist employing authorities to make cost reductions at school level through redundancies up to 31 August 2012. On the same date the Department wrote to the Chairpersons of the Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools to confirm the basis on which funding will be available in support of redundancies to effect cost reductions.

Employing Authorities wrote to controlled and maintained schools on 30/31 January 2012 advising of the compensation terms available to teachers made redundant at 31 August 2012. The Department wrote in similar terms to voluntary grammar and grant maintained integrated schools on 2 February 2012.

## Chief Inspector's Report 2008-2010

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education, in light of the Chief Inspector's Report 2008-2010, how his Department intends to improve standards in pre-school education in the voluntary/private sector.

**(AQW 6914/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As both these questions are related I will answer together. All pre-school settings, both statutory and voluntary/private, have to provide an appropriate curriculum which follows the "Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education" (NICCEA 2006) and are open to inspection by the Education Training Inspectorate. All voluntary/private pre-school settings entering the Programme are also required to meet certain standards and requirements including the registration and inspection requirements of the Health and Social Care Trusts.

In addition to employing staff with relevant qualifications, those voluntary/private pre-school settings within the PSEEP are required to work with a qualified and experienced Early Years Specialist in a way which contributes to raising educational standards.

The Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) will continue its rigorous programme of inspection across all types of pre-school settings, voluntary, private and statutory. The ETI will continue to offer support and guidance at the point of inspection and, through its reports, will highlight good practice and areas for improvement. ETI will also monitor areas for improvement with specific pre-school settings.

The ETI will continue to meet regularly with representatives of those organisations which support the voluntary/private pre-school sector (both English-medium and Irish-medium) to discuss key issues emerging from inspections and promote improvement.

DE has introduced a SEN capacity building programme in all DE-funded early years settings that aims to ensure that all settings are equipped with the necessary skills to manage successfully the needs of the majority of pupils with SEN and/or disability, with appropriate support. A number of pilots in early years settings are being rolled out across the 5 ELBs and will be fully operational from early 2012.

## Chief Inspector's Report 2008-2010

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education, in light of the Chief Inspector's Report 2008-2010, what action his Department has taken to improve the overall effectiveness of the voluntary/private sector.

**(AQW 6915/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As both these questions are related I will answer together. All pre-school settings, both statutory and voluntary/private, have to provide an appropriate curriculum which follows the

“Curricular Guidance for Pre-School Education” (NICCEA 2006) and are open to inspection by the Education Training Inspectorate. All voluntary/private pre-school settings entering the Programme are also required to meet certain standards and requirements including the registration and inspection requirements of the Health and Social Care Trusts.

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## Pre-School Provision

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of what should be the educational outcomes from pre-school provision.

**(AQW 6994/11-15)**

**Mr O’Dowd:** Pre-School education aims to prepare the whole child - personally, socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically, thereby laying a firm foundation for future development and learning .

It should be guided by the Curricular Guidance for Pre-school Education (CCEA) document which aims to provide high quality learning and teaching experiences specifically for this age group. There is an emphasis on developing children’s knowledge, skills and understanding through play, experiential learning (learning by doing) and by solving real life problems in both the indoor and outdoor environments through these areas of learning. This is age and stage appropriate and is delivered by high quality staff who have a sound knowledge, understanding and background in developmental theory and educational practice.

Early years intervention programmes can have a major positive impact at a personal level for the child and the family, and in the long term, reduce future costs in addressing any problems or issues that arise or are a result of missed opportunities to address problems early on.

## Pre-School Inspections

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last six academic years, in relation to pre-school inspections, to detail (i) the date of each inspection; (ii) the name of the facility; (iii) the number of children attending each facility on a (a) part-time; or (b) full-time basis; (iv) the grade achieved at inspection; (v) whether a follow-up inspection was required, and the grade achieved after the inspection; and (vi) whether, after inspection, each facility stayed in or opted out of the funded pre-school programme, broken down by (a) the private sector; (b) the voluntary sector; (c) statutory nursery units; and (d) statutory nursery schools.

**(AQW 7069/11-15)**

**Mr O’Dowd:** The information requested is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate costs.

## Sure Start Scheme for North Down

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education for an update on the Sure Start scheme in the North Down area.

**(AQW 7319/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Current Sure Start policy is to provide services to at least the top 20% most disadvantaged wards and Super Output Areas per NIMDM. DE gave approval in June 2010 to the proposal to extend Ards Sure Start catchment area to include Harbour 1 and Conlig 3, locally identified as Harbour and Rathgill. These areas are located in Bangor and are the first locations within North Down to fall within the criteria for Sure Start. The introduction of Sure Start in this area is at a relatively early stage and efforts are being made to build on partnership working and on the capacity to deliver appropriate services.

The draft Early Years Strategy indicates the intention to expand Sure Start to cover the top 25% most disadvantaged wards, subject to the availability of resources. In this context, Dufferin and Whitehill wards in North Down fall within the top 25% most disadvantaged wards bracket and initial discussions have been held between the Health and Social Care Board and local community groups about local need and partnership working.

## Schools Audit Process

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education when he expects the schools audit process to be completed, given that the initial audit by the Education and Library Boards has been rejected.

**(AQW 7329/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The audits did not fulfil the requirements as set out in the Terms of Reference, including reflecting the challenges schools face, particularly around the quality of education and financial stability.

The audits were completed and resubmitted to the Department on Monday 6th February. I have asked for proposals to address the position submitted by Wednesday 15th February.

## Early Year Places

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education what plans he has to address the issue of children missing out on early year places.

**(AQW 7396/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Draft Programme for Government includes a commitment to ensure that at least one year of pre-school education is available to every family that wants it. This is consistent with the aim of the Department's Pre-School Education Expansion Programme (PSEEP).

In the 2011/2012 school year there are over 23,000 children in funded pre-school education provision and DE is currently working with Education and Library Boards to ensure an adequate number of funded pre-school places are available for September 2012 and in future years.

If necessary, additional capacity in the pre-school education sector may be achieved through several options such as the creation of new/additional statutory nursery units or by the allocation of additional funded places in voluntary and private pre-school settings participating in the PSEEP.

## First Preference Applications

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of first preference applications for each primary school in the North Down constituency for the 2012/13 academic year; and (ii) the number of places available at each school.

**(AQW 7427/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The admissions process for places in primary schools in the 2012/13 academic year is currently ongoing. The South-Eastern Education and Library Board, which administers the admissions

process for the North Down constituency, have advised me that they will not be in a position to provide the information requested until after the process is completed on 18 April 2012, when letters issue to parents advising them of the primary school for which their child has been accepted/not accepted. I will be pleased to provide the information to you after that date if that would be helpful.

### Unofficial Selection Tests

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education how many Year 7 pupils from the (i) maintained; and (ii) controlled sectors are taking unofficial selection tests in this academic year.

**(AQW 7449/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department does not collect this information given that these are unofficial selection tests and are operated contrary to Department of Education policy and guidance.

### Mobile Phone Applications

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by his Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7455/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Neither my Department, nor its arm's length bodies, have designed any mobile phone applications for use by members of the public and none are currently being developed.

### New Builds for Schools

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Education to detail the costs of professional fees, including consultants and architects, for new builds for schools which have been planned but not yet built, in each of the last ten years.

**(AQW 7469/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The professional fees for the 52 major schemes previously announced for capital funding, but where construction work has not commenced, are detailed in the table below. The information provided covers all professional costs incurred since the commencement of planning up to 31 March 2011.

School Ref No	Scheme	All Spend on projects £000s
201-6068	Artigarvan PS, Strabane	112
203-6661	Arvalee / Cranny Spec School, Omagh	1
301-3315	BallyKelly PS, Limavady	169
321-0133	Ballymoney H.S	0
231-0015	Belmont Special School	3
124-0291	Colaiste Feirste, Belfast	320
223-0138	Dean Maguirc College, Carrickmore	92
221-0305	Devenish College	59
501-1575	Dromore Central PS.	258
201-0382	Ebrington PS, L'Derry	100
101-6485/ 111-0003	Glenwood PS./Edenderry N.S. Belfast	226
503-2585	Edendork PS	90

<b>School Ref No</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>All Spend on projects £000s</b>
201-2245	Eglinton PS, L'Derry	148
201-6152	Enniskillen Model PS	128
242-0229	Foyle & Londonderry College	417
421-0046	Glastry College, Ballyhalbert	697
131-0017	Greenwood Assessment Centre	0
303-6562	Holy Family PS, Magherafelt	155
523-0278	HolyTrinity College, Cookstown	0
421-0086	Knockbreda HS, Belfast	1,189
431-6516	Knockevin Spec School, Downpatrick	323
231-6662	Limegrove / Glasvey Special School	6
123-0022	Little Flower Girls S.S, Belfast	153
242-0065	Loreto College, Omagh	43
541-0057	Lurgan College	434
142-0022	Methodist College, Belfast	221
131-0016	Mitchell House Special School	0
201-2261	New Buildings PS, L'Derry	92
206-6552	Omagh IPS 03/04	71
321-0207	Parkhall College, Antrim	1,022
541-0067	Portadown College	243
425-0024 & 401-1631	Priory College & Holywood PS	845
342-0058	Rainey Endowed, Magherafelt	0
101-0307	Springhill PS. Belfast	128
503-1387	St Bronagh's PS, Rostrevor	519
503-6435	St Clare's Abbey PS Newry	522
423-0107	St Columbanus College, Bangor	495
203-2737	St Columbkille's PS. Carrickmore	109
203-6116	St Conor's PS, Omagh	112
503-1340	St Joseph's Convent PS, Newry	172
542-0045	St Louis Grammar, Kilkeel	467
503-6043	St Mary's PS, Banbridge	61
523-0076	St Patrick's College, Banbridge	97
542-0268	St Patrick's G.S. Armagh	378
542-0304	St Pat's Boys/Girls Acad, Dgnon	614

School Ref No	Scheme	All Spend on projects £000s
203-1898	St Paul's PS. Irvinestown	26
503-1160	St Teresa's PS, Lurgan	170
101-6655	Strand / Sydenham PS.	549
101-0252	Strandtown PS, Belfast	308
503-1103	Tannaghmore PS, Lurgan	186
421-0029	The High School, Ballynahinch	385
142-0264	Victoria College, Belfast	223
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>13,138</b>

### 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 their salaries, superannuation, pensions and other deductions.

**(AQW 7471/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** At 2 February 2012, there are 8 teachers suspended from primary schools and 5 teachers suspended from post primary schools. The total cost of their salaries is £486,418.25 i.e. from the start of each suspension up to the latest payroll of January 2012. This cost is inclusive of the employers' national insurance and superannuation deductions.

### First Preference Applications

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the number of first preference applications for each pre-school provider in the North Down constituency for the 2012/13 academic year; and (ii) the number of places available at each provider.

**(AQW 7478/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The admissions process for places in pre-school education in the 2012/13 academic year is currently ongoing. The South-Eastern Education and Library Board, which administers the admissions process for the North Down constituency, have advised me that they will not be in a position to provide the information requested until after the process is completed on 1 June 2012, when final placement letters issue to parents. I will be pleased to provide the information to you after that date if that would be helpful.

### Advisory Group on Shared Education

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education which groups are represented on the Advisory Group on Shared Education and when the membership details will be published.

**(AQW 7490/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The group has not yet been established.

### Age Weighted Pupil Unit

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Education to outline the rationale in changing the five percent cut to the Age Weighted Pupil Unit to nearly one percent.

**(AQW 7501/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I refer the Member to my responses to AQW 6292/11-15, AQW 6293/11-15, and AQW 6294/11-15, which were tabled by Roy Beggs MLA and published in the Official Report on 27 January 2012. These detail how the additional funding secured for schools will be distributed using the Common Funding Formula, and how the estimated Age Weighted Pupil Unit has correspondingly changed as a result of the additional £120m (£30m/£15m/£75m) over the next three financial years.

### **Future Planning of the Education Estate**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Education how his Department uses the geographical information system to support the future planning of the education estate; and whether the information produced is available to the wider public.

**(AQW 7502/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Geographical information system (GIS) mapping is available within the Department under licence and is used by officials to consider a range of issues, including planning of education provision.

Any significant change to the schools estate, such as a new school, school closure or amalgamation, requires the publication of a statutory Development Proposal to support that intent. When a proposal is made, it is assessed against the Department's policy framework, and, as an element of that assessment, geographical information system (GIS) mapping is utilised. The maps form part of the information on which I make decisions about Development Proposals. The supporting papers for these are not automatically published, but can be made available upon request.

As part of the work I have commissioned in relation to area based planning, plans will be drawn up the Education and Library Boards with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and other sectors. It is highly likely that GIS mapping will be used to inform their considerations. The contents of the area plans will be subject to public consultation in due course.

### **Voluntary Severance Programme**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Education to detail how the £49.9 million set aside for the Voluntary Severance Programme in 2011/12 will be split between (i) teaching staff, (ii) non-teaching staff in schools; and (iii) staff in his Department's arm's-length bodies.

**(AQW 7503/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The existing budget provision for voluntary severance/ redundancy costs over the budget period are £49.9m / £55.4m / £50.6m and £6.13m. These allocations have not been derived from a detailed forecast redundancy model but rather from a financial management decision to make provision in order to facilitate the reduction in the long term cost base of the education sector.

The number of redundancies in 2012 will be determined by Boards of Governors in light of pressures on school budgets.

Redundancies are a matter for each individual school/employer and the reasons for redundancies, in addition to budgetary constraint, may include school closures/amalgamations, falling enrolments or the curriculum needs of the school. The final decision for schools on how to live within their budget rests with the respective Principal and Board of Governors under the arrangements for Local Management of Schools. It is not possible to anticipate the individual decisions made across 1,200 schools.

### **School Trips**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Education to outline his Department's position on schools which charge pupils for school trips that occur during school hours.

**(AQW 7507/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education Reform (N I) Order 1989 Article 128 (1) and (2) enshrines the right to a free education for pupils registered in grant-aided schools and establishes that activities organised wholly or primarily during normal teaching time should be made available to such pupils regardless of the ability or willingness of their parents to meet the cost. There are a few limited exceptions to this principle

such as schools being permitted to require parents to pay charges for items such as board and lodging on residential trips, individual tuition in the playing of a musical instrument or optional extras provided outside school hours and which are not specifically required to meet the Board of Governors' statutory duty to deliver religious education or to deliver any component of a prescribed programme of study or of an approved public examination. Under article 131 of the Education Reform (N I) Order 1989, Boards of Governors of grant-aided schools are required to draw up and keep under review a statement of its policy in relation to the charging and remission arrangements which it proposes to make in respect of optional extras and board and lodging on residential trips.

## Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education whether his departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to his capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7547/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The table below shows the percentage change year on year to my Department's resource and capital budgets across the Budget 2011-15 period and shows that funding between the 2 budgets does not vary proportionately.

	<b>2011-12</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2012-13</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2013-14</b> <b>£m</b>	<b>2014-15</b> <b>£m</b>
Resource Budget *	1,894.9	1,906.4	1,903.0	1,949.8
<i>% change year on year</i>	-1.0%	0.6%	-0.2%	2.5%
Capital Budget	114.7	103.4	107.7	183.4
<i>% change year on year</i>	-32.2%	-9.8%	4.2%	70.3%

\* Includes additional funding of £30m / £15m / £75m for schools over the period 2012-13 to 2014-15 as announced on 12 January 2012.

## Education and Skills Authority

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 6788/11-15, (i) what is the gender background of the staff in Rathgael who would transfer to the Education and Skills Authority; and (ii) in relation to the commitment that the development of a location strategy 'will include consideration of equality impacts', whether an Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out; and when this will occur, given that a high level draft location paper has been prepared.

**(AQW 7556/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** There are 39 staff based in Rathgael House who deliver functions that will transfer to the Education and Skills Authority, of whom 31 are female and 8 are male. The draft location strategy will be subject to equality screening. If the screening indicates the need for an equality impact assessment, then this will be carried out.

## Education and Skills Authority

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 6787/11-15, given that there are no plans in place for the relocation of staff, (i) whether a high level draft location paper has been prepared (ii) whether this paper identifies a location(s) to which staff may be transferred; (iii) how many locations are under consideration; and (iv) how many staff might be relocated.

**(AQW 7557/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Officials are working on a draft high level location strategy. It does not refer to specific locations. No decisions on the future location of staff transferring have been made.

## Strategic Area Planning Process

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the timescale for the completion of the strategic area planning process to guide capital expenditure on new builds for schools; and (ii) how the schools involved will be kept up to date with progress.

**(AQW 7558/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Terms of Reference which issued to the Education and Library Boards on 15 December 2011 outlined a timescale for the completion and submission of area plans. They are available in full at <http://www.deni.gov.uk/area-planning-terms-of-reference.htm>.

The Boards, working with CCMS and the other sectoral bodies in developing their plans, have been asked to complete their plans by March 2012 for post-primary schools and June for primary schools. However, in view of the scale and complexity of the issues involved, these timescales are indicative and subject to discussion with Boards.

It is important to understand that the completion of the area plans is not the final destination, and that implementation of them will be an ongoing process. I will expect the relevant school managing authorities to keep their schools updated on developments throughout the process.

## School Inspectors

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education to outline the legal position of school inspectors entering school premises.

**(AQW 7561/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** A school must be open at reasonable times for inspection.

The Education and Libraries (N I) Order 1986 Article 102 states that 'Every relevant establishment shall be open at all reasonable times to inspection.' The Act states that 'relative establishment' means among others, 'a school'.

## December Monitoring Round

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Education how the additional monies re-allocated as a result of the December Monitoring Round will be used in terms of educational programmes.

**(AQW 7572/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department successfully bid to the Department of Finance and Personnel for £3.7m to offset significant increases in utilities costs in both the education and youth sectors. This additional funding means that frontline services are protected.

## Pupils' Dental Hygiene

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Education (i) to outline the role of the education system in improving pupils' dental hygiene; and (ii) whether he intends to make any changes around this issue during the 2011-15 period.

**(AQW 7575/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Public health policy, including the improvement of our oral health, is set by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS).

The education system plays an important role in improving pupils' dental hygiene by facilitating the provision of health care services, including dental inspections, and engaging with colleagues in the health and social care family in their schemes for improving oral health. These schemes focus, primarily, on fluoride toothpaste and are based, mainly, in the primary and pre-school settings. I have been advised that the health and social care family intend to refine and improve these schemes and to continue to provide them in school settings.

In early years, the Sure Start scheme works with families with children aged 0 – 4 by supporting parents in caring for their children and promoting children's health and development. This includes plans and activities to promote oral health.

Within the school setting, the Curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to acquire skills to keep themselves healthy through the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and Learning for Life and Work areas of learning. There are educational resources for schools which help children to understand the importance of maintaining good oral health.

Furthermore, eating healthily and drinking water can contribute to good oral health. Nutritional standards for school lunches and other food and drinks in schools have been in place since 2008 and all schools must ensure that pupils have easy access at all times to free, fresh drinking water.

In light of the provision already in place, I have no plans to make any changes.

### Primary Schools: Grounds

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education how many primary schools are situated in grounds that are (i) greater than two hectares; and (ii) less than, and including, two hectares.

**(AQW 7579/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** There are 66 primary schools that are situated in grounds that are greater than two hectares, and 780 primary schools that are situated in grounds that are less than and including two hectares.

### School Policy Announcements

**Mr Dunne** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department should communicate more directly with schools before policy announcements are made in the media.

**(AQW 7598/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I am committed to ensuring schools and other key stakeholders are kept appropriately informed of policy decisions as they are made. My Department works to ensure that policy decisions that affect schools are communicated directly to schools in a timely and appropriate manner. The approach will vary depending on the nature of each announcement and bearing in mind also the need to ensure that significant decisions are notified first to the Assembly itself.

### Irish-Medium Schools

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Education, for relevant each district council area, to detail (i) the maximum capacity of each Irish-medium school; (ii) the number of pupils attending each Irish-medium school; and (iii) the number of pupils, per head of population, attending Irish-medium schools.

**(AQW 7618/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The information requested in the question is detailed in the tables below.

#### TABLE A.

#### Approved and actual enrolments at Irish medium primary schools, by Local Government District – 2011/12

Local Government District	School name	Approved enrolment		Actual enrolment	
		Nursery	Reception - Year 7	Nursery	Reception - Year 7
Antrim	Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach	0	71	0	66
Belfast	Bunscoil An Tsleibhe Dhuibh	26	203	26	150

Local Government District	School name	Approved enrolment		Actual enrolment	
		Nursery	Reception - Year 7	Nursery	Reception - Year 7
Belfast	Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain	0	174	0	114
Belfast	Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain	0	87	0	61
Belfast	Bunscoil Phobal Feirste	52	406	52	228
Belfast	Gaelscoil an Lonnain	0	71	0	41
Belfast	Gaelscoil Na Bhfal	26	290	27	157
Belfast	Gaelscoil na Mona	0	110	0	83
Belfast	Scoil An Droichid	26	125	25	118
Cookstown	Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí	0	33	0	29
Derry	Bunscoil Cholmcille	26	196	26	100
Derry	Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir	26	145	26	120
Derry	Gaelscoil na Daroige	0	81	0	54
Down	Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche	0	87	0	75
Dungannon	Gaelscoil Aodha Rua	0	12*	0	12
Dungannon	Gaelscoil Uí Neill	26	145	26	146
Fermanagh	Bunscoil an Traonaigh	0	58	0	31
Limavady	Gaelscoil Leim an Mhadaidh	0	18*	0	18
Lisburn	Scoil na Fuisseoige	0	145	0	107
Magherafelt	Gaelscoil na Spéiríní	0	58	0	27
Moyle	Gaelscoil an Chaistil	0	105	0	80
Newry & Mourne	Bunscoil an Luir	0	129	0	92
Newtownabbey	Gaelscoil Eanna	0	67	0	70
Omagh	Gaelscoil na gCrann	26	87	26	84
Strabane	Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh	26	150	24	128

**TABLE B.**

**Approved and actual enrolments at Irish medium post-primary schools, by Local Government District – 2011/12**

Local Government District	School name	Approved enrolment	Actual enrolment
		Year 8 - 15	Year 8 - 15
Belfast	Colaiste Feirste	585	550

**TABLE C.****Pupils enrolled in Irish Medium primary and post-primary schools per head of population attending all schools, by Local Government District – 2011/12**

<b>Local Government District</b>	<b>Irish medium primary schools</b>	<b>Irish medium post- primary schools</b>
Antrim	0.012	0
Belfast	0.042	0.019
Cookstown	0.008	0
Derry	0.027	0
Down	0.011	0
Dungannon	0.030	0
Fermanagh	0.005	0
Limavady	0.006	0
Lisburn	0.010	0
Magherafelt	0.006	0
Moyle	0.053	0
Newry & Mourne	0.009	0
Newtownabbey	0.010	0
North Down	0.000	0
Omagh	0.021	0
Strabane	0.039	0

**Source:** NI school census for actual enrolments. DE School Access Team for approved enrolment figures.

**Notes:**

- 1 \* denotes actual enrolment. These schools received approval to open after the 2011/12 enrolment numbers were approved.
- 2 Capacity has been interpreted as approved enrolment.
- 3 Children in receipt of a statement of special educational needs, admitted on appeal or by direction of the Exceptional Circumstances Body are supernumerary to a school's approved enrolment number.
- 4 In addition to the figures listed, there were 708 pupils in Irish medium units in other primary schools and 212 pupils enrolled in Irish medium units in other post-primary schools.
- 5 There were also 473 funded children in funded places in Irish medium voluntary and private preschool centres.
- 6 Rates per head of population in Table 3 are based on the number of children attending nursery, primary and post-primary schools in the area specified.

**Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of special educational needs co-ordinators employed in each Education and Library Board area in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 7627/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Chief Executives of the education and library boards have confirmed that they do not hold details on the number of special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs).

The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs details that all mainstream schools are required to have a designated teacher who fulfils the role of SENCO. The specific arrangements regarding this are, however, at the discretion of each school.

## Recruitment Agencies

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Education to detail the amount paid to recruitment agencies for (i) full-time; and (ii) part-time posts in his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7647/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The amount paid to recruitment agencies for (i) full time; and (ii) part-time posts in my Department and its arms length bodies, in each of the last three financial years is provided in the table below.

Financial Year	2008/09 £'000		2009/10 £'000		2010/11 £'000	
	Part -Time	Full- Time	Part -Time	Full- Time	Part -Time	Full- Time
Department		194		247		103
BELB		734		584		592
NEELB		513		545		478
SEELB		665		521		395
SELB		194		308		346
WELB		347		275		203
CCEA	-	-	-	-	-	-
CCMS	13	3				
Staff Commission	-	-	-	-	-	-
YCNi	5		10		13	
Exceptional Special Circumstances Body						11
GTCNI		6	2	17	24	5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2,656</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2,497</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2,133</b>

### Notes:

- 0 Figures provided by the ELBs include costs, if applicable, associated with Libraries in 2008/09.
- 1 Details of the split between part-time and full-time were not available from the ELBs and all costs have therefore been attributed to full-time.

## Redundancy Package for Teachers

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education (i) for his assessment of how the recent redundancy package for teachers will impact on, and differ from, the existing transferred redundancy arrangements; (ii) whether it takes a redundancy to arise in the retiring teacher's school, or eligibility through a transferred redundancy, for a teacher to be able to apply; (iii) how the additional £120 million for education over three years will impact on the redundancy scheme; and (iv) whether there will be equality of access and eligibility across all schools for teachers aged over 55 who wish to retire.

**(AQW 7652/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** (i) As in previous years, the employing authorities will be operating a transferred redundancy scheme to allow teachers to volunteer for redundancy even if their own post is not being made redundant or there are no redundant posts within their school. This year a central clearing house will be operated across all employing authorities for those volunteers who cannot be accommodated initially within each employing authority.

- (ii) It is not possible to guarantee that every teacher who volunteers for redundancy will be accommodated, as it ultimately depends on the employing authorities being able to match volunteers to teachers in redundant posts. There is no early retirement scheme open to any teacher who wishes to leave the profession.
- (iii) The additional £120m will go directly to school budgets. While this will alleviate the financial challenges facing schools, it will not eradicate them. It is anticipated that the additional funding will significantly reduce the number of teacher redundancies that would otherwise have been required over the budget period.
- (iv) The transferred redundancy process is intended to help ensure that redundancies are managed on a voluntary basis and limit, as far as possible, the need for compulsory redundancies. It is not an early retirement scheme for teachers aged 55 or over.

### **Advisory Forum on Shared Education**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of meetings his Department has held over the last six months in relation to the establishment of the Advisory Forum on Shared Education; and who attended any such meetings.

**(AQW 7653/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The commitment to establish a ministerial advisory group on shared education was included in the draft Programme for Government, which was published on 17th November 2011. Since then I have had a number of discussions with Departmental Officials on how to take forward the commitment.

### **GCSE Agricultural Courses**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Education whether he is aware of the difficulties which schools are experiencing in relation to meeting the full criteria for GCSE agricultural courses for 14-16 year old pupils and securing farm visits due to health and safety and other requirements,

**(AQW 7701/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I am advised by the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment that there are no GCSE courses offered here that would be deemed as agricultural courses. I can also confirm that neither CCEA nor my Department has received information or correspondence from any school in relation to difficulties in the delivery by schools of GCSEs or indeed other qualifications associated with agriculture.

It could be that the member's concerns relate to a course other than a GCSE course that is being delivered collaboratively, for example, by a school in partnership with a Further Education College. In such cases a school must satisfy itself that the course itself is suitable for children and that the arrangements in place for its delivery are also suitable. If the member wishes to write to me to elaborate on her concerns in a more specific manner I will certainly look into these.

### **Age Weighted Pupil Unit**

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 6292/11-15, AQW 6293/11-15, and AQW 6294/11-15, to detail (i) the range and extent of the non-Age Weighted Pupil Unit increases that resulted in a reduction on the Age Weighted Pupil Unit value, which is significantly below the funding allocated in his Department's budget; and (ii) what pressures remain in relation to this matter. [R]

**(AQW 7713/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:**

- (i) Funding is distributed to schools under the Common Funding Formula arrangements, using a range of factors to reflect identified needs, ensuring an equitable distribution of available funds within the overall level of funding available to schools under the Aggregated Schools Budget. The details of the Scheme are available from the Departmental website. The cash value of the Age Weighted Pupil Unit in 2012/13 is £16 lower than 2011/12 for three main reasons:
- The Aggregated Schools Budget for 2012/13 was £2.4m lower than 2011/12;
  - The funding required for non-AWPU funding factors increased by £4.44m, compared to the 2011/12 year. This net increase in non-AWPU funding factors reflected increased needs for TSN, Foundation Stage, Irish-medium Unit support, Administrative costs, Landlord Maintenance and VAT; and
  - the total weighted pupil AWPU to be funded within the formula was marginally higher than in the previous year.
- (ii) A Savings Delivery Plan has been developed across the Budget 2011-15 period to deliver the reductions necessary to ensure that the Department remains within budget. On 12 January 2012, following talks convened by the First Minister and deputy First Minister, I announced additional funding for schools over the next 3 years. As a result of this additional funding, and the reallocation of £40m to schools from internal resources that I announced last November, the level of savings to be delivered over the next 3 years has reduced. Even with this additional funding the Department still faces a real terms reduction of £180m (9.2%) in resource funding by 2014/15, compared to the 2010/11 baseline. It is essential therefore that Boards of Governors continue to plan and make the necessary decisions required to ensure they live within their budgets.

**Retired Teachers**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) how many retired teachers have been recruited as examiners for local examination bodies; and (ii) the costs associated with the posts, in each year since 2005.

**(AQW 7719/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** (i) The table below shows the number of retired teachers that CCEA has engaged as examiners each year since 2005.

Year	Number of retired teachers who are examiners
2005	250
2006	300
2007	338
2008	339
2009	347
2010	354
2011	364

- (ii) This information is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

**Memento of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education what arrangements he intends to put in place to enable school children to receive a memento of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee.

**(AQW 7720/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I have no plans to put such arrangements in place. I will leave it to individual schools to consider this issue.

### Payment for Supervisory Assistants

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Education to detail the schools in the (i) South Eastern Education and Library Board area; and (ii) Southern Education and Library Board area which received a letter about the budgetary situation and payment for supervisory assistants.

**(AQW 7734/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The following schools in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area received a letter about the budgetary situation and payment for supervisory assistants:

- |                                       |                               |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ■ Bangor Academy & Sixth Form College | ■ Newtownbreda High School    |
| ■ Blackwater Integrated College       | ■ Priory Integrated College   |
| ■ De La Salle High School             | ■ Regent House                |
| ■ Down High School                    | ■ Saintfield High School      |
| ■ Dundonald High School               | ■ Shimna College              |
| ■ Dunmurry High School                | ■ St Colman's High School     |
| ■ Fort Hill Integrated College        | ■ St Colmcille's High School  |
| ■ Glastry College                     | ■ St Colm's High School       |
| ■ Glenlola Collegiate                 | ■ St Columbanus' College      |
| ■ Knockbreda High School              | ■ St Columba's College        |
| ■ Laurelhill Community College        | ■ St Malachy's High School    |
| ■ Lisnagarvey High School             | ■ St Mary's High School       |
| ■ Movilla High School                 | ■ St Patrick's Academy        |
| ■ Nendrum College                     | ■ St Patrick's Grammar School |

The Southern Education and Library Board have advised that it is not aware of any correspondence issuing which would match this description. The Board's Finance Department has issued a number of updates to schools re the changing budgetary situation but nothing specifically linking this to the issue of Special Needs Classroom Assistants.

### Statements of Educational Need

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education, for the East Belfast and the Castlereagh Borough Council areas, to detail (i) the role of educational psychologists in the issuing of Statements of Educational Need; (ii) the methodology by which this resource is apportioned to each school; (iii) the number of hours of educational psychology services available to each school; and (iv) the reasons for the use of stopwatches by those providing educational psychology services.

**(AQW 7786/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) and South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) are responsible for the delivery of educational psychology services in the East Belfast parliamentary constituency and Castlereagh Borough Council area.

The role of educational psychologists (EPs) is primarily to provide the psychological advice required in the assessment of a child's special educational needs (SEN). A statement of SEN, where this is required, will be issued by the education and library board (ELB) based on the EP's and other professionals' advice.

At Stages 4 and 5 of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (COP), when the ELB considers the need for a statutory assessment and where appropriate, a statement of SEN, referrals are received in both boards following consultation with an EP and are responded to in the order in which they are received within prescribed statutory timescales.

At Stage 3 of the COP, when schools are supported by specialists from outside the school including an EP, both boards' educational psychology services employ a time allocation model of delivery. Working closely with their named EP, schools prioritise their needs based on the principles of consultation, equity of access and flexibility. Psychology support using this model is apportioned based on school enrolment, social deprivation and educational achievement. In the SEELB, referrals from the post-primary sector are responded to in the order in which they are received.

The number of hours available to each school in the East Belfast parliamentary constituency and Castlereagh Borough Council area for Stage 3 referrals to EPs is detailed in the table below.

The Chief Executive of the BELB has confirmed that stopwatches may be used in the administration of timed tests undertaken by children to inform assessments. The Chief Executive of the SEELB has confirmed that there is no use of stopwatches in the delivery of educational psychology services.

### PRIMARY SECTOR

School name	Hours/Year*
Dundonald Primary School	50
Gilnahirk Primary School	34
Cregagh Primary School	21
Lisnasharragh Primary School	25
Braniel Primary School	25
Tullycarnet Primary School	7
Brooklands Primary School	54
Knockbreda Primary School	20
Belvoir Park Primary School	36
Cairnshill Primary School	31
Lead Hill Primary School	9
Carryduff Primary School	14
St Joseph's Primary School	22
St Bernard's Primary School	26
St Ita's Primary School	26
Loughview Integrated Primary School	33
Moneyrea Primary School	12
Millennium Integrated Primary School	19
Belmont Primary School	10
Euston Street Primary School	16
Strandtown Primary School	36
Elmgrove Primary School	26
Avoniel Primary School	11
Orangefield Primary School	15
Greenwood Primary School	10

School name	Hours/Year*
Knocknagoney Primary School	10
Dundela Infants School	10
Victoria Park Primary School	14
St Joseph's Primary School	10
St Matthew's Primary School	17
Campbell College Junior School	10
Strathearn School	10

### POST-PRIMARY SECTOR

School name	Hours/Year*
Dundonald High School	n/a
Our Lady and St Patrick's College	n/a
Knockbreda High School	n/a
Newtownbreda High School	n/a
Ashfield Girls' High School	20
Ashfield Boys' High School	35
Orangefield High School	25
Grosvenor Grammar School	20
Bloomfield Collegiate	15
Campbell College	15
Strathearn School	15

\* BELB's time allocation relates solely to contact time with the child being assessed.

SEELB's time allocation includes contact time with the child being assessed as well as other activities such as preparation, contact with parents and professionals and drafting of reports.

### Supervisory Assistants in Post-Primary Schools

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Education (i) what consultation took place in relation to the termination of direct Education and Library Board funding for supervisory assistants in post-primary schools in the South Eastern Education and Library Board area; and (ii) under what circumstances the funding will be reinstated.

**(AQW 7788/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Chief Executive of the South-Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) wrote to the Principals of all Post-Primary schools in the SEELB on 28 September 2011 to advise them that the Board Commissioners were reviewing the payment of Supervisory Assistants. The SEELB proposed that as '..... Supervisory Assistance is a universal requirement for pupils attending mainstream school, in most circumstances, it should be the responsibility of the management of the school to ensure and fund adequate adult supervision during breaks including the lunch time period.' Principals were invited to submit their views/comments on the proposal.

The SEELB have advised that they have received 10 responses from school principals.

The SEELB Board Commissioners at their meeting on 24 January 2012 agreed the following:

- (i) That officers in Special Education within the SEELB will consider requests for specific supervisory assistant support in respect of pupils with statements.
- (ii) In the event of Special Education officers being satisfied that supervisory assistant support is required for a named pupil, the associated costs will be charged to the Board.
- (iii) That from 06 February 2012 (the start of the next lunar pay period) the cost of all other supervisory assistants in post-primary schools are coded to a school's delegated budget.

### Civil Service Posts

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Education how many Civil Service posts existed in his Department at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, at the beginning of (a) 2007; and (b) 2012, broken down by local Council area.

**(AQW 7799/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The number of full-time equivalent posts in the Department of Education as at 1 January 2007 and 1 January 2012 are detailed below.

#### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POSTS AS AT 1 JANUARY 2007 (FTE)

	<b>Rathgael House North Down Borough Council</b>	<b>Waterside House Derry City Council</b>	<b>Purdy's Lane Castlereagh Borough Council</b>	<b>Total</b>
AA	73.88	27.36	0.68	101.92
AO	91.28	53.84	0.00	145.12
E02	92.60	22.20	0.00	114.80
E01	55.52	12.68	0.00	68.20
S0	74.80	4.00	1.36	80.16
DP	78.92	3.00	1.68	83.60
G7	35.06	1.00	0.00	36.06
G6	61.00	0.00	0.00	61.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>563.06</b>	<b>124.08</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>690.86</b>

#### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION POSTS AS AT 1 JANUARY 2012 (FTE)

	<b>Rathgael House North Down Borough Council</b>	<b>Waterside House Derry City Council</b>	<b>Purdy's Lane Castlereagh Borough Council</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
AA	30.43	18.50	0.00	48.93
AO	64.80	52.57	0.00	117.37
E02	65.42	23.93	0.00	89.35
E01	46.96	10.68	0.00	57.64
S0	72.84	4.00	1.00	77.84
DP	81.94	3.00	0.00	84.94
G7	39.10	1.00	2.00	42.10

	<b>Rathgael House North Down Borough Council</b>	<b>Waterside House Derry City Council</b>	<b>Purdy's Lane Castlereagh Borough Council</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
G6	59.00	0.00	0.00	59.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>460.49</b>	<b>113.68</b>	<b>3.00</b>	<b>577.17</b>

### **Woodlands Language Unit in the Foyle Constituency**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Education to outline the rationale for the proposed closure of the Woodlands Language Unit in the Foyle constituency; and what provision will be made to replace the Unit to ensure that the young people who currently avail of its services are not disadvantaged.

**(AQW 7814/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Woodlands Language Unit provides speech and language support for children who do not have statements of Special Educational Need (SEN), and who are enrolled in mainstream primary schools. Its location, within the grounds of Belmont House Special School, is considered unsuitable by the Western Education and Library Board as the current approach for children who need such support is to provide it at mainstream primary schools.

The Western Board has therefore been in discussion over the past two years with the Board of Governors of Belmont House Special School about the relocation of the 4 speech and language classes to mainstream primary school locations in both the controlled and maintained sectors.

The Western Board intends to publish a supporting statutory Development Proposal, which will afford anyone with an interest an opportunity to comment directly to the Department. However, at this stage, the issues involved are a matter for the Board to consider.

I understand that this issue has been the subject of public comment and concern and I am assured that the WELB will be writing to parents to clarify the position.

### **Department's Equality Unit**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education to detail the current (i) number; and (ii) annual cost of staff employed in his Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7819/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Three officers work in the Department of Education's Equality Team.

In 2010/2011, the Administration Salary Cost for the officers was £105,453.

In addition to equality duties the officers are also involved in issues that relate to Europe and North-South cooperation.

### **Out-of-School Activities**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Education how his Department intends to encourage children from less advantaged backgrounds to engage in out-of-school activities to enhance their academic performance.

**(AQW 7823/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Extended Schools programme, which has a clear focus on improving education outcomes, enables those schools that draw pupils from some of the most disadvantaged communities to provide a range of services and programmes, outside of the traditional school day, to help meet the needs of pupils, their families and wider communities. During 2011/12, 454 schools received funding from the Department as part of the Extended Schools Programme.

The Department also supports 2 Full Service pilot programmes in North and West Belfast as part of continuing efforts to address the needs of disadvantaged communities and narrow the gap in achievement levels.

The Department provides funding for youth work through the ELB Youth Service and the Youth Council. Youth work provision, although relevant to all young people, is particularly relevant to young people who are disadvantaged. The Department is currently developing a new policy for the youth service: "Priorities for Youth Work in Education", which will provide a clearer focus on targeting disadvantage and addressing the needs of those who are most at risk of underachievement.

### Integrated Schools

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education to list the integrated schools which are currently operating (i) at or beyond; or (ii) below, their designated enrolment capacity.

**(AQW 7827/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The integrated schools which for the 2011/12 school year are operating at or beyond; or below, their designated enrolment capacity are as detailed in the tables below.

#### INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOLS CURRENTLY OPERATING AT OR BEYOND THEIR APPROVED ENROLMENT NUMBER

School Name	Actual Enrolment	Approved Enrolment
Drumlins Integrated Primary School	122	116
Forge Integrated Primary School	257	250
Rowandale Integrated Primary School	127	116

#### INTEGRATED POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS CURRENTLY OPERATING AT OR BEYOND THEIR APPROVED ENROLMENT NUMBER

School Name	Actual Enrolment	Approved Enrolment
Drumragh College	585	580
Fort Hill College	856	850
Priory College	471	450
Shimna Integrated College	490	480
Strangford Integrated College	500	500
Ulidia Integrated College	502	500

#### INTEGRATED PRIMARY SCHOOLS CURRENTLY OPERATING BELOW THEIR APPROVED ENROLMENT NUMBER

School Name	Actual Enrolment	Approved Enrolment
Acorn Integrated Primary School	200	203
All Childrens Integrated Primary School	206	212
Annsborough Primary School	45	85
Ballycastle Integrated Primary School	129	158
Ballymoney Controlled Integrated Primary School	264	414
Bangor Central Primary School	575	588

<b>School Name</b>	<b>Actual Enrolment</b>	<b>Approved Enrolment</b>
Braidside Integrated Primary School	335	348
Bridge Integrated Primary School	398	406
Carhill Integrated Primary School	30	94
Carnlough Controlled Integrated Primary School	40	62
Cedar Integrated Primary School	179	196
Cliftonville Integrated Primary School	165	338
Corran Integrated Primary School	182	203
Cranmore Integrated Primary School	174	203
Crumlin Controlled Integrated Primary School	163	374
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School	211	244
Fort Hill Integrated Primary School	209	240
Glencraig Integrated Primary School	212	252
Glengormley Integrated Primary School	212	446
Groarty Primary School	40	63
Hazelwood Primary School	392	406
Kilbroney Integrated Primary School	90	140
Kircubbin Primary School	120	152
Loughview Integrated Primary School	399	406
Maine Integrated Primary School	105	120
Millennium Integrated Primary School	192	203
Millstrand Integrated Primary School	155	232
Oakgrove Integrated Primary School	380	400
Oakwood Integrated Primary School	195	203
Omagh Integrated Primary School	310	319
Phoenix Integrated Primary School	158	160
Portadown Integrated Primary School	198	203
Portaferry Integrated Primary School	53	101
Rathenraw Integrated Primary School	56	223
Roe Valley Integrated Primary School	145	156
Round Tower Integrated Primary School	267	276
Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School	188	270
Spires Integrated Primary School	193	203
Windmill Integrated Primary School	197	210

## INTEGRATED POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS CURRENTLY OPERATING BELOW THEIR APPROVED ENROLMENT NUMBER

School Name	Actual Enrolment	Approved Enrolment
Blackwater Integrated College	242	400
Brownlow Integrated College	352	450
Crumlin Integrated College	214	400
Erne Integrated College	390	400
Hazelwood College	810	825
Integrated College Dungannon	462	500
Lagan College	1199	1200
Malone Integrated College	672	800
New-Bridge Integrated College	495	500
North Coast Integrated College	436	500
Oakgrove Integrated College	778	800
Parkhall Integrated College	665	735
Slemish College	717	720
Sperrin Integrated College	471	500

**Source:** NI school census for actual enrolments. DE School Access Team for approved enrolment figures.

### Notes:

- 7 Capacity has been interpreted as approved enrolment.
- 8 Actual enrolment figures exclude children in receipt of a statement of special educational needs, admitted on appeal or by direction of the Exceptional Circumstances Body as they are supernumerary to a school's approved enrolment number.

## Places in Integrated Schools

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education why parental demand for places in integrated schools is not being satisfied despite unfilled capacity in the integrated schools requested.

**(AQW 7830/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Parental demand for places in all schools is limited by a school's admissions and enrolment numbers. These are set by the Department of Education as the definition of the school's capacity in terms of pupil numbers, in consultation with a school's Board of Governors and the Education and Library Board and CCMS as appropriate. Except for very rarely used exceptions, admissions legislation effectively requires that school must admit up to these numbers if the demand is there. Without exception schools may not exceed these numbers.

Accordingly, parental demand for places in integrated schools that may not be met will be (as it is in all schools) because demand has exceeded the number of available places. Unmet demand will not be despite the availability of places, defined by admissions and enrolment numbers. In the 2011/12 school year in the integrated sector, the provision of places in the integrated sector was such that the success rate for parental demand in (if taken to be expressed in parents' first choice of school) was 93% in terms of primary schools and 88% in terms of post primary schools.

## Vacancies for Teachers of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of temporary and full-time vacancies for teachers of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects in post-primary schools, in each Education and Library Board area.

**(AQW 7848/11-15)**

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

### NUMBER OF TEACHER VACANCIES IN THE 2011/12 ACADEMIC YEAR IN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS AT 7 NOVEMBER 2011 BY EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD<sup>2</sup>

Subject	Type of Vacancy	Education and Library Board Area					
		Belfast	Western	North Eastern	South Eastern	Southern	Total
Mathematics <sup>3</sup>	Full-time Permanent	0	0	2	0	1	3
	Full-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	1	0	0	0	1
	Part-time Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	1	0	0	0	0	1
Science <sup>4</sup>	Full-time Permanent	1	0	0	0	1	2
	Full-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	0	1	0	0	1
	Part-time Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	2	0	1	1	0	4
Design and Technology <sup>5</sup> (including Engineering)	Full-time Permanent	1	0	0	0	0	1
	Full-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0
Information Technology	Full-time Permanent	0	0	1	1	0	2
	Full-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	0	0	0	1	1
	Part-time Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Vacancies	Full-time Permanent	2	0	3	1	2	8
	Full-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	0	1	1	0	1	3
	Part-time Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Temporary <sup>6</sup>	3	0	1	1	0	5

**Source:** Teacher Vacancy Survey

**Notes:**

- 1 All figures refer to vacancies in schools on 7th November 2011.
- 2 Number of vacancies is for classroom teachers only.
- 3 Mathematics includes Statistics but excludes special needs provision in Mathematics.
- 4 Science includes Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Integrated or combined science and other science.

- 5 Design and Technology includes woodwork, metalwork, technical drawing and other technical subjects such as building, engineering and motor mechanics.
- 6 Temporary vacancies include temporary positions of 1 year or more and temporary positions of less than 1 year.
- 7 Engineering is included within Design and Technology. A breakdown for Engineering and Technology is therefore not feasible.
- 8 The STEM subject classifications are based on those in Annex 2 of the 2009 Report of the STEM review for the Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning.

### **Pupil to Computer Ratio**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the current ratio of pupil to computer in schools; (ii) the desired pupil to computer ratio; (iii) if the target ratio is being met, and if not, how his Department plans to meet its target.

**(AQW 7853/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:**

- (i) C2k has advised that based on the PCs and laptops provided by C2k the average computer to pupil ratio in Primary Schools is 1:6. For Post-Primary Schools the ratio is 1:5.

Schools enhance their hardware provision by making direct purchases via the C2k's managed service school catalogue and when such purchases are taken into account the ratio for Primary schools is 1:5 and for Post-Primary Schools it is 1:3.

The ratio in Special Schools is 1:2.

Schools can also purchase items not in the C2k catalogue and when they do so the above ratios are improved. The Department does not hold information on such purchases.

- (ii) & (iii) The Department does not have a desired pupil to computer ratio. It is up to schools to determine their ICT requirements taking into account their teaching practices which will vary from school to school. The Department has ensured that there is a level of ICT provision within all schools, supplied directly through the managed service operated by C2k. As mentioned at (i) above, schools can decide to supplement this provision using their delegated budgets.

The latest C2k contract will herald a new flexibility for schools providing opportunities to connect a wider range of digital devices to the managed service. The new contract is not yet finalised, but should be in place from April 2012, when a full implementation plan will be in place.

### **Schools in North Down in Need of Major Repairs**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education to detail the schools in the North Down area that are in need of major repairs; and the associated costs.

**(AQW 7861/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** According to the Education and Library Boards' estate management system, the current maintenance backlog in schools in the North Down area is as follows:

School	Maintenance Backlog (£)
Bangor Nursery	53,545
Hollywood Nursery	1,500
Trinity Nursery	63,920
Ballymagee Primary	3,290
Ballyvester Primary	28,550
Bloomfield Road Primary	313,680

School	Maintenance Backlog (£)
Clandeboye Primary	274,395
Crawfordsburn Primary	20,450
Donaghadee Primary	139,580
Grange Park Primary	256,540
Hollywood Primary	138,769
Kilcooley Primary	219,047
Millisle Primary	125,235
Rathmore Primary	367,230
Redburn Primary	604,405
Saint Anne's Primary	29,615
Saint Comgall's Primary	5,190
Saint Malachy's Primary	210,958
Saint Patrick's Primary	298,945
Bangor Central Integrated Primary	143,850
Glencraig Integrated Primary	61,900
Saint Columbanus College	527,685
Priory College	561,885
Bangor Grammar School	4,791,098
Clifton Special	3,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,244,962</b>

There is a continuous, actively managed programme of planned maintenance across the schools' estate that will affect the overall backlog maintenance (currently £310m). In addition, reactive maintenance is required to address unexpected emergency issues such as a heating system failing and the cost of such work is not reflected in the maintenance backlog. Whilst the backlog has not reduced substantially since our response to your previous AQW in January of this year, you should note that the Board may have carried out work of a reactive nature or repairs required for health and safety reasons.

### Department's Human Resources Section

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Education how many staff are employed in his Department's Human Resources section.

**(AQW 7878/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** There are currently 10 full-time staff and 2 part-time staff employed in the Department's Human Resources section.

### Schools' Budget

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education from where the additional funding of £120 million for the schools' budget will be sourced.

**(AQW 7886/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** This will be a matter for the Finance Minister to consider in the first instance and so I am unable to comment.

### **Teachers' Pay**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department will provide additional funding to schools to cover the cost of the one percent increase in teachers' pay in 2012 and 2013.

**(AQW 7887/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** In the June 2010 emergency budget the Government announced a pay freeze on all public sector workers earning more than £21,000. The pay freeze for teachers is effective from 1 September 2011 to 31 August 2013.

In agreeing Budget 2010 allocations my predecessor made provision for increases in the teachers' paybill across the 4 year period based on pay assumptions available at that time.

On 29 November 2011 the Chancellor announced in his Autumn Statement that public sector pay awards will be set at an average of 1% for each of the two years after the current pay freeze comes to an end.

Pay increases for teachers are only implemented after negotiations at the Teachers' Negotiating Committee. Negotiations on teachers' pay increases after 31 August 2013 have not yet commenced. Once these have been completed, allocations already provided for teachers' pay awards can be reviewed.

### **Schools' Budgets**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education whether he has any plans to increase the proportion of his budget which goes directly to schools' budgets in delegated spend.

**(AQW 7888/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** On 12 January, following talks convened by the First Minister and deputy First Minister I announced an additional funding package for schools over the next 3 years. This is over and above the £40m that I reallocated to schools last November from within the education budget.

As these additional funds will only help alleviate rather than eradicate the financial pressures on schools, I fully intend to continue to argue the case for further investment in the education sector. I have also asked my officials to carry out a review right across the education budget with the primary focus being on delivering additional funding for the classroom.

### **Social Deprivation**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department recognises that eligibility for free school meals is an unreliable indicator of social deprivation.

**(AQW 7889/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department takes the view that entitlement to free school meals is in fact an effective indicator of social disadvantage for a number of reasons.

These include the fact that it is highly correlated with the multiple deprivation measure and, as it relates to an individual pupil, is more robust than a spatial measure which assumes everyone in an area is alike. FSME is also updated regularly and available to us as part of the census return.

### **Age Weighted Pupil Unit**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education why the cut to the Age Weighted Pupil Unit is more severe than the cut to the overall aggregated schools budget.

**(AQW 7890/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Aggregated Schools Budget (ASB) is distributed to schools using the Common Funding Formula, as outlined in the Common Funding Scheme. The details of the Scheme are available from the Departmental website. The Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) cash value is determined by:

- the overall level of funding - the ASB;
- the amount of this budget used to fund other 'non AWPU' funding factors within the formula (such as Premises, TSN, Small Schools support and Foundation Stage);
- a range of demographic values such as the number and profile of pupils. Higher 'weighted' pupils such as 6th form and nursery-age pupils, alongside a moderate increase in the number of pupils in schools, results in a further reduction in the AWPU cash value.

There is, therefore, not a linear relationship between changes in the ASB and the AWPU cash value.

### Fuel Hedging

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, are engaged in fuel hedging to manage fluctuations in fuel prices.

**(AQW 7897/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department of Education and its arm's-length bodies are not engaged in fuel hedging to manage fluctuations in fuel prices.

### School Transport

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Education what arrangements are in place to facilitate travel to an alternative post-primary school, when a pupil's nearest school does not provide the subjects on its curriculum that are required for a chosen career.

**(AQW 7905/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The focus of the post 14 curriculum is very firmly on meeting the needs of pupils by offering them a wider range of courses under the entitlement framework. On the assumption that there may be costs associated with planning and delivering an expanded curricular offer through collaboration, my Department provides earmarked funds to schools which may be used to cover any aspect of the entitlement framework including travel costs when a suitable course is delivered in partnership with the most appropriate provider. My priority is to see tangible and measurable outcomes in terms of course delivery to meet the needs of pupils through the appropriate and cost effective use of the entitlement framework resources. We do not have school catchment areas here.

### School Transport

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Education what financial restrictions are in place to ensure that post-primary schools do not use their resources to provide school transport in other post-primary school catchment areas.

**(AQW 7906/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The focus of the post 14 curriculum is very firmly on meeting the needs of pupils by offering them a wider range of courses under the entitlement framework. On the assumption that there may be costs associated with planning and delivering an expanded curricular offer through collaboration, my Department provides earmarked funds to schools which may be used to cover any aspect of the entitlement framework including travel costs when a suitable course is delivered in partnership with the most appropriate provider. My priority is to see tangible and measurable outcomes in terms of course delivery to meet the needs of pupils through the appropriate and cost effective use of the entitlement framework resources. We do not have school catchment areas here.

## Retired Teachers

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education how many teachers, who have taken early retirement, have subsequently taken up temporary teaching positions in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7949/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I refer you to your question AQW 778/11-15 and my earlier response which was published in the official report on 1 July 2011.

## Accrued Money Held Within Schools

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education to detail the accrued money held by each school, or by his Department on behalf of each school, in the (i) Belfast Education and Library Board; and (ii) the South Eastern Education and Library Board areas.

**(AQW 7966/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The amounts which individual schools have accrued as delegated budget savings are routinely available from the Local Management of Schools Outturn Statements which are published on Education and Library Board Websites. The latest full financial year information currently available is in respect of the 2010/11 year. In respect of those schools for which the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) and South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) are Funding Authorities, I have reproduced electronic links to the Outturn Statements below.

### BELB

[http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/lms\\_ot\\_1011.pdf](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/lms_ot_1011.pdf)

[http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/lms\\_ot\\_1011\\_p3.pdf](http://www.belb.org.uk/Downloads/lms_ot_1011_p3.pdf)

### SEELB

[http://80.4.159.11/school\\_man\\_new/pdfs/outturn2011.pdf](http://80.4.159.11/school_man_new/pdfs/outturn2011.pdf)

## Spend on Fuel

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Education how much his Department, and its arm's-length bodies has spent on fuel in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 7971/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The amount spent on fuel by the Department of Education and its arm's length bodies in each of the last five years is detailed in the table below.

### FUEL COSTS

£'000

Financial Years	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
BELB	196	178	228	222	272
NEELB	410	438	541	469	603
SEELB	480	532	633	616	694
SELB	760	869	992	976	988
WELB	1,096	946	1,448	1,222	1,335
CCEA	3	3	4	4	5
CCMS	0	0	0	0	0
Staff Commission	0	0	0	0	0
YCNI	0	0	0	0	0

Financial Years	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
GTC	0	0	0	0	0
Exceptional Circumstances Body	0	0	0	0	0
DE	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,945</b>	<b>2,966</b>	<b>3,846</b>	<b>3,509</b>	<b>3,897</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 The above figures cover diesel and petrol only as confirmed by your office.
- 2 Figures provided by the ELBs include costs, if applicable, associated with the Public Library Service up to and including 2008/09.
- 3 As the amounts provided are in round thousands, costs totalling less than £500, in any year for any ALB, have not been included.

**Vacancies for Teachers of English**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of temporary and full-time vacancies for teachers of English in post-primary schools in each Education and Library Board area.

**(AQW 7989/11-15)**

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

**NUMBER OF TEACHER VACANCIES IN THE 2011/12 ACADEMIC YEAR IN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS AT 7 NOVEMBER 2011 BY EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD<sup>2</sup>**

Subject	Type of Vacancy	Education and Library Board Area					Total
		Belfast	Western	North Eastern	South Eastern	Southern	
English <sup>3</sup>	Full-time Permanent	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Full-time Temporary <sup>4</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Permanent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Part-time Temporary <sup>4</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Source:** Teacher Vacancy Survey

**Notes:**

- 9 All figures refer to vacancies in schools on 7th November 2011.
10. Number of vacancies is for classroom teachers only.
11. English excludes special needs provision in English.
12. Temporary vacancies include temporary positions of 1 year or more and temporary positions of less than 1 year.
13. In addition to the 2 vacancies still existing at 7th November 2011, 35 vacancies had already been filled by the 7th November 2011; 17 Full-time Permanent vacancies, 14 Full-time Temporary vacancies and 4 Part-time Temporary vacancies.

## Alternative Indicator of Social Deprivation

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department is seeking an alternative indicator of social deprivation rather than the number of children who receive free school meals.

**(AQW 7993/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department is content that that entitlement for free school meals (FSME) is an effective indicator of social disadvantage for a number of reasons. FSME is highly correlated with the multiple deprivation measure and, as it relates to an individual pupil, is more robust than a spatial measure which assumes everyone in an area is alike. FSME is also updated regularly and available to us as part of the census return.

Where appropriate, the Department does apply spatial measures of deprivation. For example, the Multiple Deprivation Measure and those living in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas are used in relation to a number of its programmes such as Extended Schools and SureStart.

## Teachers' Negotiating Committee Negotiating Panels

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education whether teacher leaders will be included in future Teachers' Negotiating Committee negotiating panels.

**(AQW 7996/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The constitution of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC) states that teachers unions are to be represented by those unions on the NI Teachers' Council (NITC). The NITC comprises the five recognised teacher unions, one of which, the National Association of Headteachers, exclusively represents the interests of school leaders.

## Local Management of Schools Budgets

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education what plans there are to increase the money allocated to Local Management of Schools budgets, to bring them into line with other jurisdictions.

**(AQW 7997/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Direct comparisons between the funding here and other jurisdictions are not appropriate as the arrangements for delegating funding to schools varies so considerably. These include differences in the nature of the functions delegated to individual schools and the associated funding. For example, in some jurisdictions the funding for school meals, school transport or special needs can be delegated directly to schools while in others these services will be managed centrally to reduce the administrative burden on schools. Furthermore, different starting ages and transfer ages, alongside differing arrangements for post-16 education make comparisons more difficult.

International comparisons are difficult, due to variations in the timing of research, definitions used and the levels of delegated autonomy.

On 12 January 2012, I confirmed that I had secured significant additional funding for schools over the next 3 years, on top of the £40m to schools that I announced last November. Even with this additional funding my Department still faces a real terms reduction of £180m (9.2%) in resource funding by 2014/15, compared to the 2010/11 baseline.

## Stationery Costs in Replying to Assembly Written Questions

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Education how much his Department has spent on stationery costs in replying to Assembly Written Questions, including the price of the envelopes and paper used, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 8014/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department of Education does not routinely record the cost of stationery used in the answering of Assembly Questions and an exercise to do so would result in disproportionate cost.

## Drumlins Integrated Primary School in Ballynahinch

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Education what steps he is taking to secure a permanent site for Drumlins Integrated Primary School in Ballynahinch, and for his assessment of the suitability of the current temporary location, including the lack of planning permission.

**(AQW 8057/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** A site search has been completed and the Department of Education (DE) officials met, in December 2011, with the owner of the preferred site to discuss the purchase of the land at a valuation provided by the Land and Property Services (LPS). The site owner has indicated that he will not sell the site at the LPS valuation.

The second preferred option is a site owned by the South Eastern Regional College (SERC). DE is progressing the feasibility of purchasing this site and has met with SERC, the school and NICIE to discuss the matter.

The school achieved viability in September 2009 but cannot be vested in the schools' estate until a suitable new site is found. The current site is the third site the school has moved to since 2006 and is unsuitable as the Civic Amenity Site is located to the rear of the school.

## Total Spend on Hospitality

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education what has been the total spend on hospitality by his Department in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 8072/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The amount spent on hospitality by the Department of Education in the last five years is shown in the following table.

Financial year	£'000
2006-07	45
2007-08	89
2008-09	74
2009-10	57
2010-11	26

## School Visit Invitations

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education to detail (i) the school visit invitations he has received; and (ii) the school visit invitations he has declined since coming into office.

**(AQW 8111/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Since coming into office I have been invited to 119 schools. I have accepted 52 invitations and declined 64. 3 invitations are still under consideration. Details of the schools are detailed in the tabled below.

Accepted	Declined
Ceara Special School, Lurgan	Forge Integrated PS, Belfast
St Mary's PS, Newtownbutler	Model PS, Derry
St Colmcille's PS, Downpatrick	Gaelscoil na Speirini, Draperstown
Primate Dixon PS, Coalisland	Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin, Belfast*

<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Declined</b>
Brownlow Integrated College, Craigavon	Holy Trinity PS, Enniskillen
St Mary's Gortnaghey PS, Dungiven	Lismore Comprehensive, Craigavon
St Mary's, Limavady	Drumlins Integrated PS, Ballynahinch
St Mary's PS, Stewartstown	Omagh Integrated PS, Omagh
St Paul's JHS, Craigavon	St Mark's HS, Warrenpoint
Wellington College, Belfast	St Clare's Convent PS, Newry
Castle Tower Special School, Ballymena	St Theresa's PS, Lurgan
St Louise's Comprehensive, Belfast	St Patrick's College, Dungannon
St Francis, Derrylatinee	Foyle Learning Community, Derry*
St Mary's HS, Newry	St Patrick's College, Belfast
Foyle College, Derry	St Mary's HS, Newry
St Gerard's Educ Centre, Belfast	St Brigid's PS, Magherafelt
St Patrick's PS, Gortin	Castle Tower School, Ballymena
St John's PS, Moy	St Luke's PS, Belfast
Ballyoran PS, Portadown	Devenish College, Enniskillen
St Patrick's PS, Crossmaglen	Carrick PS, Burren
Sacred Heart College, Omagh	Bocombra PS, Portadown
Barrack St Boys' PS, Belfast	St Nicholas PS, Ardglass
St Columbanus' College, Bangor	St Mary's Girls' PS, Strabane
St Joseph's College, Belfast	St Mary's HS, Belleek
St Bernard's PS, Glengormley	All Children Int PS, Newcastle
Oakwood School and Assessment Centre, Belfast	St Mary's PS, Granemore
St Mary's PS, Attinure	St Colm's HS, Draperstown
St Mark's HS, Warrenpoint	Bangor Central PS, Bangor
Naiscoil Éanna, Glengormley	Holy Trinity PS, Belfast
Clea PS, Keady	Carrickfergus College, Carrickfergus
De La Salle College, Belfast	Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Castletwellan*
Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche, Castletwellan*	St Rose's Dominican College, Belfast
Corpus Christi College, Belfast	St Mary's HS, Newry
St Michael's GS, Lurgan	St Patrick's GS/St Brigid's HS, Armagh
St Patrick's College, Banbridge	St Killen's College, Garron Tower
Gaelscoil na Ómaigh, Omagh	St Joseph's PS, Newcastle
St Joseph's PS, Armagh	St Teresa's PS, Belfast

<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Declined</b>
Holy Rosary PS, Belfast	St Malachy's PS, Armagh
St Joseph's College, Coalisland	Hollywood PS, Hollywood
Sperrinview Spec School, Dungannon	Redburn PS, Hollywood
Down HS, Downpatrick	Priory College, Hollywood
Millburn PS, Coleraine	Ballykeigle PS, Comber
St Francis PS, Lurgan	St Bronagh's PS, Rostrevor
St Genevieve's HS, Belfast	Mitchell House School, Belfast
Foyle Learning Community, Derry	St Gemma's HS, Belfast
Tannaghmore PS, Craigavon	St Dominic's, Belfast
Roan St Patrick's PS, Eglisli	Belfast HS, Belfast
Regent House, Newtownards	Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagáin, Belfast*
Ballyoran PS, Portadown	St Brigid's HS, Armagh
Our Lady and St Patrick's, Belfast	St Anne's PS, Derry
Methodist College, Belfast	St Colm's HS, Dunmurry
Loughshore Education Resource Centre, Belfast	College Farm Nursery Armagh
	Gaelscoil ui Dhochartaigh, Strabane
	St Patrick's PS, Castlewellan
	Lagan College, Belfast
	Tannaghmore PS, Lurgan
	Drumcree College, Portadown
	Bangor Central IPS, Bangor
	Ballyclare HS, Ballyclare
	Foyle Learning Community, Derry*
	Magherafelt NS, Magherafelt
	Maine IPS, Randalstown
	St Mary's IPS, Killyleagh
	Bunscoil na Traonaigh, Lisnaskea
<b>Still under consideration</b>	
St Patrick's PS, Portaferry	
Holy Child PS, Belfast	
St Oliver Plunkett PS, Belfast	

\* invited on 2 occasions

## Education and Skills Authority

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of staff (i) appointed to; and (ii) who are being paid to work for, the Education and Skills Authority, broken down by (a) post; and (b) annual cost. **(AQW 8118/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Skills Authority (ESA) does not yet exist; its establishment is planned for April 2013.

Gavin Boyd's contract of employment to my Department as Chief Executive (Designate) of ESA was recently renewed. Upon the establishment of ESA, on 1 April 2013 he will become the Chief Executive of the organisation. My Department does not give details of individuals' salaries; however, the post of Chief Executive (Designate) is within the salary band £145-150,000. There are no other ESA staff in position at present. Six Directors (Designate) were recruited following competition, but they have not yet taken up post and remain employees of existing education organisations.

## Schools Estate

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister of Education whether the total value of the schools estate in the maintained sector is greater or lesser than that in the controlled sector. **(AQW 8140/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The most recent valuation of the schools in the maintained sector was carried out in 2003 and cannot be used as a robust comparator with the controlled estate that was last valued in 2008.

The Department is considering options for addressing this issue in future, but a resurvey of the schools' estate would be a major exercise that would incur disproportionate cost and take several months to complete.

## Impact of Class Sizes on Pupils Development

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Education what research his Department has carried out, or what evidence his Department has, on the impact of class sizes on pupils development. **(AQW 8155/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department has carefully considered the local data and the international research on the issue of class sizes.

As regards local data we looked at the relationship between pupil-teacher ratios and assessment results at the end of key stages 2 and 3 and at GCSE. Our analysis showed there is no evidence of a correlation between class size and pupil outcomes.

International research evidence also suggests that, except during the very early years, there is little correlation between class size and pupil outcomes. Improving the quality of teaching is found to be a more effective route to improving outcomes.

A recent research report published by the Department for Education in England, Class Size and education in England evidence report (December 2011), found that overall, the available evidence suggests that, compared to other options such as increasing teacher effectiveness, class size reduction policies are not the best option in terms of value for money to raising pupil attainment.

Within all stages of a child's education in school, our focus is on raising standards and supporting and promoting high quality teaching and learning and our school improvement policy is designed with this purpose in mind.

## Education: Area Plans

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Education whether up-to-date Area Plans exist in each Education and Library Board area. **(AQW 8156/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Area Planning Terms of Reference (TOR) which issued to the Education and Library Boards on 15 December 2011 define the task and the scope of the process and make it clear that area plans must be based on robust and verifiable data. The TOR are available in full at <http://www.deni.gov.uk/area-planning-terms-of-reference.htm>.

It is a matter for the Education and Library Boards, working with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and other sectoral bodies, to determine the most appropriate means of arriving at area plans in line with Departmental Guidance.

The area planning process must cover the entirety of grant-aided primary and post-primary provision within the Board areas and must take account of cross boundary issues.

The TOR also outlined a timescale for the completion and submission of area plans. Those for post-primary schools have been requested by March 2012, and those for primary schools by June 2012. However, in view of the scale and complexity of the issues involved, these timescales are indicative and subject to discussion with Boards.

The completion of the plans is not an end in itself, and their implementation will be an ongoing process.

### **Area Planning**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Education to detail the timescale for the completion of, and the areas that will be affected by Area Planning in each Education and Library Board area.

**(AQW 8157/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Area Planning Terms of Reference (TOR) which issued to the Education and Library Boards on 15 December 2011 define the task and the scope of the process and make it clear that area plans must be based on robust and verifiable data. The TOR are available in full at <http://www.deni.gov.uk/area-planning-terms-of-reference.htm>.

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The completion of the plans is not an end in itself, and their implementation will be an ongoing process.

### **Vacant Education and Library Board Properties**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Education what plans his Department has for vacant Education and Library Board properties, such as Rathvarna House, Lisburn.

**(AQW 8158/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Education and Library Boards have a responsibility, under Managing Public Money, to dispose of surplus property. In doing this they adhere to the guidance on the disposal of public sector property issued by DFP's Land and Property Services. Surplus property must either be transferred within the public sector at market prices or put on the open market.

Rathvarna House is currently being considered for purchase by a Housing Association.

## Education and Skills Authority

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education, given that there is no legislative basis for the Education and Skills Authority (ESA), why the post of Irish-Medium Project Manager for the ESA has been advertised; and whether such managers will be appointed in other education sectors.

**(AQW 8204/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Skills Authority (ESA) does not yet exist; its establishment is planned for April 2013 under the Executive's Programme for Government.

Following advertisement, a temporary post was filled in April 2010, on the basis of secondment to my Department, to take forward work connected with the Irish Medium Review. This post was placed within the ESA Implementation Team. Applications were invited from all eligible staff within the RPA affected education sector bodies, including schools.

There are no proposals currently for the appointment of project managers for other sectors.

## Mobile Phones in Schools

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Education whether he has any plans to ban pupils from using mobile phones in schools.

**(AQW 8281/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** It is a matter for the Board of Governors of each school to adopt a policy regarding the use of mobile phones by children and young people on school premises.

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Proposed Merger of Queen's University, Belfast and Stranmillis University College, Belfast

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) what discussions he, or his officials, have had with the relevant trade unions in relation to the proposed merger of Queen's University, Belfast and Stranmillis University College, Belfast; and (ii) whether he, or his officials, and the trade unions hold the same views.

**(AQW 7182/11-15)**

**Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):** Discussions with relevant trade unions in relation to the proposed merger of Stranmillis University College with Queen's University Belfast took place on 3 August 2011 and 6 October 2011. After the latter, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions confirmed in writing that "the official position of UCU1, at national regional and branch level is that there is no opposition to the merger". As to my views on this issue, I would refer you to my Statement to the Assembly on 28 November 2011.

### Chairmanship of the Stranmillis University College Board of Governors

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) who recommended or advised on the extension of the Chairmanship of the Stranmillis University College Board of Governors; (ii) what consultation was carried out prior to the decision to extend the Chairmanship; (iii) how many candidates were in the running for this post; and (iv) to outline the rationale behind the decision to extend the Chairmanship.

**(AQW 7230/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My decision to extend the term of office of the Chair of the Governing Body of Stranmillis University College complied with the relevant Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland (CPANI) guidelines. These do not require a consultation to be carried out and, given that the extension related to only one person, no other candidates were involved.

The rationale for the extension was set out in the Press Release issued by my Department on 21 December 2011, namely, that it was “in the interests of maintaining continuity and stability in both the Governing Body and the College”.

### **Winning in Europe: European Priorities 2011-12**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how he is using EU policies, networks and programmes to achieve the key objective to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects to young people through creative and inspirational initiatives which can involve industry, academia and Government, as detailed in ‘Winning in Europe: European Priorities 2011-12’.

**(AQW 7261/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department is not currently engaged directly in EU policies, networks and programmes related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) but will continue to work to identify potential opportunities to maintain and enhance links with relevant policies and programmes through the work of the STEM Government sub group and implementation of the STEM Strategy.

Employment Service as part of its actions under the Barroso Taskforce Initiative is actively exploring opportunities to access European funding to support programmes and work with young people seeking employment.

### **Made Not Born 2012 Leadership Learning Series**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the criteria used by the Made Not Born 2012 Leadership Learning Series programme to determine where its events will take place.

**(AQW 7291/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The Department’s ‘Made Not Born’ campaign promotes management and leadership programmes through a carefully planned series of events. The 2012 programme, as with each of the previous 3 years, sets as its primary criteria, to hold events in towns throughout all of Northern Ireland (north, south, east and west) taking into account local catchment areas and reasonable travelling distances. This is to ensure that as many SMEs as possible have the opportunity to attend an event to learn about the business benefits of developing their own people through the use of specialist management and leadership training. Feedback from past events is also used to help determine future locations.

### **College Courses Towards Employment**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether people, who were previously claiming benefits but are now enrolled in college courses towards employment, have travel expenses or subsistence costs included in their bursaries or are able to claim back the costs incurred in travelling to college.

**(AQW 7306/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** While attending short accredited training courses on the Steps to Work programme, all participants are entitled to full travel expenses to cover the cost of their journeys to and from the course venue. Participants are reimbursed by the Steps to Work Lead Contractor.

All other students enrolled on nationally accredited professional and technical courses at Further Education (FE) colleges may be eligible for financial help, including travel costs, through FE Awards and / or college Hardship Funds.

FE Awards provide students with a means tested maintenance grant of up to £2,092 to provide financial assistance in relation to living expenses generally, including travel costs.

Students who are not eligible for FE Awards or who have exhausted their awards and still face financial difficulties can make applications to the college Hardship Fund, which is discretionary and intended to provide support to learners who are experiencing exceptional financial difficulty with meeting costs associated with learning. The maximum amount payable is £3,500 per annum, including any FE Award

(calculated on a pro rata basis for part-time students) and is aimed specifically at providing assistance with fees, books and equipment, travel costs and associated living costs.

In addition, any student under 19 years of age who is following a full-time course at a FE college and whose home is located over the statutory distance of three miles from any college qualifies for travel assistance. Eligible students are provided with annual travel tickets for use on public transport. Alternatively, students who chose to use their own cars can receive financial assistance up to the same value of the travel ticket which is £649.39.

### **Further Education College in Coleraine**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what progress has been made over the last year to replace the existing further education college in Coleraine; and when work on this project will start. **(AQW 7309/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The Northern Regional College submitted a Strategic Outline Case which recommended options for the College estate at five campuses, including Coleraine. The Strategic Outline Case was approved in April 2011 by my Department and by the Department of Finance and Personnel. The next stage is the completion of a more detailed Outline Business Case, which the College is currently preparing. The timetable for completion and approval of this business case is January 2013. A bid to finance the projects was made in Budget 2010 and as no funds were allocated in this bidding round it is not possible to specify a start date.

### **Capital Investment for the Further Education Campus in Enniskillen**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the capital investment for the further education campus in Enniskillen. **(AQW 7348/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The South West College is currently preparing a Business Case to address deficiencies at its campus in Enniskillen. The business case will consider a range of options, one of which is a shared services use of the old Erne Hospital site. The viability of this option is dependent on the involvement of a range of other public sector partners.

A bid was made in Budget 2010 for capital funding, in years 2013/14 and 2014/15, but no allocation was made.

### **Work Placements**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what steps his Department has taken to ensure that students who are taking courses that have a work placement element, but are having difficulties securing placements, are able to continue with their courses and to graduate. **(AQW 7351/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Universities and university colleges are responsible for their own policies and procedures, including work placements.

However, I am advised by the University of Ulster that in the current economic downturn it has been decided that students on sandwich courses with compulsory placements, who have been unsuccessful in finding a placement, but who could demonstrate appropriate efforts to find a placement, should be permitted to proceed directly to the final year of study.

The University also agreed that students who had not made sufficient effort to find a place could opt to apply for a leave of absence, so that they could continue to search for a placement which might possibly be completed before the following academic year.

Queen's University Belfast has advised that it is aware that the number of work placements may be reduced due to the current economic climate and it is monitoring the situation. To date it has not identified any significant increase in the difficulties experienced by students in securing placements. In

such circumstances, however, the University has mechanisms in place to enable students to continue with their courses and to graduate.

The University is exploring additional options that will provide students with relevant experience. These include:

- adoption of a more flexible timeframe for the completion of obligatory work placements. For example, some Schools have accepted a 'portfolio' of placement experience provided it meets the 9 month degree programme requirement. In this way a student may undertake a 6 month placement followed by a summer 3 month placement, or complete a part time placement over 15 months.
- broadening the definition of work placement beyond the traditional, for example, accepting work placements within the University, or participation on the Study USA programme.

In addition, through the University's Degree Plus programme, students are encouraged to reflect on and utilise all aspects of their University experience, including part time paid work, to enhance their employability.

To date, St Mary's University College and Stranmillis University College have advised that they are not experiencing any significant difficulties in finding work placements for students.

### **Catholic Certificate of Religious Education**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 2469/11-15 and AQW 6427/11-15, whether, in the interests of good relations, equality, access to services and positive collaboration, he will introduce a strategy to share the teachers with the Catholic Certificate of Religious Education between St Mary's University College and Stranmillis University College.

**(AQW 7376/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** This is an issue that will be explored with both university colleges during my announced study of the teacher education infrastructure in Northern Ireland.

### **Further Education College: Staff Travelling Expenses**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether each campus of each Further Education College pays staff travelling expenses for any relevant work that they carry out; and to detail the cost of these expenses broken down by campus and college for the last year.

**(AQW 7380/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department does not hold the information requested by the Member, as terms of employment are a matter for each college Governing Body.

I have passed this query to the six Further Education College Directors, who will respond to the Member directly.

### **Regional Colleges: Staff Travel Expenses**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the travel expenses claimed by the (i) Chief Executives; (ii) Principals; (iii) Senior Management; and (iv) Board of Governors of each campus of each Regional College in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7382/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department does not hold the information requested by the Member, as the award of travel expenses for Governors and the terms of employment for staff members are a matter for each college Governing Body.

I have passed this query to the six Further Education College Directors to respond to the Member directly.

## Regional Colleges in Omagh and Strabane

**Mr Byrne** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what is the current level of higher education provision delivered by the Regional Colleges in (i) Omagh; and (ii) Strabane.

**(AQW 7407/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** South West College currently delivers higher education provision for 145 full-time and 443 part-time students at its Omagh campus covering a range of courses including Foundation Degrees in Creative Media Production; Architectural Technology with Sustainable Design; Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development, and Event Management.

North West Regional College currently delivers part-time higher education provision for 40 students at its Strabane campus covering the following courses; Certificate in Counselling Studies, Higher National Certificate in Health & Social Care and Higher National Certificate / Diploma in Advanced Practice in Working with Children and Families. There is not currently any full-time higher education provision delivered at the Strabane campus.

As I announced on 6 December last year there will be an allocation of an additional 70 full-time higher education places across the further education regional colleges. My Department will determine which colleges receive an additional allocation of places but, as with all other full-time and part-time higher education in further education provision, it is the responsibility of the individual college to determine where its courses are delivered and how best to distribute its allocation of places across its campus network.

## Craft Skills Training in Omagh and Strabane

**Mr Byrne** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what proposals his Department has to increase participation in Craft Skills training in Omagh and Strabane.

**(AQW 7409/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department provides a range of training opportunities throughout Northern Ireland for people of all ages. These opportunities, outlined below, are available across a wide range of occupational areas including craft and construction and offer incentives by way of financial support.

Training for Success provides a guarantee of a training place for all eligible unemployed young people aged 16 and 17, with extended eligibility for those with a disability or from an in-care background. Training is offered through the demand led Training for Success and Programme-Led Apprenticeship programmes with participants following their chosen occupational area. My Department funds contracted training suppliers for training delivery and, in addition, a weekly training allowance is paid to participants.

ApprenticeshipsNI is a demand-led provision, and as such, it is employers and not my Department that create apprenticeships. There are over 100 ApprenticeshipsNI frameworks to choose from covering a diverse range of occupational areas. The frameworks are designed by Sector Skills Councils/Industry Representative Bodies to meet the need of their particular sector. The apprentice is employed from day one and my Department funds training providers for training delivery and an employer incentive bonus is paid on completion.

There are currently 82 participants on ApprenticeshipsNI and 147 Programme-Led apprentices following construction apprenticeships in the West Tyrone area.

Skills Solutions is a proactive service to local industry and enables companies to upskill and reskill their employees by the provision of bespoke training helping them become more productive and competitive within their sector. Skills Solutions Advisers will meet with employers to discuss their training requirements and to look at how the Department can assist the business.

## Government Sponsored Training Schemes

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the number of people under age 26 who attended government sponsored training schemes in each year since 2006, broken down by gender. **(AQW 7440/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Annex A illustrates the overall occupancy for those aged under 26 on Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI each year since 2007, using the 30th September as a baseline comparison. The occupancy profile is also broken down by gender.

ApprenticeshipsNI is an all age provision and participants are in employment. Participants on the Training for Success programme are, in the main, young school leavers.

### New Deal and Steps to Work

Annex B shows the number of participants aged under 26 who started New Deal or Steps to Work from April 2006 to September 2011. Steps to Work is an employment programme, rather than a training scheme, and subsumed the former New Deal programmes in Northern Ireland from 29 September 2008. The aim of Steps to Work is to assist people who are unemployed or economically inactive to find and sustain employment. Participants may avail of training through the Steps to Work programme where this has been identified as a barrier to them finding work.

In addition, the Department has in place a contract with Parkanaur College, Dungannon for the delivery of vocational training in a residential setting for people with disabilities who are unable to access mainstream training provision due to the effects of their disabilities. A small number of participants (under 20) are currently availing of this training.

### Annex A

#### TRAINING FOR SUCCESS (INCLUDING JOBSKILLS)

Date	Female	Male	Total	% Female	% Male
30 September 2007	2130	5581	7711	27.6%	72.4%
30 September 2008	1667	4389	6056	27.5%	72.5%
30 September 2009	1785	5158	6943	25.7%	74.3%
30 September 2010	2243	5680	7923	23.3%	71.7%
30 September 2011	2554	5787	8341	30.6%	69.4%

#### ALL (WAGED) APPRENTICES

Date	Female	Male	Total	% Female	% Male
30 September 2007	1496	5707	7203	20.8%	79.2%
30 September 2008	2229	6268	8497	26.2%	73.8%
30 September 2009	2175	4878	7053	30.8%	69.2%
30 September 2010	1914	3853	5767	33.2%	66.8%
30 September 2011	2361	3843	6204	38.1%	61.9%

**Annex B:****STARTS ON NEW DEAL AND STEPS TO WORK BY PARTICIPANTS AGED UNDER 26**

Year/Quarter	Starts on New Deal 18-24 and 25+			Starts on Steps to Work		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2006/07	4,563	1,894	6,457	-	-	-
2007/08	3,614	1,490	5,104	-	-	-
2008/09	1,855	690	2,545	4,119	1,369	5,488
2009/10	760	290	1,050	7,975	2,367	10,342
2010/11	808	335	1,143	9,377	3,355	12,732
Apr-June 2011	192	89	281	2,282	799	3,081
June-Sep 2011	3	2	5	2,480	895	3,375
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,795</b>	<b>4,790</b>	<b>16,585</b>	<b>26,233</b>	<b>8,785</b>	<b>35,018</b>

**Notes to Table:**

- (1) During 2007/08, the Steps to Work pilot was introduced in six offices (Carrickfergus, Knockbreda, Limavady, Lisburn, Magherafelt and Shaftesbury Square). Figures for the Steps to Work pilot are not included in this table. The Steps to Work programme was introduced widely in NI on 29th September 2008 and subsumed New Deal 18-24 and 25+. Steps to Work was introduced in the Foyle Contract Management Area on 25th July 2011.
- (2) Includes those who have received an initial invitation but have not yet attended their first interview.
- (3) Includes starts on New Deal 18-24, those aged 25 on starting a New Deal 25+ episode and those aged under 26 on starting a Steps to Work episode. An individual can start New Deal/Steps to Work more than once.

**Teacher Training Provision**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the timescale for a final announcement on the future of teacher training provision.

**(AQW 7468/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The first stage should be completed in the Spring of 2012, and the second stage in Autumn of 2012.

**Veterinary Medicine**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 6459/11-15, to detail the number of (i) students from Northern Ireland currently taking degree courses in veterinary medicine outside Northern Ireland; (ii) veterinary medicine graduates from Northern Ireland who have returned to practise as veterinary surgeons in each of the last five years; and (iii) veterinary surgeons from Northern Ireland currently practising in Northern Ireland, expressed as a percentage of the total number of veterinary surgeons in Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 7517/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Information held by my Department relates to students at UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and therefore figures for those enrolling in other countries are not provided.

- i In 2010/11 there were 150 students from Northern Ireland enrolled on veterinary science courses at HEIs in Great Britain (GB). This figure includes students across all years of study.
- ii Information on the destinations of students has been obtained from the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey which is carried out six months after graduation. Destinations of veterinary science graduates at any other point after graduation are not available

from my Department. Due to the relatively small number of leavers from veterinary science courses each year, figures from this survey have been amalgamated between 2005/06 and 2009/10. On this basis, of the 105 Northern Ireland domiciles who graduated from veterinary science courses at GB HEIs between 2005/06 and 2009/10, and who responded to the DLHE, 35 returned to Northern Ireland to work as veterinary surgeons.

- iii. Figures for veterinary surgeons from Northern Ireland currently practising in Northern Ireland, expressed as a percentage of the total number of veterinary surgeons in Northern Ireland are not held by my Department.

**Notes:**

- 1 The source for parts i and ii is from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).
- 2 It should be noted that the above information on destinations relates to students who gain qualifications at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- 3 Enrolment figures include students in their first and continuing years of study in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Only a proportion of these students will be in their final year and therefore expected to qualify in any given year.
- 4 Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5.
- 5 The DLHE survey was issued to all students whose study was full-time or part-time and who obtained relevant qualifications reported to HESA for each reporting period. Response rates for the DLHE survey are generally around 80% for NI.

### **Mobile Phone Applications**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by his Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7540/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department has not designed or developed any mobile phone applications. You may also wish to note that further education colleges have undertaken the following projects:

- (i) South Eastern Regional College launched a mobile phone application, at the start of the 2010/11 academic year, aimed primarily at students but available also to members of the public. The purpose of the application was to increase the students' understanding of Health and Safety issues within the college in a new and innovative manner;
- (ii) Northern Regional College has designed an online micro-site, which members of the public can use to access the college's part-time curriculum via their mobiles phones. The application will go live on 23rd April 2012;
- (iii) South West College developed an application to allow students to view the training available at the college; and
- (iv) In addition, all six further education colleges have engaged with local SME businesses, through the Open Source Solution Centre project, to provide assistance with software development. Part of this project involved the development of mobile applications for local businesses, some of which would have been made available to the public.

### **Private Catering Companies Operate within University Buildings**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the prices being charged to students by private catering companies which operate within university buildings; and whether he has any plans to take action to ensure that the prices charged are reasonable.

**(AQW 7667/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** This is an operational matter for the universities and my Department has no remit to intervene.

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Knock Airport

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the potential of Knock Airport, including the role it plays in bringing visitors to Co Fermanagh; and how her Department can maximise the benefits to the local tourist industry of the airport, given its proximity to destinations such as Belleek Pottery and the Marble Arch Caves.

**(AQW 7243/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** Ireland West Airport Knock (IWAK) is situated within another jurisdiction and services County Mayo and neighbouring counties in the Republic of Ireland. However, it can be used as a gateway to County Fermanagh, which can also be conveniently accessed via City of Derry Airport, Belfast City Airport and Belfast International Airport.

Tourism Ireland seeks to maximise the tourism potential of all airports which provide access to Northern Ireland (including IWAK) by investing in co-operative marketing activity, not just with airports but also with airlines and other tourism interests to drive demand for services from key overseas markets and to identify opportunities for the introduction of new services.

Fermanagh provides an excellent opportunity to showcase Northern Ireland tourism and Tourism Ireland features the county – including the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark and Belleek Pottery – as part of its extensive global destination marketing programme.

### Outsourced Training

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any caps or restrictions on the costs associated with outsourced training, by companies that are in receipt of public funding.

**(AQW 7277/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI may offer an element of project based support for training costs through its Business Improvement Training Programme (BITP).

Clients are required to submit a training plan linked to identified business improvement needs. Proposals are rigorously assessed and challenged to ensure eligibility and value for money.

Support is negotiated on a project by project basis and is not available for induction training nor any other training mandated by law – Health & Safety for example.

There are no specific caps or restrictions on the cash cost of individual elements of outsourced training although Invest NI does apply limitations to the percentage support rate offered for any specific project.

Any support offered however will be proportionate and is normally considerably below the maximum percentage limits allowed under EU regulations.

Training plans may include both in-house and outsourced training. Support for outsourced training is only available for vouched and approved expenditure in line with the agreed training plan as specified in a Letter of Offer.

### Recovery of Training Costs

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the provisions in place for her Department to monitor the recovery of training costs from the employees of companies that have received public funding.

**(AQW 7278/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** DETI public funding mechanisms for training support to companies is delivered through Invest NI. Invest NI may offer an element of project based support for training costs through its Business Improvement Training Programme (BITP).

Companies are required to submit a training plan, detailing all training activities, linked to identified business improvement needs. Proposals are rigorously assessed and challenged to ensure eligibility and value for money. Support is negotiated on a project by project basis. Payment of funds against projects is against vouched and approved actual expenditure.

In relation to the training support that Invest NI provides, the recovery by companies of training costs from employees is uncommon. Invest NI has been made aware of only one company who has adopted this practice. As this is an uncommon practice, Invest NI has no specific provisions in place for monitoring the recovery of training costs from the employees of companies that have support under BITP. However, the legal agreement between InvestNI and companies receiving support toward training costs states:

*“The Client shall.....inform Invest NI .... of any circumstance which has caused or is likely to cause a loss or misuse of funding and provide a full and detailed report in writing to Invest NI.”*

This would include the requirement for companies to notify InvestNI of payment of any public funds which have subsequently been recovered from employees.

### **New Hotel in Ballycastle**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the conditions that an application for a new hotel in Ballycastle would have to meet to receive funding from her Department; and whether such an application would be affected by planning applications for hotels elsewhere in the Moyle council area.

**(AQW 7301/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Any application for capital support for a new hotel must be able to clearly demonstrate how the project satisfies the general principles of support outlined in the Invest NI “Support for Tourism Businesses” guidelines. These focus on establishing quality projects which are capable of competing in the national and global marketplace by being customer focused and market driven. They also require the promoter to be able to demonstrate that the business will be clearly differentiated from existing and competing projects. In addition the Promoter should be able to demonstrate that it has a clearly defined strategy for growth. Projects that simply displace visitors from similar projects will not be considered. The onus is on the promoter to prove that market need exists.

In addition, any project seeking support must be able to meet Invest NI's basic criteria for support by demonstrating viability; a need for support and a positive return to the economy.

Should an application for assistance be successful Invest NI would issue a Letter of Offer that contains a number of terms and conditions some of which must be included in all offers and others are particular to the individual project.

With reference to whether such an application would be affected by planning applications for hotels elsewhere in the Moyle council area it should be noted that any application is looked at on its own merits but an appraisal will take into account a range of factors when considering the future viability of the project.

Invest NI's guidance on support for business and tourism businesses in particular is available in published form and I will write to you directly with copies of this information and will place a copy in the Assembly Library.

### **Links Between Hydraulic Fracturing and Water Pollution**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6257/11-15, what the British Geological Survey is intending to test for, as part of this wider baseline study, including a list of any chemicals or metals that will be included in the search.

**(AQW 7345/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The British Geological Survey is carrying out a baseline study of groundwater geochemistry in seven areas of the UK, including Northern Ireland, where there is current or potential future interest

in shale gas exploration and development and no current groundwater methane data exist. Existing groundwater abstraction or monitoring sites – generally boreholes – will be selected for sampling.

Initial surveillance sampling will be followed by re-sampling of selected sites for more detailed assessment. In the sampling Round 1 samples will be taken to characterise general groundwater chemistry and screen groundwater for the presence of dissolved methane and other light hydrocarbons. In Round 2 sites with elevated groundwater methane concentrations, or other relevant characteristics of interest, will be re-sampled in order to characterise methane source, using stable isotope and potentially radiocarbon isotopes, groundwater residence time indicators and indicators of microbiological activity related to methane chemistry (methanotrophs).

Samples will be collected and analysed for the following parameters:

### Round 1

- Dissolved concentrations of CH<sub>4</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub>, (and higher alkanes if detectable)
- Major and trace element chemistry by ICP-MS and IC
- Dissolved Oxygen Concentration and fluorescence
- <sup>13</sup>C and possibly <sup>2</sup>H composition of CH<sub>4</sub> (and higher alkanes if concentrations permit) in selected samples
- Trace volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds (emerging pollutants) by GCMS in selected samples
- Field measurements of dissolved oxygen, redox, pH, temperature, SEC and alkalinity

### Round 2

- Confirm dissolved CH<sub>4</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub> concentration (and higher alkanes if detectable)
- <sup>13</sup>C and possibly <sup>2</sup>H composition of CH<sub>4</sub> (and higher alkanes if concentrations permit)
- <sup>14</sup>C activity of CH<sub>4</sub> (only if other measurements fail to identify likely CH<sub>4</sub> source)
- <sup>13</sup>C in DIC; <sup>18</sup>O and <sup>2</sup>H in groundwater
- Residence time (CFC and SF<sub>6</sub> concentrations) of groundwater
- Microbiological indicators associated with methane chemistry, e.g. methanotrophs
- Trace volatile and semi-volatile organic compounds (emerging pollutants) by GCMS

Full details of the major and trace element chemistry for which the samples will be analysed is not yet available but these will be similar to the analyses carried out in the collaborative project, undertaken by BGS and the Environment Agency, called The Natural (Baseline) Quality of Groundwaters in England and Wales. Further information and downloadable reports from this project can be found at <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/research/groundwater/quality/home.html>

## Links Between Hydraulic Fracturing and Water Pollution

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6257/11-15, to list the organisations that will assist the British Geological Survey in carrying out this work.

**(AQW 7346/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** As stated in answer to AQW 6257/11-15, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland will be assisting the British Geological Survey (BGS) in the sampling of well/borehole waters in Northern Ireland as part of their UK-wide study of baseline geochemistry of groundwater. Further details of the proposed study are given in the answer to AQW 7345/11-15.

## 'The Gathering: An Irish Homecoming' Campaign

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she has taken to ensure that we get proportionate coverage in 'The Gathering: An Irish Homecoming' campaign; and to outline plans for our inclusion in this campaign.

**(AQW 7373/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Gathering is an initiative being run by the Republic of Ireland Government with the aim of attracting the diaspora home for a holiday in 2013. Any increase in tourism numbers to the island is to be welcomed and Northern Ireland is well placed to benefit as the initiative fits well with our plans for 2013 when Londonderry is the UK City of Culture and we will host the World Police and Fire Games. We will also have the Titanic Belfast and the new Causeway Visitor Centre to offer tourists in 2013.

## Available Hotel Rooms

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of hotel rooms available in each of the last ten years; and (ii) the projected numbers for each of the next three years.

**(AQW 7374/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

(i) The number of hotel rooms available in each of the last 10 years is as follows:

Year	Hotels	Bed rooms
2002	132	5,696
2003	129	5,837
2004	131	5,944
2005	128	5,957
2006	129	6,078
2007	129	6,413
2008	131	6,986
2009	138	7,643
2010	139	7,765
2011	136	7,563

(ii) It is not possible to make an accurate assessment of the number of additional hotels and hotel bedrooms which might become available over the next three years as this is subject to the planning process. However to provide an indication of potential future developments, in the last 3 years the Northern Ireland Tourist Board has been consulted by Planning Service on 10 hotel proposals, encompassing more than 720 hotel bedrooms.

## Key Tourism Destinations

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to list the nine key tourism destinations that she referred to in her statement on Economic Strategy on 9 November 2011.

**(AQW 7381/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The draft Tourism Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020 proposes nine key tourism areas/destinations which are:

- Armagh
- Belfast
- Causeway Coast and Glens
- Fermanagh Lakelands
- Londonderry
- Lough Neagh
- Mourne
- Sperrins & Tyrone
- Strangford Lough

My Department and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board continue to engage in consultations with key stakeholders including local authorities in each of the areas to facilitate the final definition of the key areas and development of destination management plans across Northern Ireland.

## Mountain Biking

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the tourism potential of mountain biking.

**(AQW 7384/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Northern Ireland Tourist Board has identified mountain biking as a key tourism opportunity for Northern Ireland and has invested over £1.9 million developing new mountain bike trails all which have added to Northern Ireland's potential to become a world class, short-break mountain bike destination.

This includes £1.4million to implement two world class mountain bike trails at Castlewellan and Kilbroney in the Mourne Mountains. The project is seen as of strategic tourism and recreational importance for County Down and Northern Ireland. This new facility is due to be ready for use in forthcoming World Police and Fire Games 2013.

The business case for the Mournes biking project conservatively estimated it will welcome 22,000 visitors in year one, generating £660,000 of economic impact to the local area.

We have the example of Scotland to look at, where considerable investment has taken place in developing mountain bike trails and supporting infrastructure. It has been assessed that £46.5million was generated directly from mountain biking, growing to £119million when you include all of the additional trip expenditure.

## InvestNI Start-Up Scheme

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what changes have been made to the InvestNI start-up scheme advertised under the Go For It brand since the start of October 2011 compared to the Go For It strand of the Enterprise Development Programme, which was delivered by the Local Enterprise Agency Network until 30 September 2011; and to outline the rationale behind these changes.

**(AQW 7403/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI is not currently advertising or delivering a specific start-up scheme in connection with Go For It. The arrangements put in place during the period of delay as a result of the legal challenge are part of Invest NI's core service and include business advice, signposting to other sources of help, and business plan support.

The Go For It strand of the Enterprise Development Programme delivered:-

- Pre Start - seminar-based offering
- Compulsory business planning workshop
- Optional One to one financial business planning ( up to 2 hours)
- Training workshops including financial and business planning, employing staff, IT and innovation, managing business finances, market planning, market research, operations and legal issues, selling and networking, taxation and bookkeeping
- Business clinics on specific business issues
- Client Business plan
- Mentoring
- Web Packages

Invest NI is prevented from delivering a programme of this type as a direct result of the legal action being taken by Enterprise Northern Ireland.

## InvestNI Start-Up Scheme

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how the current start up scheme delivered by InvestNI, as advertised on the InvestNI website, differs from the proposed Business Start Up Programme, which is subject to a legal challenge.

**(AQW 7405/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI is not currently advertising or delivering a specific start-up scheme in connection with Go For It. As part of Invest NI's core service, through the Regional Office network, staff provide advice and business plan support. Invest NI is also proactively engaging with other stakeholders providing services in this area including DEL and Princes Trust NI and, where appropriate, is signposting individuals to these organisations for support.

The new Business Start Programme, which has been delayed as a result of the legal challenge, proposes the following core elements:-

- An initial 1:1 'Business Assessment' session
- A Financial and Business Planning training session.
- A 1:1 financial and business planning advisory/mentoring session.
- A Client Business Plan

Invest NI is prevented from initiating delivery of this programme as a direct result of the legal action undertaken by Enterprise Northern Ireland.

## Tourism Related Projects in West Tyrone

**Mr Byrne** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what capital expenditure has been given to tourism related projects in West Tyrone over the last five years.

**(AQW 7408/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Over the past 5 years to date 3 capital projects have received offers of financial assistance totalling £520,000. A further 10 capital projects have submitted applications of which 2 were unsuccessful, 1 was withdrawn and 7, which were submitted in January 2012, are currently at the preliminary stage of assessment.

## Bed and Breakfast Sector in Newry and Mourne

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she will take to provide a new quality scheme for the bed and breakfast sector in Newry and Mourne to improve the visitor experience.

**(AQW 7413/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** On the 20th of June 2011 NITB launched a new Quality Grading Scheme to the Serviced Accommodation Sector, which includes B&B's and Guesthouses in Northern Ireland. To date NITB have received 17 B&B application requests from the Newry and Mourne area. To date 3 B&B's have been assessed and a star grading has been awarded. The NITB's Quality Grading Schemes are open all year round for applications and information can be accessed on NITB.com.

## Green Investment Bank

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) for an update on the establishment of a Green Investment Bank; (ii) to outline her Department's position on such a fund; and (iii) what steps her Department is taking to maximise the funding that is drawn down.

**(AQW 7414/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

- (i) The Government committed in the 2011 budget to fund the Green Investment Bank (GIB) with £3 billion over the period to 2015. The GIB is a UK-wide initiative and will be open to Northern Ireland applicants once it becomes operational.

The GIB will evolve over two key phases, preceded by a preliminary Government investment phase:

- government investments managed by UK Green Investments from 2012 to State Aid approval;
- establishment as a stand-alone institution following approval; and,
- full borrowing powers from 2015, subject to public sector net debt falling as a percentage of GDP.

Offshore wind power generation, commercial and industrial waste processing and recycling, energy from waste generation, non-domestic energy efficiency and support for the Green Deal will be the first priority sectors for the Bank, subject to approval by the European Commission. At least 80% of the funds committed by the Bank over the Spending Review period to 2015/16 period will be invested in these priority sectors.

- (ii) In the draft Economic Strategy we have committed to encourage and develop the green economy and develop the sustainable energy sector. I welcome any steps the Government is taking to accelerate private sector investment in the UK's transition to a green economy. The establishment of the GIB will complement other green policies to help accelerate additional investment.
- (iii) The Government expects to obtain state aid approval for the GIB by early 2013. In advance of that UK Green Investments (UKGI), a team within the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), has been established to drive investment in the UK's green infrastructure until the GIB is formally established. UKGI will begin making investments in green projects from April 2012. DETI will continue to monitor developments in relation to the GIB and, where appropriate, will support NI businesses to maximise their access to the Bank.

**Shackleton Army Barracks at Ballykelly**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with her Executive colleagues concerning the compilation of a masterplan for the development of Shackleton army barracks at Ballykelly.

**(AQW 7450/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** None. As I pointed out at DETI Oral Questions on Monday 6th February 2012, OFMDFM are leading on this matter.

**Visitors to the Giants Causeway, Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge and the Bushmills Distillery**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of visitors to (i) the Giants Causeway; (ii) Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge; and (iii) the Bushmills Distillery in each of the last five years, broken down by the country from which the visitor came.

**(AQW 7452/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** This information is sourced from the Northern Ireland Visitor Attraction Survey. The report for 2011 will not be available until March 2012 so data has been provided for the years 2006 to 2010. It is important to note that the Visitor Attraction Survey is a voluntary survey and all data presented in the report is based solely on the visitor numbers provided by attractions choosing to take part in the survey. Visitor numbers are supplied by the proprietor of the attraction and are taken in good faith. Information provided by Attractions (other than visitor numbers) is treated in strictest confidence. Visitor origin information is not available for release.

Year	Attraction Name	Visitor Numbers
2010	Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	464,195

Year	Attraction Name	Visitor Numbers
2010	Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge	238,227
	Old Bushmills Distillery	98,318
2009	Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	714,612
	Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge	241,856
	Old Bushmills Distillery	100,318
2008	Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	751,693
	Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge	241,291
	Old Bushmills Distillery	101,589

Year	Attraction Name	Visitor Numbers
2007	Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	712,714
	Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge	222,613
	Old Bushmills Distillery	123,000
2006	Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	553,063
	Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge	184,904
	Old Bushmills Distillery	134,298

### Energy Efficiency Directive

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what further policy development her Department is considering on energy efficiency measures to comply with the potential targets under the proposed new Energy Efficiency Directive.

**(AQW 7453/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I am not able to give further details at this stage as it remains policy in development.

### Enterprise NI's Performance

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 4968/11-15, (i) to detail the specific issues that "arose both in the SABP in 2006 and in the delivery of EDP within the contract period April 2009 – end September 2011"; and (ii) to provide figures that substantiate this claim.

**(AQW 7505/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In respect of the specific issues that arose in the Start a Business Programme, (SABp) in July 2006 Invest NI identified a number of potential irregularities in relation to the Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) delivery of the programme. Invest NI subsequently appointed independent auditors to identify the extent of the potential irregularities. As a result, a financial sanction was imposed on ENI. Significant changes were made to SABp processes in an effort to ensure no similar problems occurred going forward.

Within the delivery of the Enterprise Development Programme (2009-2011), the Growth Programme incorporated two elements:

- **Growth Core** – a mentoring programme targeting businesses achieving the VAT threshold. This was open to all sectors;
- **Growth Pipeline** – involving the identification, development and referral of export focused growth businesses to Invest NI client bank.

Invest NI raised concerns with ENI around both the capacity and capability of the network to deliver both the Growth Core and Growth Pipeline elements. Indeed the Growth Core element was discontinued after 15 months as targets were significantly under-achieved. During this period 284 projects were supported against a corporate target of 1000 for the same period.

Within the Growth Pipeline, Invest NI staff were required to operate alongside a number of the ENI Growth Co-Ordinators in order to ensure the programme made progress.

The outturns for the Growth Programme against Target are reflected, as follows:

- **Growth Core:** 284 Participants achieved against a 1,000 target (28% achieved) – 15 months to June 2010
- **Growth Pipeline:** 179 entries against a target of 600 (29.8% achieved), although 70% of exit target was achieved.

## Enterprise NI's Performance

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 4968/11-15, to detail the (i) pro-rata target figures; and (ii) pro-rata actual figures delivered for the Growth Pipeline over the lifetime of the contract.

### (AQW 7506/11-15)

**Mrs Foster:** Within the delivery of the Enterprise Development Programme (2009-2011), the Growth Programme incorporated two elements:

- **Growth Core** – a mentoring programme targeting businesses achieving the VAT threshold. This was open to all sectors;
- **Growth Pipeline** – involving the identification, development and referral of export focussed growth businesses to Invest NI client bank.

Invest NI raised concerns with Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) around both the capacity and capability of the network to deliver the Growth Programme. Indeed the Growth Core element was discontinued after 15 months as targets were significantly under-achieved. During this period 284 projects were supported against a corporate target of 1000 for the same period.

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- **Growth Core:** 284 Participants achieved against a 1,000 target (28% achieved) – 15 months to June 2010
- **Growth Pipeline:** 179 entries against a target of 600 (29.8% achieved), although 70% of exit target was achieved.

## Lands at Creagh and Station Road, Magherafelt

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why the figures in AQW 6024/11-15 and AQW 6300/11-15 for the allocation and use of lands at Creagh and Station Road, Magherafelt do not match.

### (AQW 7518/11-15)

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI's land holding at its Creagh and Station Road industrial estates is by definition the total land owned by the Agency and that figure includes, for example, the land upon which footpaths, roads, landscaping and underground services have been constructed.

It is not normal practice to include these lands in the area which is sold in support of economic development and therefore Invest NI cannot regard them as having been allocated to or leased by businesses.

This distinction between the land which Invest NI holds and the land which it is able to sell accounts for the difference between those figures provided in response to AQW 6024/11-15 and AQW 6300/11-15. Renewable Energy Targets

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what financial assistance is available for businesses to help them meet the renewable energy targets set out in the draft Strategic Energy Framework.

**(AQW 7546/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Businesses wishing to generate electricity from renewable sources are incentivised by the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation. This provides a revenue stream for the renewable electricity generated in the form of Renewables Obligation Certificates which are then sold to electricity suppliers. There are no grants available for the generation of renewable electricity.

DETI has recently consulted on proposals to provide financial support for a range of renewable heat installations. It has been proposed that the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) will first be available to non-domestic customers and later extended to the domestic sector. The RHI is designed to incentivise the uptake of renewable heat technologies to ensure a level of 10% renewable heat by 2020, in line with the target set in the Strategic Energy Framework. This is a challenging and ambitious target given a starting position of 1.7% renewable heat. My Department is currently carrying out further analysis on the proposed scheme in advance of finalising levels of support. An announcement will be made in due course.

## United States National Football League

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) whether her Department, and its arm's-length bodies, have given any consideration to the possibility of hosting a United States National Football League match on one of our sports grounds, to boost our profile across America.

**(AQW 7574/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Final decisions on hosting a US National Football League (NFL) game at a sports ground in Northern Ireland would be a matter for the NFL and any relevant sports ground owner. However, there are no sports grounds currently in Northern Ireland that would be large enough to accommodate the numbers of spectators that are understood to regularly attend NFL games held outside the United States.

If however the NFL were willing to organise such an event the Northern Ireland Tourist Board currently run the Tourism Events Fund for National and International tourism events. I would encourage event organisers to submit applications to the scheme which will open in September 2012 for the 2013/14 year.

Should a high profile US National Football League game be hosted in Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland would be happy to put in place a promotional campaign in the US to attract as many fans as possible to travel to Northern Ireland for the game.

## Introduction of Social Tariffs

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the introduction of social tariffs by energy companies for low-income customers.

**(AQW 7583/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I am already on record as stating that the introduction of social tariffs would be extremely complex and unlikely to solve the hardships caused by fuel poverty. As such, I have no plans to introduce social tariffs at this time.

## Electricity Price Reductions

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in light of electricity price reductions in Britain, whether any similar reductions are planned for customers in Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 7585/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I understand that the Utility Regulator monitors wholesale and retail energy prices on an ongoing basis and is keeping this matter under review. If wholesale energy costs continue to fall, this will be reflected in the electricity bills of Northern Ireland consumers in due course.

### Hydraulic Fracturing

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6424/11-15, (i) to detail the chemical constituents, including CAS numbers, of the chemical compounds; and (ii) whether her Department has any more specific information on (a) where the fresh water was obtained; and (b) the disposal of the waste water and how it was treated prior to disposal

**(AQW 7586/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The information requested is not held by my Department.

### High Energy Costs for Businesses

**Mr McClarty** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she is aware that some businesses, with a significant number of staff, are currently spending more on energy costs than employment costs; and (ii) how she intends to address the high energy costs for businesses.

**(AQW 7589/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I am very aware of the impact of high energy costs on the business competitiveness of companies operating in Northern Ireland, particularly those companies in energy intensive industries.

While my Department endeavours to create conditions within the market to boost competition and drive down prices, it has no role in setting the tariffs which business energy users pay. However, Invest NI, provides a range of support to help companies manage energy costs and to operate as efficiently as possible.

Invest NI's Sustainable Development team is actively seeking to introduce all possible measures to improve energy efficiency and in the last three years has helped Northern Ireland companies save more than £50 million per year. Advice and audits are available to all manufacturing businesses and financial support is primarily provided through our funding of the interest-free Energy Efficiency Loan Fund managed by the Carbon Trust.

### Credit Unions

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what support will be offered to Credit Unions to implement new measures to comply with Financial Services Authority requirements.

**(AQW 7607/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My officials, together with staff from the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS), and the Financial Ombudsman's Office have provided a structured programme of support to all credit unions in the period leading to transfer of regulatory arrangements to FSA in March 2012.

This has included two separate series of road shows held in locations across Northern Ireland; one in September/October 2011 was designed to inform the consultation process, while the most recent was aimed at providing NICUs with a fuller understanding of how the new regulatory arrangements will work in practice. These, with considerable contribution from, and participation of, DETI officials, were delivered by FSA / FSCS representatives and provided valuable opportunities for discussion and for useful contacts to be made between individual NICUs and FSA / FSCS staff. The road-shows, which concluded on 2 February 2012, were well attended by NICU representatives. FSA has also included a special Northern Ireland 'help section' on its website specifically for the assistance of NICUs.

FSA has indicated that it will maintain its support to NICUs for as long as required.

## Green Investment Bank

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the potential to obtain funding through the Green Investment Bank; and whether it could be used to help fund renewable energy projects and modernise the electricity grid infrastructure.

**(AQW 7608/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Green Investment Bank (GIB) is a UK-wide initiative and will be open to Northern Ireland applicants once it becomes operational.

The GIB is designed to accelerate private sector investment in the UK's transition to a green economy. The Government committed in the 2011 budget to fund the GIB with £3 billion over the period to 2015. The GIB will evolve over two key phases, preceded by a preliminary Government investment phase:

- government investments managed by UK Green Investments from 2012 to State Aid approval;
- establishment as a stand-alone institution following approval; and,
- full borrowing powers from 2015, subject to public sector net debt falling as a percentage of GDP

Offshore wind power generation, commercial and industrial waste processing and recycling, energy from waste generation, non-domestic energy efficiency and support for the Green Deal will be the first priority sectors for the Bank over the Spending Review period to 2015/16, subject to approval by the European Commission. At least 80% of the funds committed by the Bank over the Spending Review period will be invested in these priority sectors.

## Mobile Phone Applications

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by her Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7630/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and its arm's length bodies have not designed any mobile phone applications nor are they developing any.

## Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to her capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7637/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department's current budget for 2011/12 comprises £186.5 million (43.4%) Resource expenditure and £242.7 million (56.6%) Capital. The Capital figure includes a net amount of £216 million in respect of support for the Presbyterian Mutual Society.

A breakdown of expenditure plans for future years is available from the departmental website at [www.detini.gov.uk/index/deti-spending-proposals](http://www.detini.gov.uk/index/deti-spending-proposals) .

## Civil Service Posts

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many Civil Service posts existed in her Department at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, at the beginning of (a) 2007; and (b) 2012, broken down by local Council area.

**(AQW 7691/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

Grade	*Numbers Of Posts			
	Belfast Local Council		Castlereagh Local Council	
	2007	2012	2007	2012
Administrative Assistant	44.4	9	2	2
Administrative Officer	115.76	58.64	6.72	8.34
Executive Officer 2	68.84	53.47	2	1
Executive Officer 1	46.8	39.07	2.68	2.2
Staff Officer	55.08	46.56	5.36	5.16
Deputy Principal	49.72	46.78	1	1
Grade 7	27.04	24.66	1	1
Grade 6	2	2	0	0

\* These figures are expressed as whole time equivalent posts.

**Electricity Price Increases**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what control her Department, or the Utility Regulator, have over the timing of electricity price increases.

**(AQW 7727/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department has no direct role in the process of setting electricity tariffs or the timing of tariff reviews. On at least an annual basis, the Utility Regulator carries out a review and scrutinises any proposed electricity tariff changes for Power NI due to its monopoly position within the market. The Utility Regulator also monitors wholesale and retail energy prices on an ongoing basis and, if necessary, can conduct an in-year review of tariffs.

**Recruitment Agencies**

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the amount paid to recruitment agencies for (i) full-time; and (ii) part-time posts in her Department, and its arm's-length bodies, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7743/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

**(I) AMOUNT PAID TO RECRUITMENT AGENCIES (FULL-TIME POSTS)**

2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
£323,377	£94,033	£112,504

**(II) AMOUNT PAID TO RECRUITMENT AGENCIES (PART-TIME POSTS)**

2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
£12,102	£12,161	£13,684

## Climate Change Research

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the research conducted by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research which claimed that consuming just 20 percent of Lancashire's shale gas reserves would equate to 15 percent of the UK's carbon budget up to 2050, whether the climate change impact of gas extraction will be taken into account in her decision about whether to grant permits for extraction.

**(AQW 7750/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The carbon footprint of shale gas production would be one of the factors considered in any decision about permission for any future shale gas development in Northern Ireland. My Department remains committed to increasing the percentage of electricity and heat produced from renewable energy sources and reducing carbon emissions, but recognises that fossil fuels will still be required for the foreseeable future. As the recent Tyndall Report notes, "With effective capture of fugitive methane from flow back, greenhouse gas emissions from shale gas are likely to be only marginally higher than those from conventional gas sources per unit of energy." The impact of shale gas production on carbon emissions would have to be assessed in the context of the current and future energy supply mix for Northern Ireland, taking into account the use of fossil fuels in both the electricity and heating sectors.

## Department's Human Resources Section

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many staff are employed in her Department's Human Resources section.

**(AQW 7760/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** 14 full-time equivalent staff work in the Department's Human Resources Branch.

## Visitor Numbers

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how our visitor numbers compare with the visitor numbers in the Irish Republic, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 7761/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The total number of out-of-state visitors to Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are detailed below.

Year	Visitors to Northern Ireland (000s)	Visitors to Republic of Ireland (000s)
2005	1,972	7,376
2006	1,979	8,043
2007	2,107	8,377
2008	2,076	8,072
2009	1,918	7,219

**Source:** Northern Ireland Tourist Board, Fáilte Ireland

Domestic trips by Republic of Ireland (ROI) residents within ROI and Northern Ireland (NI) residents within NI are excluded from this table.

Visitors who overnighed in both NI and ROI will be included in both columns of the table.

Final visitor estimates for 2010 are not yet available for NI or ROI.

## Credit Unions

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what representations she has made, or intends to make, to Treasury regarding the concerns of credit unions about the proposals to restrict the majority of their investments to one year maturity.

**(AQW 7828/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Following the joint HM Treasury and FSA consultation exercise on future regulation policy in relation to NI credit unions, I wrote to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (FST) in November 2011, setting out a number of concerns with the proposals within the document. One of these related to the twelve month limit on investment periods for those credit unions which will transfer as 'version 1' on 31 March 2012 and which will comprise the majority of transferees. The letter was copied to the Chief Executive of the Financial Services Authority for his observations. As a result of my intervention, in its December 2011 policy response to the consultation, FSA announced a policy change in respect of several issues, including a one year transitional easement for investment limits following the transfer date of 31 March 2012.

However, from my contact with the trade bodies as well as correspondence received from individual credit unions, I am aware that there is considerable disappointment that the policy easement remains as an interim, transitional measure. In view of this, I have again written to the FST and the FSA on 1 February 2012, outlining the detrimental effect this policy will continue to have on credit unions here and requested that this issue be reviewed.

## Credit Unions

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what support her Department will offer to credit unions during their transfer to Financial Services Authority regulation.

**(AQW 7829/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** DETI officials, together with staff from the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) and the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) have provided a programme of support to all NI credit unions (NICU) in the period leading up to transfer of regulatory arrangements to FSA in March 2012.

This has included two separate series of road shows held in locations across Northern Ireland; one in September/October 2011 was designed to inform the consultation process, while the most recent was aimed at providing NICUs with a fuller understanding of how the new regulatory arrangements will work in practice. These, with considerable contribution from, and participation of, DETI officials, were delivered by FSA / FSCS representatives and provided valuable opportunities for discussion and for useful contacts to be made between individual NICUs and FSA / FSCS staff. The road-shows, which concluded on 2 February 2012, were well attended by NICU representatives. FSA has also included a special Northern Ireland 'help section' on its website specifically for the assistance of NICUs.

FSA has indicated that it will maintain its support to NICUs for as long as required.

## Renewable Energy Sector

**Mr W Clarke** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much her Department invested into the renewable energy sector (i) prior to; and (ii) since 2007; and how much of this investment has been directed to projects in the South Down constituency

**(AQW 7832/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

- (i) Prior to 2007 it is only possible to provide an estimate of the total investment by the Department in the renewable energy sector for the period April 2003 to March 2007 and this is approximately £8.25m. DETI investments in renewable energy have not been specifically allocated to any Northern Ireland constituency in the period referred to.

- (ii) For the period from April 2007 to date, including any commitments for the period up to end March 2012, estimated total investment in projects and consultancy assignments deemed to have primarily a renewable energy focus is £14.5m. DETI investments in renewable energy have not been specifically allocated to any Northern Ireland constituency in the period referred to.

### **Renewable Energy Targets**

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on her Department's performance against renewable energy targets; and to what extent projects based in South Down have contributed to the targets.

**(AQW 7835/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Programme for Government 2008 – 2011 included a target of 12% electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2012. The Northern Ireland Executive's Strategic Energy Framework (SEF) has a target of 40% electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020. Over the 12 month rolling period to end December 2011, on average, 12.5% of electricity consumption was from renewable sources.

The SEF also includes a target of 10% renewable heat by 2020 which is intended to be delivered through a Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) for Northern Ireland. At present, 1.7% of Northern Ireland's heat demand is met by renewable fuels.

The Department does not hold information specifically by constituency area on the contribution of renewable energy projects to the various targets. However, the absence of any large scale wind farms in South Down would indicate that only a very small contribution is made by renewable electricity generation in that constituency, most likely from single small scale wind turbines and hydro.

### **Fuel Shortage**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the potential for a fuel shortage; and what plans her Department has in place if such a fuel shortage were to occur.

**(AQW 7840/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I have no concerns with respect to current stocks of fuel held by the four Northern Ireland based terminals, which are more than adequate to meet expected demand.

The Department has well developed plans to deal with any severe disruption to fuel, which thankfully is a very rare occurrence. They are regularly exercised and tested with key stakeholders at both a UK and local level.

### **Industry Standard for the Oil Industry**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she has any plans to introduce an industry standard for the oil industry, similar to the CORGI standard for gas.

**(AQW 7843/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The All Party, Parliamentary Gas Safety Group, launched its report, entitled "Preventing Carbon Monoxide Poisoning", in November 2011. This followed a six-month inquiry by the Group into carbon monoxide poisoning. A recommendation of the report is that government should seek to bring in regulation for the whole fossil fuel sector, in line with that of the gas industry. The Coalition Government's response is awaited.

### **Profit Margin on a 20 Litre Drum of Home Heating Oil**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what is the estimated average of the profit margin on a 20 litre drum of home heating oil.

**(AQW 7844/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department has no statutory remit for the oil industry, particularly retail filling stations where I understand most of the trade in 20 litre drums is conducted. A significant number of the 550 local filling stations are independently owned and operated, and will set their own prices for a range of retail products.

### **Renewal Heat Incentive Tariff on Bioliquids**

**Mr Irwin** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans she has to increase the Renewal Heat Incentive tariff on bioliquids to 3p per kWh for home heating purposes.

**(AQW 7865/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In July 2011, my Department consulted on proposals to introduce a Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI). These proposals involved a phased approach with the non domestic sector being able to avail of the RHI from the outset and the domestic sector being included at a later date. It was also proposed that interim support in the form of a Renewable Heat Premium Payment would be available for the domestic sector. Full details of the proposals are on the DETI website.

The consultation closed in October 2011 and in light of the responses received, my Department has been carrying out further analysis prior to developing a final policy position. I hope to make an announcement on the final design of the RHI shortly.

### **Electricity Interconnection**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 6900/11-15, whether there has been any cost-benefit modelling undertaken, as asked in the original question.

**(AQW 7891/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I refer the Member to the answer to AQW 5723/11-15.

## **Department of the Environment**

### **Cost of Clean-Ups**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 3066/11-15, what was the total cost of clean-ups in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 5901/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment):** The fish kills detailed in AQW 3066/11-15 were caused by discharges of organic industrial effluent, such as sewage or farm effluent, into rivers. Once organic pollution enters a river there is very little that can be done in terms of clean up. The main course of action is to stop any further pollution getting into the river as quickly as possible once the source has been established.

I can confirm that there were no clean-up costs incurred by the Department in relation to the incidents detailed in AQW 3066/11-15.

### **0845 Numbers**

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of the Environment how much revenue has been raised by his Department in each of the last three financial years by the usage of 0845 numbers,

**(AQW 6393/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department has two 0845 numbers to accept queries in respect of driving licences, motor tax and vehicle and driving tests. However, no revenue is raised by the Department from the usage of these numbers.

## Planning Service: Definition of Land

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment whether the Planning Service considers that the land adjoining 22, Drumavoley Road, Ballycastle, which is owned by the occupant is a field or a garden.

**(AQW 6444/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** On 1st March 2010, the Department issued a Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use or Development on the lands to the rear of 16-22 Drumavoley Road, accepting that the land adjoining 22 Drumavoley Road, Ballycastle, which is owned by the occupant, to be a garden.

## Planning Service: Complaints

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment how many complaints the Planning Service has received since 2009, in relation to how it has dealt with planning matters in the planning applications for 22, Drumavoley Road, Ballycastle.

**(AQW 6445/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Northern Area Planning Office has, since 2009, provided 10 official complaint responses in relation to planning matters at 22 Drumavoley Road, Ballycastle, as detailed below.

Ref	Complaint Stage	Work Area	Date of Response	Comments
CO/2009/0020	ONE	Development Management	14/01/2010	
CO/2009/0020	ONE (continuance)	Development Plan	25/01/2010	
CO/2010/0001 & 3	TWO	Development Plan	25/02/2010	
CO/2010/0008	TWO	Development Management	23/03/2010	
CX 28239	THREE	Development Plan & Development management	23/04/2010	Joint response covering areas raised in two previous stage 2 complaints
CO/2010/0007	ONE	Admin	12/03/2010	
CO/2011/0015	ONE	Development Plan	19/12/2011	
CO/2012/0001	TWO	Development Plan	16/01/2012	
CO/2012/0002	ONE	Admin	Due 08/02/2012	

## Clause 2 of the Rates (Amendment) Bill

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of the Environment whether there are any planning issues regarding the establishment of a window display of the type and nature anticipated in Clause 2 of the Rates (Amendment) Bill.

**(AQW 7113/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department would take the view that the provisions of the Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992 permit the establishment of window displays of the type and nature detailed in Clause 2 of the Rates (Amendment) Bill without the need to apply to the Department for advertisement consent for their display.

## Legislative Proposals

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 4123/11-15, when his Department intends to submit their legislative proposals to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

**(AQW 7204/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I submitted my proposals for primary legislation to the First Minister and deputy First Minister on 4 January 2012.

## Unwanted Apartment Blocks in Goomsport

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he can confirm that unwanted apartment blocks will not be built in Goomsport, now that it has been designated as an Area of Village Character. **(AQW 7252/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** An Area of Village Character (AVC) designation in Goomsport is included in the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan proposals. While the draft designation is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in that area it should be noted that the PAC report is currently under consideration by the Department while the plan is being prepared for adoption.

In addition individual planning applications are considered on their own merits and the proposed design criteria for the Area of Village Character would not rule out the development of apartments within the AVC.

I will keep this issue and relevant application under attention.

## Uninsured Drivers

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what steps are being taken to improve the co-ordination between the Driver and Vehicle Agency and the PSNI in the tracking and prosecution of uninsured drivers **(AQW 7332/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department has already put in place measures to help ensure that the PSNI can identify and remove vehicles detected while being driven uninsured.

Regulations made by the Department which came into operation in July 2008 require the Motor Insurers' Bureau (MIB) to provide the PSNI with information on uninsured vehicles. In addition, regulations made by the Northern Ireland Office, in consultation with the Department, which came into operation in January 2009, allow the PSNI to seize vehicles being driven without insurance.

The PSNI uses information from the MIB's Motor Insurance Database to detect uninsured drivers, including in conjunction with its vehicle Automatic Number Plate Recognition system.

Ultimately, continuous insurance enforcement would be an effective means to address the issue. It is cost prohibitive for the NI Government to introduce a system. It may follow 'integration' of vehicle licensing with those in Britain, but, as I have warned, the potential cost in job losses is a serious risk. That is why I have made the argument that DVA jobs can be protected through a number of measures.

## Ballyholme Beach and Goomsport Beach

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of the Environment whether Ballyholme Beach and Goomsport Beach met water quality standards last year.

**(AQW 7445/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** At the second Good Beach Summit, on 21 September 2011, I announced the EC Bathing Water Directive Compliance results for Northern Ireland.

In 2011, all 24 (100% compliance) of Northern Ireland's identified bathing waters achieved the mandatory water quality standards of the EC Bathing Water Directive i.e. passed the Directive achieving

Good water quality. 20 out of 24 (83% compliance) achieved the tighter guideline requirements of the Directive i.e. passed the Directive achieving Excellent water quality.

Groomsport Beach achieved the tighter guideline requirements of the Directive i.e. passed the Directive achieving excellent water quality while nearby Ballyholme Beach achieved the mandatory water quality standards of the EC Bathing Water Directive i.e. passed the Directive achieving Good water quality.

Ballyholme Beach had failed the overall requirements of the directive on three occasions in recent years (2010, 2008 & 2007). To pass the overall mandatory requirements of the Directive in 2011 is a very positive result for the area and may, in part, be credited to the ongoing investment in sewerage infrastructure in the greater north Down area.

### **George Best Belfast City Airport Planning Agreement**

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of the Environment where responsibility for the George Best Belfast City Airport Planning Agreement would reside following the Review of Public Administration.

**(AQW 7461/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** It is the case that, final decisions on which types of planning matters will remain the responsibility of the Department after the reorganisation of local government will be taken nearer the time of the transfer of functions to local government. However, planning issues in relation to our airports have significant regional and economic impact. I believe therefore that airport planning issues will remain the responsibility of central government.

### **Snaring Regulations**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of the Environment what consideration his Department has given to how the new snaring regulations will act as a deterrent to the current animal welfare problems associated with the use of snares.

**(AQW 7484/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The aim of the new regulations will be to mitigate as far as reasonably practicable the risks of adverse welfare impacts. For example it is proposed to require users of snares to ensure that their snares adhere to certain technical standards. These standards include the fitting of permanent stops, which prevent the noose from tightening beyond a specific point, and swivels to facilitate twisting by any animal caught by the snare which will mitigate the risk of injury. It is also proposed to adopt a Code of Practice for Northern Ireland to supplement the new regulations in order to promote the highest possible standards in the use of snares.

### **Snaring Regulations**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department intends to seek independent veterinary advice to inform the drafting of the snaring regulations.

**(AQW 7486/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department does not propose to seek independent veterinary advice in the initial phase of preparing the proposals. However veterinary interests in Northern Ireland will form an important part of the consultative process which will be undertaken prior to making any new regulations, which I trust will address the issue raised by the member.

### **Snaring Regulations**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department has met or plans to meet (i) veterinary associations; and (ii) animal welfare organisations to discuss the development of the draft snaring regulations.

**(AQW 7488/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department has no specific plans to meet veterinary associations to discuss the development of the draft snaring regulations. However, as indicated in my answer to AQW 7486/11-15, such interests will be fully consulted about the proposals.

Departmental officials met animal welfare interests during 2011 to discuss the proposals. More recently, on 23 January 2012 officials were present during a meeting I held with representatives from the League Against Cruel Sports. During this meeting the issue of snares was discussed at some length.

### **Cost of Repairs to Thatched Roofs**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the rationale behind the Environment Agency's policy of providing grant aid of only 75 percent of the cost of repairs to thatched roofs.  
**(AQW 7516/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Recognising the importance and rarity of this type of building, along with the recurring costs they present to owners to maintain, listed building grant-aid is set at a higher rate than that provided for normal repair works such as stonework, which is normally 35%. This provides significant support to owners of listed thatched buildings. The Built Heritage is a vital element of the character of our lives and tourist/economy growth. That includes thatched roofs.

### **Grant Aid for the Repair of Windows**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the Environment Agency's policy in relation to the provision of grant aid for the repair of windows, including double-glazing, in listed buildings which are (i) private homes; (ii) commercial premises; and (iii) public buildings.  
**(AQW 7519/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The department has authority under Article 106 of The Planning (NI) Order 1991 to provide grant-aid for the '...repair and maintenance of a listed building...' and therefore focuses on the repair of historic fabric. Double glazed window units are not regarded as a 'repair', but as an alteration. This has always been the policy, based on legislation, and therefore the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) does not provide grant-aid assistance for double glazed units in any type of listed building.

NIEA does provide assistance for the repair of historic windows, currently at a rate of 35%. It regards them as components of historic fabric, and assesses them for grant-aid accordingly. There is no difference in the grant-aid offered for private homes, commercial premises or public buildings, in these circumstances.

### **Listed Buildings**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment what steps his Department is taking to facilitate and expedite the inspection and grant aid process for the maintenance and repair of listed buildings.  
**(AQW 7521/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Within my department the NIEA Historic Buildings Unit manages the Listed Buildings Grant-aid Scheme, to assist with the repair and maintenance of the historic fabric of listed buildings. NIEA Conservation Architects carry out an inspection before any work is undertaken. This ensures that the proposed works are necessary. They may also need to visit during the duration of the scheme, which facilitates the release of 'interim' payments, as well as undertaking a final inspection to ensure works undertaken comply with requirements of the scheme. A final payment will not be released without this having taken place.

All grants are processed as expeditiously as possible, whilst ensuring compliance with audit and other NICS financial guidelines and procedures. Internal processes and targets for the issue of acknowledgements, schedules of requirements and payments are closely monitored. Performance indicators are currently in line with targets.

The listed building grant-aid policy is currently under review, and will be the subject of a public consultation exercise later in the year. Any proposed changes to the scheme will be reflected in updated/revised internal procedures.

### **Draft Northern Area Plan**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the draft Northern Area Plan.  
**(AQW 7560/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Draft Northern Area Plan 2016 is the subject of an Independent Examination currently being conducted by the Planning Appeals Commission. Stage one of the Independent Examination addressed strategic policy matters as contained in Volume One of the Draft Plan and was held over the period 19th September 2011 until the 6th October 2011. Stage Two of the examination into site specific matters commenced on 23rd January 2012 and is programmed to close on 22nd March 2012. Following the Examination the Planning Appeals Commission will prepare a report recommending how the objections should in their view be addressed. The Department will take into account this report, amending the Plan where appropriate, before moving to final adoption.

### **Discharge Consents for the Glynn River**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 5761-11/15, to detail all of the conditions of consent to discharge numbers 106/11 and 107/11.  
**(AQW 7676/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has issued 2 consents (consent nos. 106/11 and 107/11) to Bord Gáis Energy (Northern Ireland) for discharges of site drainage from an exploratory borehole site into the Raloo Water, a tributary of the Glynn River, near Glenoe.

Both consents permitting the discharges were issued by the Department on 19 July 2011. These consents authorise the discharge of site drainage from the premises at any time, providing all conditions of consent are complied with.

I have attached a copy of consent to discharge 106/11 at Annex A and a copy of consent to discharge 107/11 at Annex B.

NIEA is currently reviewing the electronic data storage facility relating to discharge consents. The ultimate aim of this project is to provide a web based facility to allow public access to consent records. In the meantime, however, all information on the public register concerning discharge consents is available from NIEA on request.

### **High Hedges Act (Northern Ireland) 2011**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the timescale for the full implementation of the High Hedges Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.  
**(AQW 7810/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The High Hedges Act (NI) 2011 will become fully operational on 31 March 2012.

### **Planning Application B/2011/0057/F**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he intends to direct a refusal of planning application B/2011/0057/F in respect of the sewage cake storage facility on the A37 Broad Road, Coleraine.  
**(AQO 1253/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The consultation process on the planning application is currently ongoing and the Department is not yet in a position to make a decision on the application. When all material planning matters have been fully considered, the Department will make a recommendation to Limavady Borough

Council. I am very aware of this issue and the member diligently brings it to my attention and I have asked for updates at every appropriate stage of the planning process.

## Department of Finance and Personnel

### Solicitors and Barristers: Debarred

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many (i) solicitors; and (ii) barristers have been debarred because of professional misconduct in each of the last ten years.

**(AQW 7106/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):** The Department of Finance and Personnel does not hold statistics on how many solicitors or barristers have been disbarred because of professional misconduct in each of the last ten years. That information is held by the relevant professional body which is the Law Society for solicitors and, in the case of barristers, the Bar Council.

Figures obtained by the Department from the Law Society in relation to the numbers of solicitors removed from the roll of solicitors by the independent Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal on grounds of professional misconduct over the past 10 years are tabulated overleaf.

The Bar Council has indicated that no barristers have been disbarred by it within the last 10 years.

**TABLE A**

Year	Number of Solicitors Removed from the Roll
2002	0
2003	4
2004	2
2005	3
2006	3
2007	2
2008	2
2009	2
2010	4
2011	3

### Rates Relief

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people are currently in receipt of rates relief, but not in receipt of housing benefit.

**(AQW 7399/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** As at 29th January 2012, there are 4,877 current awards of Rate Relief where the recipient is not in receipt of Housing Benefit as administered by Land & Property Services.

### Rates

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of occupied properties, previously thought to be unoccupied, where rates have not been paid in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7447/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The information requested is not available as the relevant historic information is available only at a point in time that is, at year-end. The number of vacant properties fluctuates as properties move in and out of occupation on an ongoing basis, therefore historic information only captures the number of properties that were vacant at the end of year. It should also be noted that prior to 1st October 2011, unoccupied domestic properties received a full discharge from the rating liability, so no rates were due or paid.

### **Mobile Phone Applications**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by his Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7457/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Department of Finance and Personnel has not developed, and is not in the process of developing, any mobile phone applications for use by members of the public.

### **Reduced Rates for Vacant Properties**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of his commitment to provide reduced rates for vacant properties while permitting the continued use of window displays within such units, whether he would consider additional rate reductions for vacant units accommodating young and social enterprise projects.

**(AQW 7492/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** As you will be aware the Rates (Amendment) Bill reached its final stage in the Assembly on 7 February. This introduces two measures to deal with the issue of empty retail premises and the blighting effect that they are having on our town and city centres.

At present almost any use of a property, including storage or displays, will trigger full occupied rates. The Bill provides that where shop window displays are used for (non-political) community or other non-commercial purposes the property will still be considered unoccupied. Ratepayers will continue to receive 50% empty property relief (or an exclusion if applicable). This will encourage ratepayers to take steps to brighten up shopping areas, without incurring full occupied rates, and work with the local community to help revitalise affected areas.

The Bill will also allow new occupiers of long term empty retail premises to receive a 50% rebate on their rates for 12 months, effectively providing for the continuation of empty property relief. The property will need to have to been empty for 12 months and when last occupied used for the retail provision of goods or services.

I do not consider it necessary to extend these measures more broadly. However, as I have already advised the Assembly any non-domestic ratepayer will be able to avail of the 50% rebate, where they occupy a long term empty retail property, regardless of the next use to which the property is put. This would include those using the empty retail premise for the purpose of accommodating young and social enterprise projects.

### **Mortgage and Debt Arrears**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 6159/11-15 and AQW 6161/11-15, why his Department does not hold information on mortgage and debt arrears.

**(AQW 7513/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Banking is a Reserved Matter for HM Treasury to determine and is therefore outside the remit of the Department of Finance & Personnel.

Banks and other lending institutions are not compelled by UK regulatory authorities to publish data on mortgage and debt arrears in the format requested and therefore this information is not available at this time.

## Peace III Funding

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the efficiency of the allocation of Peace III funding.

**(AQW 7545/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** I am content with the pace at which PEACE III is progressing. The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) has advised that, from a total Programme budget of approximately £300 million, some £270 million (90 per cent) has to date been allocated to projects.

SEUPB expects the remainder of the PEACE III budget to be allocated within the next three to six months.

PEACE III has to date met all of its EU targets and SEUPB expects that it will continue to do so.

## Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether his departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to his capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7549/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** My Department's revenue expenditure does not vary proportionately to my Department's capital budget allocation.

A number of my Department's activities incur revenue expenditure, but do not require significant capital investment.

In addition, depending on the purpose of the capital expenditure, my Department's revenue expenditure may increase, decrease or remain unchanged as a result of capital investment. If a new asset is purchased this is likely to increase revenue expenditure, for example through increased depreciation costs. However, if an existing asset is replaced the revenue expenditure may remain the same or decrease, for example through reduced costs of maintaining a newer asset.

## Response of Banks to the Needs of Businesses

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the response of the banks to the needs of businesses in the current economic downturn.

**(AQW 7623/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Having a competitive banking sector that meets the needs of businesses and consumers is vital as our economy struggles to recover from the recession. There have been concerns that the availability of credit has been constrained and that the cost of credit has sometimes been prohibitive. I have therefore been working with the British Bankers Association (BBA) and the local banks on this important issue for some time now. And in that regard, I am pleased that the local banks have made progress in implementing the reform measures currently being undertaken through the Better Business Finance initiative. I believe these actions – including the establishment of an independent appeals process – have the potential to offer a fairer and more transparent banking sector in the future.

And while I have no doubt that the cost and conditions attached to credit remain an issue, data provided to my Department by the British Bankers Association (BBA) also indicates that demand for credit is subdued and the BBA have reported that 90 per cent of loan applications are approved. So business confidence is also clearly an issue.

That said, I recognise that the banking sector can still do more. I will therefore continue to engage with local banking representatives to encourage them to meet the needs of local businesses. I have also made representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the Governor of the Bank of England to ensure that Northern Ireland's banks are included in nationwide banking initiatives aimed to improve liquidity and the availability of credit, such as the upcoming National Loan Guarantee scheme.

## Deaths: Mephedrone Consumption

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of deaths in each of the last three years where mephedrone consumption was recorded as a contributing factor.

**(AQW 7718/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Over the three year period between 2008 and 2010 there has been one death registered in 2010 in Northern Ireland due to drug poisoning<sup>1</sup> where mephedrone was mentioned on the death certificate. Data for 2011 will not be available until April 2012. Deaths due to drug poisoning<sup>1</sup> are likely to be referred to the coroner and can take time to be fully investigated. Therefore there is often a period of time between when such deaths occur, and when they are registered.

- 1 International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes:  
 F11-F16, F18-F19 – Mental and behavioural disorders related to drug use  
 X40-X44 – Accidental poisoning by drugs  
 X60-X64 – Intentional self-poisoning by drugs  
 X85 – Assault by drugs  
 Y10-Y34 – Undetermined and other poisoning by drugs.

## Department's Equality Unit

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) number; and (ii) annual cost of staff employed in his Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7806/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Department of Finance and Personnel currently employs 1 member of staff in the Department's Equality Unit. The staff member is a Deputy Principal with a salary range of £34,163 - £38,893.

## Guidelines on Credit Checks

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what control or input his Department has in relation to the issuing of guidelines on credit checks by the Financial Services Authority.

**(AQW 7811/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Banking is a Reserved Matter for HM Treasury to determine and is therefore outside the remit of the Department of Finance & Personnel.

As I understand it, banks use their own systems when performing credit checks and these details would be considered confidential. The Financial Services Authority does not closely regulate credit checks or credit scoring for general lending by banks.

## Retired Civil Servants

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the total number of civil servants who retired on an exit salary of £80,000 or greater in the last five years; and (ii) the average pension received.

**(AQW 7854/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The number of civil servants who retired on an exit salary of £80,000 or greater the last five years and the average pension received is set out in the table below:

	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011
Civil Servants on exit salary of £80k +	8	9	5	5	13
Average pension	43,287	43,628	46,723	29,569	34,405

## Hospitality: Spend

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what has been the total spend on hospitality by his Department in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 8071/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Hospitality expenditure by the Department of Finance and Personnel (including its executive agencies) in each of the last five years is as follows:

	£'000
2007/08	205
2008/09	209
2009/10	91
2010/11	62
2011/12*	42

\* This represents hospitality spend for the current financial year up to 31 December 2011.

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Recruitment to the Patient Tracker Positions in the Royal Victoria Hospital's Accident and Emergency Department

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on recruitment to the Patient Tracker positions in the Royal Victoria Hospital's Accident and Emergency department; and why agency staff, who are currently employed in the positions, are barred from applying for the permanent positions.

**(AQW 7289/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The Belfast HSC Trust is using a system of internal trawls in order to fill the Patient Tracker positions in the Royal Victoria Hospital's Accident and Emergency Department. This redeployment process will, in the first instance, target permanent medical secretaries who meet the relevant skills requirements. This process follows a modernisation review of medical secretary provision within the Trust and is aimed at preventing a redundancy situation among this staff group.

This process of restructuring and redeploying existing internal staff fully complies with the requirements of the Agency Workers Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011.

### Compton Review

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the Compton Review identifying a need for approximately £25 million to restructure the Health Service, to detail (i) how the funding would be spent; and (ii) whether the funding is available from the Executive's budget in each of the next three financial years.

**(AQW 7428/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Review recommended that transitional funding of approximately £25m, £25m and £20m would be required over the next three years to support the implementation of the new model of service as set out in Transforming Your Care. This funding would be required to support the development of the Integrated Care Partnerships; take forward service changes; and reshape the workforce.

My Department is currently engaged in financial planning for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15. The HSC faces significant financial challenges over this period. I will want to consider carefully how the

resources can be identified to support Transforming Your Care, including raising the matter with the Department of Finance and Personnel. I am clear that much needed reform must be progressed and resources will need to be found to help to do so.

### **Hospital Booking Lines**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average response time to answer a call on the booking line in each hospital in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 7463/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Western HSC Trust has informed me that during January 2012, their telephony statistics show that the Altnagelvin Booking Centre received 12,986 calls at an average speed of answer of three minutes and 47 seconds.

The Tyrone County Hospital Booking Centre, which covers calls for both Tyrone County and Erne Hospitals, received 2,800 calls, during January 2012, at an average speed of answer of 35 seconds.

### **Pseudomonas Incident in Altnagevlin Area Hospital**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he was first briefed, or became aware of, the December 2011 pseudomonas incident in Altnagevlin Area Hospital; and what action he took.

**(AQW 7493/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I was made aware of a pseudomonas outbreak in Altnagelvin Area Hospital by my Department in a submission of 13 December 2011. The Chief Medical Officer and Chief Estates Officer issued a joint letter to the Health and Social Care service on 22 December 2011 reminding the service of the infection risks associated with water systems in healthcare facilities and reminding the service of important messages about infection prevention and control contained in two earlier communications.

While it is important to act quickly, the Department must ensure that it has sufficient and accurate information in order to give sound, resolved advice on the appropriate actions to take in the interests of patient safety. In infectious disease incidents the cause of the problem is not always apparent and detailed investigative work is necessary to identify and address the underlying cause and so, in this case, reduce the risk to the babies. In these circumstances the aim is to strike the best possible balance in both acting quickly and doing the right thing.

### **Pseudomonas**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the letter of 22 December 2011, concerning the pseudomonas problem, did not mention (i) that in Altnagevlin Area Hospital on 14 December 2011 a tap had been found positive for pseudomonas; and (ii) the death of a baby at the hospital.

**(AQW 7495/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The purpose of the letter of 22 December 2011 was to highlight the risks associated with water sources and to reinforce earlier messages about infection control.

This letter did not refer to the contaminated tap that was identified in Altnagelvin on 14 December because additional specialised tests identifying the particular strain of Pseudomonas bacteria were still being processed. Therefore it had not been established at that stage whether this tap could have contributed to the infections that had occurred. A reference to this tap could have been misleading and was not necessary for the purposes of the letter. The priority on 22 December was to focus attention on the risks from water sources; the actions required; and on the importance of good infection prevention and control.

The letter of 22 December did not mention the death of the baby in Altnagelvin because Pseudomonas can cause infection in any clinical area where there are immunocompromised or debilitated patients.

For that reason, the letter was issued to a wide group of staff, as it applied to a number of clinical areas. Focusing on the death of a child in the neonatal unit in Altnagelvin could have implied that this was a problem localised to Altnagelvin or to neonatal units only.

### **Pseudomonas Outbreak**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, following the pseudomonas outbreak, the date from which only sterile water has been allowed to come into contact with babies in neo-natal units.

**(AQW 7497/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It was agreed during a teleconference held on Saturday 21 January, at which all the HSC Trusts were represented, that neonatal units should move to using sterile water for all nappy changes with immediate effect. Before then the Western Trust and the Belfast Trust had already adopted this measure in response to the cases and Pseudomonas colonisation of babies in their neonatal units. The region-wide approach was reiterated and clarified in a joint letter of 28 January to the Trusts, PHA and HSC Board issued by the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Estates Officer.

### **Pseudomonas**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when action was first taken at the Royal Victoria Hospital's Neo-natal Unit as a result the pseudomonas event at Altnagelvin Hospital and letter of 22 December 2012.

**(AQW 7498/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have commissioned an independent review and have asked Professor Patricia Troop and her team specifically to review the effectiveness of the Trusts' management of the occurrences of Pseudomonas infection and colonisation within neonatal units. I have asked the Review team to present an interim report to me by the end of March 2012 and to present their final report within eight weeks of the interim report. I will present the findings of the Review to the Assembly at the earliest opportunity.

### **Departmental Revenue Expenditure**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to his capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7550/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The table below shows the current expenditure and capital investment allocations for my Department over the current budget period.

	<b>2011/12 £m</b>	<b>2012/13 £m</b>	<b>2013/14 £m</b>	<b>2014/15 £m</b>
Current	4,383.1	4,447.6	4,569.2	4,659.4
Capital	200.5	279.8	187.5	183.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,583.6</b>	<b>4,727.4</b>	<b>4,756.7</b>	<b>4,842.4</b>

**Source:** Budget 2011 -15 Document

My Department's current expenditure allocation does not vary proportionately to its capital investment allocation.

### Physiotherapist Post at the Suffolk Day Centre, Belfast

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the physiotherapist post at the Suffolk Day Centre, Belfast, will be filled.

**(AQW 7563/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am advised that the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have now successfully recruited a new full time member of staff to the learning disability team. This member of staff will commence work on 1 March 2012 and this will include work within the Suffolk Day Centre.

### Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Staff

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area at Band 5 within Learning Disability are currently on maternity leave.

**(AQW 7564/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Belfast Health & Social Care Trust have advised that 5 (4.50 WTE) staff employed at pay band 5 within Learning Disability are currently on maternity leave.

### Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Staff

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why staff in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust area at Band 5 within Learning Disability who are currently on maternity leave are being replaced by staff at Band 3 who are not receiving additional pay or conditions.

**(AQW 7565/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Belfast HSC Trust has not deployed Band 3 staff to undertake the duties of Band 5 staff in Learning and Disability who are absent on maternity leave. Each post is assessed using the Agenda for Change Job Evaluation Scheme which determines the pay band for each post and the appropriate rate of pay. All staff deployed within Learning Disability services at the Trust have been allocated duties commensurate with their Agenda for Change grading.

### Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Staff

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) how many agency staff are currently employed in Learning Disability in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Area; and (ii) for how long each agency staff member has been employed.

**(AQW 7566/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have advised that at February 2012, 22 agency staff are employed within Learning Disability in the Trust. Their employment lengths are given in the table below.

Number of Agency Staff employed in Learning Disability within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust by length of employment as at February 2012

Length of Employment	Headcount
0-3 months	8
3-6 months	4
6-12 months	4
12-24 months	4
Over 24 months	2

**Source:** Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

**Notes:** All 22 agency staff listed in the above table are employed at Pay Band 2 level.

## Business Services Transformation Programme

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 7042/11-15, for his assessment of whether the Business Services Transformation Programme business case should have distinguished between savings from systems implementation and savings from reconfigured shared services, so as not to mislead the consultee and to make it clear what savings will be realised.

**(AQW 7597/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As explained in reply to AQW 7042/11-15, and as was recognised in the business case approved by DFP in 2010, the closely interdependent nature of the IT systems and reconfigured shared services means that no meaningful distinction can be drawn between these two elements of the Business Services Transformation Programme. It follows that no-one has been misled on the point.

## Recruitment Agencies

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the amount paid to recruitment agencies for (i) full-time; and (ii) part-time posts in his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7650/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Table 1. The amount paid to recruitment agencies for full or part-time posts in the Department of Health Social Services and its arms-length bodies.

	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011
DHSSPS	£408,630	£74,835	£31,608
PCC	NA	£33,290	£75,781
PHA	NA	£514,000	£479,891
NIBTS	£4,000	£68,000	£52,000
NIMDTA	£68,578	£43,707	£16,476
NIPEC	£13,466	£6,141	£16,950
NIGALA	£26,740	£268	£10,324
RQIA	£95,143	£116,717	£95,781
NISCC	£233,338	£130,741	£185,152
NIFRS	NA	NA	NA
SHSCT	£3,449,190	£4,986,334	£4,494,386
SEHSVT	£8,132,185	£8,211,931	£4,074,499
NHSCT	£5,021,000	£6,492,000	£6,392,000
NIAS	£462,334	£511,856	£425,336
WHSCT	£6,393	£9,530	£11,071
BHSCT	£23,710,000	£19,900,000	£13,100,000
HSCB	NA	£960,000	£381,420
BSO	NA	£1,422,118	£1,512,118
<b>Total</b>	<b>£41,630,997</b>	<b>£43,481,468</b>	<b>£31,354,793</b>

It should be noted that:

- 1 These are total figures for each year as systems do not provide a breakdown between full time and part time posts.
- 2 NIFRS - does not pay any money directly to Recruitment Agencies.
- 3 PCC, PHA, HSCB and BSO were not established until April 2009.

### **MRI Scanner in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to install an MRI scanner in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

**(AQW 7665/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The installation of an MRI scanner at the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit is subject to business case analysis and approval to assess the need for and value for money of the proposal. The Belfast Trust is currently developing the required analysis and a detailed Outline Business Case (OBC) is expected to be submitted later in 2012, for consideration and approval. Following approval, I will then be in a position to consider whether the required funding can be accommodated within my constrained budgetary allocation.

### **Domiciliary Care**

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the levels of domiciliary care currently being provided in each Health and Social Care Trust area compare to that which was provided in (i) 2000; (ii) 2005; and (iii) 2010.

**(AQW 7705/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Table 1 below presents information on the number of clients receiving domiciliary care services in Northern Ireland during a survey week in 2008, 2009 and 2010. This information is not available on a comparable basis before 2008.

**TABLE 1**

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>Statutory</b>			<b>Independent</b>			<b>Total Clients Receiving Domiciliary Care (excludes double counting)</b>		
	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Belfast	5,393	4,883	4,836	2,166	2,579	2,889	6,297	6,214	6,427
Northern	3,709	3,453	3,285	927	1,030	1,605	4,143	4,052	4,164
South Eastern	2,344	1,728	1,598	2,459	2,696	2,772	4,278	3,908	3,954
Southern	3,299	3,183	2,880	1,686	1,545	1,709	4,685	4,462	4,331
Western	2,861	2,635	2,328	2,565	2,740	2,507	3,657	4,741	4,513
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>17,606</b>	<b>15,882</b>	<b>14,927</b>	<b>9,803</b>	<b>10,590</b>	<b>11,482</b>	<b>23,060</b>	<b>23,377</b>	<b>23,389</b>

**Source:** CC7b Community Information Return.

- 1 Information for; 2008 relates to the survey week 21st–27th September 2008 inclusive; 2009 relates to the survey week 20th–26th September 2009 inclusive and; 2010 relates to the survey week 19th–25th September 2010 inclusive.

The number of clients in receipt of domiciliary care services increased by 329 (1.4%) from 23,060 during the survey week in 2008 to 23,389 during the survey week in 2010.

The latest available information shows that during the survey week 19th–25th September 2010, 14,927 clients received domiciliary care services from the statutory sector, 11,482 clients received domiciliary care services from the independent sector (this information cannot be split by private and voluntary sectors), and 3,020 clients received domiciliary care services from both sectors.

This information is published in the ‘Domiciliary Care Services for Adults in Northern Ireland’ publication which is available to download from the DHSSPS internet site at:

[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/stats-cib-3/statistics\\_and\\_research-cib-pub/adult\\_statistics-1/statistics\\_and\\_research-dom\\_care\\_services.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib-3/statistics_and_research-cib-pub/adult_statistics-1/statistics_and_research-dom_care_services.htm)

## Domiciliary Care Packages

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many domiciliary care packages are currently provided by the (i) statutory sector; (ii) private sector; and (iii) voluntary sector.

**(AQW 7706/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Table 1 below presents information on the number of clients receiving domiciliary care services in Northern Ireland during a survey week in 2008, 2009 and 2010. This information is not available on a comparable basis before 2008.

**TABLE 1**

HSC Trust	Statutory			Independent			Total Clients Receiving Domiciliary Care (excludes double counting)		
	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010	2008	2009	2010
Belfast	5,393	4,883	4,836	2,166	2,579	2,889	6,297	6,214	6,427
Northern	3,709	3,453	3,285	927	1,030	1,605	4,143	4,052	4,164
South Eastern	2,344	1,728	1,598	2,459	2,696	2,772	4,278	3,908	3,954
Southern	3,299	3,183	2,880	1,686	1,545	1,709	4,685	4,462	4,331
Western	2,861	2,635	2,328	2,565	2,740	2,507	3,657	4,741	4,513
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>17,606</b>	<b>15,882</b>	<b>14,927</b>	<b>9,803</b>	<b>10,590</b>	<b>11,482</b>	<b>23,060</b>	<b>23,377</b>	<b>23,389</b>

**Source:** CC7b Community Information Return.

- 1 Information for; 2008 relates to the survey week 21st–27th September 2008 inclusive; 2009 relates to the survey week 20th–26th September 2009 inclusive and; 2010 relates to the survey week 19th–25th September 2010 inclusive.

The number of clients in receipt of domiciliary care services increased by 329 (1.4%) from 23,060 during the survey week in 2008 to 23,389 during the survey week in 2010.

The latest available information shows that during the survey week 19th–25th September 2010, 14,927 clients received domiciliary care services from the statutory sector, 11,482 clients received domiciliary care services from the independent sector (this information cannot be split by private and voluntary sectors), and 3,020 clients received domiciliary care services from both sectors.

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[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/stats-cib-3/statistics\\_and\\_research-cib-pub/adult\\_statistics-1/statistics\\_and\\_research-dom\\_care\\_services.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib-3/statistics_and_research-cib-pub/adult_statistics-1/statistics_and_research-dom_care_services.htm)

## Residential Care Homes

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the change in the number of (i) residential care homes; and (ii) places available at residential care homes since 2005.

**(AQW 7708/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

Year	(i) No. of residential homes	(ii) No. of residential places available
2005	353	5,947
2011	267	4,757

The fall in numbers of residential care Homes, and consequently the reduction in the number of residential care places, is in keeping with one of my Department's key priorities, to support people in their own home maintaining independence for as long as it is safe and possible to do so. All assessments are person-centred and take account of individuals' choice and needs.

## Care Management Assessments

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether common standards of care management assessments are currently being achieved in all Health and Social Care Trust areas, and if not, to detail why.

**(AQW 7709/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In March 2010 my Department issued 'Care Management, Provision of Services and Charging Guidance' to colleagues across the HSC. This guidance was issued in order to ensure a harmonised approach to each stage of the care management process which includes assessment of need. In addition, the guidance sets out clear requirements for reviews of needs identified in such assessments to ensure that service users are supported in an environment which best matches their needs.

The Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool (NISAT) was developed to assess the health and social care needs of older people across Northern Ireland, bringing a consistent structure to assessment and outcomes. NISAT takes account of standards set by the Department regarding assessment, care management and discharge arrangements, and is currently at varying stages of roll-out across the five Trusts.

## Suicide and Alcohol or Drug Addiction

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there is a correlation between suicide and alcohol or drug addiction.

**(AQW 7710/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Alcohol and drugs act as a disinhibitor, affecting a person's judgement and decision making process, and therefore increasing the likelihood of a depressed person making a suicide attempt.

Substance abuse is a significant risk factor for suicide, and in particular, heavy drinking patterns are linked to a higher incidence of suicide. International research also indicates that 1 in 3 young people were intoxicated at the time of their suicide attempt.

## Tackling Alcohol and Drug Addiction

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much the (i) voluntary sector; and (ii) statutory sector have spent on tackling alcohol and drug addiction in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7711/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** On the 26th January 2012, I launched the New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs Phase 2 (NSD), which is a cross-sectoral strategy to reduce the harm related to alcohol and drug misuse. The NSD seeks to direct action across five pillars: prevention and early intervention; harm reduction; treatment and support; criminal justice; and monitoring, evaluation and research. This Department allocates approximately £8 million to its implementation each year, and additional funding of approximately £6.5 million is provided through the mental health budget for the provision of treatment and support services.

In 2011/12, of the funding highlighted above:

- (i) £4,916,407 was allocated to the community and voluntary sector; and
- (ii) £9,859,695 was allocated to statutory sector services.

It was not possible to provide figures for 2009/10 and 2010/11 in the timeframe, however, as the majority of this funding is allocated on the basis of rolling contracts and recurrent funding, the expenditure in these two years would be broadly similar to the figures given for 2011/12.

It should be noted that that the funding set out above is the money allocated from the Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency to the statutory and community and voluntary sectors. It is not possible to give the total funding these services receive from donations, charitable organisations and other Government Departments.

## Ten Day Prompt Payment of Invoices

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the ten day prompt payment of invoices performance target is based on calendar days or working days; and at which point the ten day count commences.

**(AQW 7723/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The guidance in relation to this issue is contained in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland. Annex 4.6.3 of this publication indicates that Public Sector organisations should aim to pay suppliers wherever possible within 10 working days. The ten day count commences from the date the invoice is received in the organisation.

Extant HSC guidance on this matter does not specify that working days should be used and as such, the majority of HSC trusts have been reporting on a calendar day basis, thereby understating their performance against this target. In order to ensure a consistent reporting basis, HSC guidance will now be updated to reflect Managing Public Money Northern Ireland.

## Payment of Invoices to Businesses

**Mr McClarty** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 5640/11-15, to detail (i) the number of invoices paid by the Health and Social Care Trusts (a) in the 2010/11 financial year; and (b) from 1 April 2011 to 31 October 2011; and (ii) how many of these invoices were paid late.

**(AQW 7724/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The total number of invoices paid by the HSC Trusts in the 2010/11 financial year and during the period 1 April to 31 October 2011 is presented in the following table.

The number of invoices paid within agreed terms, or if no terms have been agreed, within 30 days following the receipt of goods or a valid invoice (whichever is later) is also provided, together with the number of invoices paid late.

		<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12 1 April 11 to 31 October 11</b>
Northern	Total invoices paid	137,673	74,387
	Total invoices paid on time	131,636	70,155
	Total invoices paid late	6,037	4,232
Belfast	Total invoices paid	356,767	209,484
	Total invoices paid on time	319,905	193,564
	Total invoices paid late	36,862	15,920
Western	Total invoices paid	98,991	59,877
	Total invoices paid on time	94,451	57,476
	Total invoices paid late	4,540	2,401
South Eastern	Total invoices paid	121,262	76,295
	Total invoices paid on time	111,417	70,075
	Total invoices paid late	9,845	6,220
NIAS	Total invoices paid	15,137	8,986
	Total invoices paid on time	14,764	8,702
	Total invoices paid late	373	284
Southern	Total invoices paid	108,591	64,981
	Total invoices paid on time	98,136	57,926
	Total invoices paid late	10,455	7,055

### Payment of Invoices to Businesses

**Mr McClarty** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 5640/11-15 (i) to detail the nature of the on-going prompt payment performance monitoring of Health and Social Care Trusts and other health bodies; (ii) if he will publish the findings of the internal audit review on the Trusts' levels of compliance with departmental guidance on prompt payment; and (iii) to detail the reasons why any of the Trusts and other health bodies have not achieved the minimum prompt payments target of 95 percent.

**(AQW 7726/11-15)**

#### Mr Poots:

- (i) The Department receives monthly returns from all of its Arm's Length Bodies which report (both for the current month and year to date cumulative) details of the total number of invoices paid, the number paid within 30 days or other agreed terms and the percentage this represents of the total.
- (ii) Trusts' levels of compliance with Departmental guidance on prompt payment are contained within each Trust's annual Internal Audit Report.

- (iii) The main reasons why some organisations have not achieved the minimum prompt payments target of 95 percent are:
- The constraints of the current IT systems on which the HSC's payment function depends;
  - the wide geographical spread of sites within the organisations and the impact of this on payment procedures;
  - delays in receiving appropriate or complete information from suppliers.

### Domiciliary Care Packages

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the criteria used in each Health and Social Care Trust area to determine eligibility for (i) domiciliary care packages; and (ii) domiciliary care Attendance Allowance.

**(AQW 7780/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In May 2008 the Department issued Regional Access Criteria for Domiciliary Care. The Criteria provide a framework for a more consistent approach to eligibility and fairer access to domiciliary care. Identified risks to independence, or personal safety are compared to the eligibility criteria against four bands:

- (i) Critical, Substantial, Moderate and Low. Health and Social Care Trusts are required to provide services where the identified risk to independence falls within the Critical or Substantial bands.
- (ii) Eligibility for Attendance Allowance is determined by the Social Security Agency and is a matter for the Department for Social Development.

### Social Care in a Residential Home

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how much, on average, his Department has paid for one week of social care in a residential home in the (a) independent sector; and (b) statutory sector in each year since 2005; and (ii) whether these prices reflect any increases in inflation and other operating costs.

**(AQW 7781/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The average weekly cost of residential care is set out in the table below. The average cost represents the running costs of the accommodation and is calculated on the number of occupied resident weeks in the year.

This does not represent the cost to the HSC as residents in both the statutory and independent sector will make personal contributions to the cost of their accommodation.

- (i) The average weekly cost of a one week stay in residential care in the statutory and independent sectors from 2004/05 to 2010/1:

#### AVERAGE COST PER PERSON PER WEEK (£)

	(a) Independent Sector	(b) Statutory Sector
2004/05	379	730
2005/06	416	787
2006/07	456	840
2007/08	474	936
2008/09	502	1,032
2009/10	515	1,099
2010/11	528	1,140

The figures represent residential care only for both adults and children and exclude those in nursing care.

- (ii) The average weekly cost represents the full running cost of the accommodation and therefore takes account of all increases in inflation and other operating costs.

### **Brendan Lillis**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what arrangements, if any, the Public Prosecution Service has requested that his Department put in place to monitor the state of health of Brendan Lillis, given that he could stand trial if his health improves.

**(AQW 7805/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department has not received a request from the Public Prosecution Service to monitor the state of health of Brendan Lillis.

### **Speech and Language Therapists**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of full-time equivalent speech and language therapists in each Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 7812/11-15)**

**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 31st December 2011

<b>Trust</b>	<b>HC</b>	<b>WTE</b>
Belfast	126	100.77
Northern	117	95.82
South Eastern	78	65.19
Southern	72	60.82
Western	63	56.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>379.01</b>

**Source:** Human Resources Management System

**Notes:**

HC = Headcount; WTE = Whole-time Equivalent

Figures exclude bank staff, staff on career breaks and staff with a whole-time equivalent of 0.03 or less.

### **Payment of Invoices**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 2224/11-15, to detail the number of invoices paid within 10 days by each Health and Social Care Trust area between 1 April 2011 and 31 October 2011.

**(AQW 7815/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number of invoices paid by the Trusts within 10 days between 1 April 2011 and 31 October 2011 is summarised in the following table:

<b>Trust</b>	<b>Number of invoices paid within 10 days between 1 April 2011 to 31 October 2011</b>
Northern	41,232
Belfast	108,140
Western	35,024
South Eastern	31,154
NIAS	4,270
Southern	24,403

### **Payment of Invoices**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) why his Department's arm's-length bodies paid 110,346 invoices late in the 2010/11 financial year and between 1 April 2011 and 30 November 2011; and (ii) to detail the procedures that suppliers should follow to claim statutory late payment interest and any compensation applicable.

**(AQW 7816/11-15)**

#### **Mr Poots:**

- (i) The main reasons why Arm's Length Bodies have paid invoices late are:-
- The constraints of the current IT systems on which the HSC's payment function depends. I can confirm however that new financial systems will be rolled out across the HSC in the second half of the 2012/13 financial year as part of the Business Services Transformation Programme;
  - the wide geographical spread of sites within the organisations and the impact of this on payment procedures;
  - delays in receiving appropriate or complete information from suppliers.
- (ii) There are no formal documented procedures for suppliers to follow to claim statutory late payment interest and compensation. Suppliers should liaise directly with organisations where invoices have been paid late under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1988.

### **Misuse of Disabled Car Parking Bays**

**Mr Irwin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any plans to address the misuse of disabled car parking bays at health care facilities.

**(AQW 7820/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The public consultation on the Draft Policy for Car Parking Provision and Management in the Health & Social Care Sector period ended on 30 December 2011. The proposed draft policy retains the use of vehicle immobilisation as a deterrent against all forms of car-parking abuse (including misuse of disabled spaces) on hospital sites and extends the potential for its use to other Health & Social Care sites

A possible alternative or complementary measure might be to increase the number of security staff on HSC sites. The new policy provides for such costs being recovered through charging for car parking on HSC sites. Trusts may consider this approach in response to sustained parking abuse.

## Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how much the judicial review in relation to the Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee cost his Department, including (a) the legal costs incurred by his Department; and (b) the legal costs his Department had to pay to the Committee as a result of the outcome of the judicial review.

**(AQW 7825/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The remedy hearing for the Judicial Review brought by Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI), formerly the Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee (PCC), was held on 7 February 2012. At the hearing Mr Justice Treacy awarded legal costs against my Department but did not impose any other financial penalty. The Departmental Solicitor's Office acted on behalf of my Department and to date they have not submitted an account of the costs they incurred in defending the action. To date no account has been received from CPNI of the legal costs they incurred in taking the Judicial Review.

## Oasis Dental Care Limited

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the opening date and location of each Oasis Dental Care Limited practice; and (ii) the number of (a) adults; and (b) children, under 18 years of age, registered at each practice.

**(AQW 7833/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The answer to this question is set out in the table below:

Practice Location	Opening date	Adults registered (Jan 2012)	Children Registered (Jan 2012)
Enniskillen	16/11/2009	7,365	1,828
Londonderry	16/11/2009	4,921	1,204
Omagh	02/02/2010	2,686	573
Dungannon	03/02/2010	2,263	666
Strabane	04/02/2010	2,362	722
Cookstown	22/03/2010	2,473	535
Carrickfergus	23/03/2010	2,475	549
Glengormley	24/03/2010	3,104	758
Holywood	22/04/2010	1,255	293
Bangor	05/05/2010	1,816	402
Banbridge	09/06/2010	1,444	392
Newry	10/06/2010	668	129
Lisburn	14/06/2010	1,612	460
Dundonald	09/08/2010	2,039	583

## Oasis Dental Care Limited

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many orthodontic treatment cases have been completed by Oasis Dental Care Limited up to 31 January 2012.

**(AQW 7834/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information obtained from the Family Practitioner Services, Information and Registration Unit of the HSC Business Services Organisation shows that no orthodontic treatment cases have been completed by Oasis Dental Care Limited up to 31 January 2012.

An orthodontic treatment case has been defined as dental treatment for which a claim containing at least one item from Determination I, Section VIII of the Statement of Dental Remuneration has been submitted for payment. This data only applies to treatments paid for either in full or in part by the Health Service; information on private treatment is not available.

### **Oasis Dental Care Limited**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the value of the contract with Oasis Dental Care Limited; (ii) the amount paid to Oasis Dental Care Limited for the contract in the (a) 2009/10; (b) 2010/11; and (c) 2011/12 financial years, to date.

**(AQW 7836/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The value of the contract with Oasis Dental Care Limited for the provision of additional dental services is £5.7 million per year. The table below shows the payments made to Oasis Dental Care Limited:

	<b>Payments to Oasis Dental Care Ltd £</b>
2009/10	645,109
2010/11	4,290,041
2011/12(To 31 Jan 2012)	4,574,004

Payments are less than the total contract value because:

- The 14 Oasis practices opened in a phased roll out between November 2009 and August 2010; and
- Payments to Oasis are net of patient contributions, which are collected and retained by Oasis.

### **Tyrone County Hospital**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how he will ensure that the removal of the laboratory from Tyrone County Hospital will not have a detrimental effect on the renal services provided in the hospital and throughout the West Tyrone area.

**(AQW 7850/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In December 2007 the Department's review, The Future of Pathology Services in Northern Ireland set out the strategic policy which guided the development of pathology services in Northern Ireland. In order to secure higher quality and more efficient services the Department endorsed the recommendation that there should be no laboratory facilities at local and enhanced local hospitals; services should instead be provided by the nearest acute hospital laboratory.

The Western Health and Social Care Trust is currently exploring options to ensure that the proposed changes will have no detrimental effect on the renal services provided in the Tyrone County Hospital and surrounding area. In addition, Tyrone County Hospital will continue to have appropriate point-of-care testing to effectively support renal services.

### **Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much the judicial review in relation to Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland cost his Department.

**(AQW 7855/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The remedy hearing for the Judicial Review brought by Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI) was held on 7 February 2012. At the hearing Mr Justice Treacy awarded legal costs against my Department but did not impose any other financial penalty. The Departmental Solicitor's Office acted on behalf of my Department and to date they have not submitted an account of the costs they incurred in defending the action. To date no account has been received from CPNI of the legal costs they incurred in taking the Judicial Review.

### **Speech and Language Therapy**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much, per head, was spent on speech and language therapy in the last 12 months, in each Health and Social Care Trust area. **(AQW 7856/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

### **Department's Human Resources Section**

**Dr McDonnell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many staff are employed in his Department's Human Resources section. **(AQW 7881/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A total of 27 staff (24.18 Full Time Equivalent) are employed in my Department's Human Resources and Learning and Development sections.

### **Speech and Language Therapists**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many speech and language therapists currently work in the Health Service; and (ii) for his assessment of whether the service provision is adequate.

**(AQW 7884/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** At 31 December 2011 there were 456 (379.01 Whole Time Equivalent) speech and language therapists employed within health and social care in Northern Ireland. This represents an increase of 58 (35.3 WTE) or 14.6% (10.3% WTE) from the December 2007 figure of 398 (343.7 WTE). In the current very challenging financial climate facing health and social care in NI, I consider that speech and language therapists continue to provide a high quality and professional service to all those clients who require their expertise, support and advice. Moreover, in relation to children, in recent years speech and language therapists have invested time working with teachers and parents to ensure a partnership approach to the delivery of programmes to children and allow more children to benefit from speech and language therapy advice.

### **Speech and Language Therapists**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many speech and language therapists have been employed by the Health Service in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 7885/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number of speech and language therapists employed within Northern Ireland Health and Social Care over the last five years broken down by Health and Social Care Trust is given in the following table.

**SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE BY TRUST AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2007-2011**

Trust	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	HC	WTE								
Belfast	118	97.6	117	93.0	120	95.6	117	94.2	126	100.8
Northern	90	78.6	93	80.6	103	88.8	108	88.9	117	95.8
South Eastern	67	56.3	73	61.5	72	60.7	74	62.2	78	65.2
Southern	69	60.8	66	57.6	66	57.0	66	56.6	72	60.8
Western	54	50.4	57	53.7	57	53.5	59	52.5	63	56.4
Total	398	343.7	406	346.3	418	355.6	424	354.4	456	379.0

**Source:** Human Resources Management System

**Notes:**

HC = Headcount; WTE = Whole-time Equivalent

Figures exclude bank staff, staff on career breaks and staff with a whole-time equivalent of 0.03 or less.

### Fuel Hedging

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, are engaged in fuel hedging to manage fluctuations in fuel prices.

**(AQW 7896/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Fuel procurement for the DHSSPS accommodation in Castle Buildings is managed by the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) and DFP have confirmed that fuel hedging is not used in the procurement process. The Western, Northern and South Eastern HSC Trusts use fuel hedging to reduce their exposure to volatile and potentially rising fuel costs.

### Respite Care

**Mr McCallister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many respite care hours, for all programmes of care, were provided in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area between 2009 and 2011.

**(AQW 7901/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** This information is not available centrally within my Department and could only be obtained by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust at disproportionate costs.

### Public Consultation on a Rare Disease Plan

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the public consultation on a rare disease plan.

**(AQW 7919/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The UK Plan on Rare Disease is a joint plan being produced by the four nations of the UK. We are working closely with our counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales.

I have been advised that work is progressing on refining the consultation and finalising questions. No decision has been taken about when the consultation will be launched. However, I expect this to be agreed shortly.

## Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of the judicial review in relation to Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland, including the total legal costs.

**(AQW 7931/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The remedy hearing for the Judicial Review brought by Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland (CPNI) was held on 7 February 2012. At the hearing Mr Justice Treacy awarded legal costs against my Department but did not impose any other financial penalty. The Departmental Solicitor's Office acted on behalf of my Department and to date they have not submitted an account of the costs they incurred in defending the action. To date no account has been received from CPNI of the legal costs they incurred in taking the Judicial Review.

## Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Tenders

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust's advertisement on 29 March 2011, in the Belfast Telegraph Classifieds (i) why, under the procurement process, there was only a 13 day turnaround in which the applicants had to apply in writing requesting the tender documentation; (ii) how many organisations applied; and (iii) which organisation was successful.

**(AQW 7968/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that the question refers to an advertisement for two community-based learning disability drop-in centres. On that understanding, the answer to each part of the question is as follows:

- (i) the service concerned is categorised as social care, which is not subject to the standard procurement requirements. The Trust nevertheless allowed 10 working days for responses to its advertisement, as provided for in the Department's guidance on compliance with procurement regulations;
- (ii) two organisations applied; and
- (iii) Compass Advocacy Network was successful.

## Shared Services

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether financial assessments are part of the proposed Shared Services.

**(AQW 7973/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** No. Financial assessments are outside the scope of the shared services proposals currently being consulted on.

## Shared Services

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the grades; and (ii) how many of each grade will be employed in each centre under the Shared Services proposal.

**(AQW 7974/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Without prejudice to the outcome of the public consultation, the Business Services Organisation shared draft indicative structures for the shared services with directors of HR and with the trade unions on Friday 10 February. Those structures illustrate initial thinking with regard to the level and banding of posts. Final decisions on shared service structures are dependent on the eventual model and locations of shared services and will be affected also by the detailed design for the replacement IT systems.

## Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Tenders

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust's advertisement on 29 March 2011, in the Belfast Telegraph Classifieds

(i) which organisation ran the schemes before they were put out to tender for the areas listed in the advert; (ii) whether European money was involved before or after the tendering process; (iii) who currently runs these schemes/services in the Antrim and Magherfelt areas; (iv) to detail the timescale and process of the tendering; (v) how many organisations applied; and (vi) which organisation was successful.

**(AQW 7975/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that the question refers to an advertisement for community-based learning disability drop-in centres in Ballymena and Coleraine. On that understanding, the answer to each part of the question is as follows:

- (iv) these were new services, with no previous providers;
- (v) no EU money was involved;
- (vi) such facilities depend on partnership working, with the Trust providing the service and the relevant organisation providing the accommodation and volunteers. In the instance referred to, the organisations concerned are INVOLVE (Antrim) and VOLUNTEER CENTRE (Magherafelt/Cookstown);
- (vii) The advertisement was published on 29 March with a closing date of 12 April ie it allowed 10 working days for response;
- (viii) two organisations applied;
- (ix) Compass Advocacy Network was successful.

### **Director of Adult Services**

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the individual who last held the post of Director of Adult Services in the Homefirst Community Trust, is the same individual as the current Director of Adult Services in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust.

**(AQW 7982/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Since its establishment in April 2007, the Northern Health and Social Care Trust has not had a Director of Adult Services post.

### **Departmental Equality Unit**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current (i) number; and (ii) annual cost, of staff employed in his Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7991/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department currently employs four staff (2.75 full time equivalent) on the Equality function.

The annual cost of these staff is £85,267.

### **Tristel Product**

**Mr T Clarke** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 7590/11-15, whether a copy of the Tristel Product case-note audit of all adverse reactions has been published; and where it can be accessed.

**(AQW 8012/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The audit of case notes of those staff who had reported symptoms was used internally within the Trust. The information is an audit of staff personal health information and is therefore not available for publication.

## Stationery Costs in Replying to Assembly Written Questions

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent on stationery costs in replying to Assembly Written Questions, including the price of the envelopes and paper used, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 8017/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** DHSSPS does not routinely collect this information and it would only be available at disproportionate cost.

## Investigation into the Death of Joe McCloskey

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will order an independent investigation into the death of Fire Fighter, Joe McCloskey, at the Gorteen Hotel, Limavady on 2 November 2003.

**(AQW 8122/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have no plans to commission an independent investigation into the death of firefighter Joe McCloskey. I have given very careful consideration to the three separate investigations already undertaken into the circumstances surrounding Mr McCloskey's death. None of these was able to provide a definitive conclusion and I am not aware of any fresh evidence on which to base a new investigation.

## Speech and Language Therapy

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 7856/11-15, how much, per head, was spent on speech and language therapy in the last 12 months, in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQW 8131/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information is not readily available in the format requested, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the criteria used to determine a referral for stereotactic ablative radiotherapy to another part of the UK.

**(AQW 8153/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Stereotactic ablative radiotherapy is not currently provided in Northern Ireland. Referrals for such treatment would therefore be considered under the process the HSC Board uses for the approval of Individual Funding Requests (IFRs) or Extra Contractual Referrals (ECRs) to providers outside Northern Ireland.

The criteria used to determine Extra contractual referrals are as follows:

- The patient's clinical condition requires specialised care that could only be sustained for a large catchment population and cannot be provided for a small geographic area such as Northern Ireland;
- The patient's clinician wishes to seek a second opinion from a provider outside Northern Ireland because of complexities of the patient's condition or circumstances;
- The treatment is available locally but the patient has some exceptional reason which renders their case different from the vast majority of other patients with the same condition and which therefore justifies a referral for care or treatment outside Northern Ireland.

The decision to recommend a patient for stereotactic radiotherapy in the first instance is a matter for the clinical judgement of the referring consultant. This will be done on the basis of the patient's clinical condition, the best available evidence on the most appropriate treatment and discussions with the patient on his or her treatment options. Omagh Hospital: Mental Health Services

**Mr Doherty** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the mental health services that will be available at the new hospital planned for Omagh.

**(AQO 1275/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In Phase 1 of the Omagh Hospital project it is proposed to provide accommodation in the new Health and Care Centre for a range of community mental health services currently based at Lissan House.

Proposals for Phase 2 currently include a 26-bed acute psychiatric unit, day care facilities, a 7-bed addiction unit and accommodation for a community addiction team. However, the provision of both inpatient acute mental health care and addiction services are currently under regional review by the Health and Social Care Board. A business case, setting out the final proposals for Phase 2, will be required.

### **Ballymena Health and Care Centre**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the new Ballymena Health and Care Centre.

**(AQO 1276/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Detailed proposals for the new health and care centre in Ballymena have been developed. Given the constraints on my capital budget, I have instigated work to consider how best to progress a range of new health and care centres, including Ballymena. This will look at financing options both conventional and private with a view to early delivery of this project with the most cost-effective procurement methodology.

Whilst this review is ongoing, I have given approval for the enabling works for the new Ballymena Health and Care Centre to commence and work is due to start on site shortly.

### **Bamford Review**

**Mr Molloy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the Compton Report and its implications, whether he has any plans to accelerate the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Bamford Report.

**(AQO 1277/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Transforming Your Care's key messages of person-centred care, and a shift from hospital care to more responsive community care, reiterate and reinforce the Bamford priorities for the reform and modernisation of mental health and learning disability services. Progress has already been made through the 2009-11 Bamford Action Plan, but there is much more still to be done.

My Department is developing the 2012-15 Bamford Action Plan within the resources available, both in my Department and the HSC, and across the many other Departments and their arm's length bodies which contribute to the realisation of the Bamford vision.

### **Antrim Area Hospital: Accident and Emergency**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline how the number of people waiting twelve hours, or more, for treatment in Antrim Area Hospital's Accident and Emergency Department, between October 2011 and December 2011, compares with the previous two years.

**(AQO 1278/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am aware of the high levels of activity and delays within the Emergency Department at Antrim Area hospital and indeed the number of patients waiting over 12 hours has been of particular concern.

Between October and December 2011 a total of 810 patients waited more than 12 hours from arrival at the emergency department to be either treated and discharged or admitted - 252 in October, 164 in November and 394 in December. In the same period in 2010 356 patients waited over 12 hours and in 2009 99 patients waited more than 12 hours.

I acknowledge that these figures are high and that there is a pressing need to improve performance. However, fluctuations in the number of emergency department attendances will always occur, and I can assure you that emergency cases will always be dealt with as a priority.

I have acted robustly to ensure that the HSC Board and the Northern Trust work together to put in place a number of immediate measures to improve services.

### **South Tyrone Hospital: Minor Injuries Unit**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the Minor Injuries Unit at South Tyrone Hospital.

**(AQO 1279/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The South Tyrone Hospital Minor Injuries Service is currently operational from 9am-9pm seven days per week. It is provided by Emergency Nurse Practitioners supported by nursing/auxiliary staff. The Minor Injuries Unit has access to diagnostic services between 9am-9pm Monday to Sunday.

The Minor Injuries Unit at South Tyrone Hospital plays an important role in the provision of urgent care in the Dungannon area and during 2010/11 there were over 18,800 attendances at the Unit.

The Southern Health and Social Care Trust is currently consulting on the future service model for minor injury services across the Trust area. This consultation process is due to end on 24 February 2012.

As Minister I want to ensure any proposed changes to the configuration of services focus on safety, sustainability and resilience in clinical terms.

### **Multiple Sclerosis: Newry and Armagh**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the number of people suffering from Multiple Sclerosis in the Newry and Armagh area.

**(AQO 1281/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Unfortunately, the number of people currently diagnosed with MS in the Newry and Armagh area is not known; however I understand there are approximately 900 people living with MS in the Southern Trust area as a whole.

### **Multiple Sclerosis**

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the performance of the Health Service in meeting the health requirements of people with Multiple Sclerosis.

**(AQO 1282/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Within the UK, it is believed NI has the second highest prevalence rate of MS after Scotland. So it is important that we have a health service that is appropriately skilled and understands how best to support people with MS.

In NI, I believe we are providing a high quality service to all members of the population, regardless of their illness or condition. All services accessed by people with MS are provided on the basis of assessed need, and I am proud of the dedication and commitment shown by the HSC workforce in continuing to make a difference within the current resource constrained environment.

Of course there remains work to be done; and I would assure you I will continue to work together with the HSC, the voluntary and community sector, patients and carers, to ensure that people with MS can live full, independent and inclusive lives.

## Diabetes

**Mr McQuillan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to improve services for people with diabetes.

**(AQO 1283/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Report of the Health and Social Care Review “Transforming Your Care” identifies long term conditions, such as diabetes, as a key area for health and social care. I want to ensure that services are commissioned and delivered that will secure optimum health outcomes and well-being for people with diabetes and that these services reflect the principles of the new model of care set out in “Transforming Your Care”.

To this end I have asked officials in my Department to instigate a review of the Report developed in 2003 by the Clinical Resource Efficiency Support Team (CREST)/ Diabetes UK Joint Taskforce which set out a framework for diabetes care in Northern Ireland. This review will consider the provision of existing services and emerging priorities in order to inform the development of a strategic and co-ordinated approach to improving services for people with diabetes.

## Protect Life Strategy

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to update the ‘Protect Life’ suicide strategy.

**(AQO 1284/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** A review of the ‘Protect Life’ strategy has been completed and I will seek Executive clearance within the coming weeks for publication of an updated version of the Strategy.

The “refreshed” strategy will reflect the findings of evaluation of various initiatives and local research on suicide prevention.

It will also take into account latest international evidence of best practice in this field.

An independent overall evaluation of the impact of ‘Protect Life’ will also be completed this year and will inform future suicide and self harm prevention policy in Northern Ireland from 2014 onwards.

## Department of Justice

### Police Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Scheme

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Justice how many appeals were received in relation to the Police Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Scheme; and how many of the appeals were successful.

**(AQW 6919/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice ):** 41 appeals have been received against the decision to refuse a gratuity payment on the basis of eligibility, or against the banding of a payment. Of these, 31 have been successful. In addition, 29 applications have been made to challenge the decision not to accept any applications received following the deadline of 4 February 2011. Since this is not a matter of eligibility but of policy, these cases have been treated separately from the appeals and applicants will be informed shortly.

### Robert Black

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice (i) on how many occasions Robert Black has been transported to, and from, Northern Ireland; (ii) what was the method of transport on each occasion; and (iii) what the total cost has been to date.

**(AQW 7299/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I would refer the Member to the table in the corrected response to AQW 3975/11-15, which details this information.

### **Human Trafficking**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice how many convictions have been secured in Northern Ireland, in each of the last five years for (i) trafficking into the UK for sexual exploitation; (ii) trafficking out of the UK for sexual exploitation; (iii) trafficking within the UK for sexual exploitation; and (iv) paying for sex from someone who has been forced into prostitution.

**(AQW 7337/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Trafficking for sexual exploitation offences may be prosecuted under Section 57(1)(a), 57(1)(b), 58(1) and 59(1) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. Paying for the sexual services of a prostitute subjected to force may be prosecuted under Section 53(a) of the same act.

Data for the calendar years 2007 to 2010 (the last year for which data are available) record one conviction for the offences listed: for trafficking within the UK for sexual exploitation in 2008.

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

### **Prison Service's Strategic Efficiency and Effectiveness Programme**

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister of Justice when the Prison Service's Strategic Efficiency and Effectiveness Programme will be published.

**(AQW 7356/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service's Strategic, Efficiency and Effectiveness (SEE) Programme was launched on 28 June 2011. Since then, the Prison Review Team (PRT) has also published its final report in October 2011.

At present the SEE Programme incorporates approximately 70 separate ongoing workstreams linked to the NIPS change programme, not all of which are directly related to the PRT recommendations.

The SEE Programme, as it sits within the wider PRT reform agenda, is a very complex programme and there is not at this stage any single "SEE Programme" document which captures the programme in its entirety.

NIPS has already shared material with the Justice Committee in January 2012 relating to the key workstreams within the SEE Programme, their key outcomes and milestones, where these are known and how they align with the PRT recommendations. NIPS is also currently developing its Business Plan for the 2012-2013 business period and it is anticipated that plans under the SEE Programme will be integrated into that Business Plan. The Business Plan will be shared with the Justice Committee in due course.

Progress against the reforms planned under the SEE Programme and the Prison Review Team report will be subject to ongoing monitoring by the Ministerial-led Prison Review Oversight Group, which is due to meet for the first time on 15 February. Regular updates will also be provided to the Justice Committee.

### **Representations to the Parole Commissioners in Relation to Marian Price**

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister of Justice what representations his Department has made to the Parole Commissioners in relation to Marian Price.

**(AQW 7357/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** My Department has not made any representations to the Parole Commissioners in relation to Marion McGlinchey (nee Price).

## Revocation of Marian Price's Licence

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister of Justice what representations his Department has received in relation to the revocation of Marian Price's licence by the Secretary of State.

**(AQW 7358/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The detention of a female prisoner in a male establishment has attracted representations from organisations such as British Irish Rights Watch (BIRW), the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and the Celtic League.

In addition, a number of individuals from the UK and abroad, have written to me to express concerns that Mrs McGlinchey's licence has been revoked. Sinn Fein and SDLP MLAs have also contacted me on her behalf. In addition SDLP MLAs also tabled a motion for debate in the Assembly on this issue which was heard on the 30 January.

## Civil Legal Aid

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) current average waiting time from a refusal of a civil legal aid application until a determination of a civil legal aid appeal; and (ii) the waiting time in each of the last four years.

**(AQW 7360/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Legal Services Commission holds information that gives an indication only of waiting times. Waiting time is defined as the time between an application being refused and the earliest decision on appeal.

The table below sets out the average waiting time from a refusal of a civil legal aid application until a determination of civil legal aid appeals over the last four years.

Year	Average waiting time, Application to determination of a civil legal aid appeal
11/12 (to date)	20 weeks
10/11	21 weeks
09/10	20 weeks
08/09	23 weeks
07/08	25 weeks

## Civil Legal Aid

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice what is the average waiting time for a civil legal aid application to be processed; and how this compares to the previous four years.

**(AQW 7361/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The average processing time is defined as the time from the date of registration of an application for civil legal aid to the date a legal aid decision is determined.

Prior to September 2011 the Legal Services Commission registered all applications, whether completed correctly or not. Post September 2011 a pilot project has been initiated to only register correctly completed applications.

The table below sets out the average waiting time for a civil legal aid application to be processed, this year and the previous four years.

Year	Average waiting time for processing a civil legal aid application
11/12 (to date)	3 weeks
10/11	5 weeks
09/10	5 weeks
08/09	3 weeks
07/08	7 weeks

### Legal Services Commission

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice how much has been spent by the Legal Services Commission in legal fees and outlays under civil legal aid in this financial year, to date; and how this amount compares to the previous four financial years.

**(AQW 7362/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Legal Services Commission has supplied the figures in the following table detailing how much has been spent to date this year on civil legal aid and the previous four years.

Financial Year	Expenditure (£m)				
	Legal Advice & Assistance	Assistance By Way of Representation (ABWOR)		Civil	Total
		Other than Children Order	Children Order only		
2011/12 (YTD)	3.6	1.7	8.0	26.0	39.3
2010/11	5.2	1.9	8.0	27.4	42.5
2009/10	3.5	1.8	5.5	26.1	36.9
2008/09	3.6	1.6	5.2	22.1	32.5
2007/08	2.6	1.7	4.0	19.2	27.5

### Civil Legal Aid

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice how much money has been recouped by the Legal Services Commission through the payment of the statutory charge on civil legal aid in this financial year to date; and how this figure compares to the previous four financial years.

**(AQW 7364/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Legal Services Commission has recouped £6,046.77 from April 2011 to end January 2012 from payments received in respect of the Statutory Charge. While precise figures cannot easily be extracted from the Commission's management information and finance systems, officials would estimate that this would compare favourably to the monies recouped in the previous four years.

### Legal Services Commission

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the category of case; (ii) the number of cases paid; and (iii) the total amount of money spent, for each category of bills paid by the Legal

Services Commission, under the Assistance by Way of Representation scheme in this financial year, to date; and how this compares to the previous four financial years.

**(AQW 7367/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Legal Services Commission makes payments to solicitors on submission of reports rather than cases. A solicitor may lodge more than one report throughout the life of the case.

The following table (overleaf) provides a detailed outline of the categories of proceedings covered under Assistance By Way of Representation, the volume of full reports paid for each and additional reports which have been paid up to the end of January 2012.

**TABLE 1 – ABWOR SUMMARY**

Case Type	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Volume	Net Total	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2010-11	2011-12	2011-12	2011-12
An Application for Life Sentence Review hearing before Parole Commission	65	£273,187	38	£208,216	43	£164,080	25	£115,042	14	£58,582
An application for Parole hearing before Parole Commission	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	3	£8,669	0	£0
Appeal under Art 2 of Child Support Appeal Jurisdiction Courts Order (NI) 1993	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	1	£334	0	£0
Application to discharge Order under Children (NI) Order 1995	8	£14,217	7	£11,198	11	£13,109	7	£18,888	9	£6,007
Application to Remove Child from Jurisdiction under Children (NI) Order 1995	4	£2,206	0	£0	0	£0	3	£2,675	2	£1,437
Article 2 of Child Support Appeal Jurisdiction	4	£788	1	£148	1	£776	0	£0	0	£0
Article 44 or 45 of the PACE (NI) 1989	0	£0	0	£0	2	£846	0	£0	0	£0
Article 6 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 1998	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	1	£827	0	£0
Attachment of Earnings Order	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0
Breach of Order	41	£46,852	57	£70,907	54	£45,373	75	£94,833	66	£67,339
Care Order Article 50 under Children (NI) Order 1995	499	£1,091,552	646	£1,377,809	633	£1,200,803	799	£1,739,801	703	£1,506,935
Change of Child's Name Article 13 under Children (NI) Order 1995	1	£442	1	£298	6	£2,891	3	£1,321	3	£1,516
Child Assessment Order Article 62 under Children (NI) Order 1995	0	£0	10	£3,212	3	£1,761	0	£0	2	£5,141

Case Type	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Volume	Net Total	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2010-11	2011-12	2011-12	2011-12
Contact Order Article 8 under Children (NI) Order 1995	1,551	£1,298,998	1,797	£1,819,673	2,079	£2,090,794	2,748	£2,902,428	2,779	£3,158,657
Contact with Child in Care Article 53 under Children (NI) Order 1995	52	£66,210	72	£79,775	54	£37,853	92	£126,955	75	£72,035
Debt Proceedings	1	£159	5	£547	8	£780	5	£1,089	8	£882
Declaration of Parentage	39	£31,885	61	£46,140	104	£77,787	134	£100,566	128	£99,641
Declaration under Article 28 Child Support Order	0	£0	1	£287	1	£302	0	£0	0	£0
Discharge or Variation of Care or Supervision Orders Article 58 CO (NI) 1995	35	£25,226	29	£41,057	31	£22,716	81	£102,123	53	£53,416
Education Supervision Order Article 55 under Children (NI) Order 1995	9	£3,685	13	£15,927	20	£20,991	47	£26,377	23	£17,352
Ejectment	1	£159	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0
Emergency Protection Order Article 63 under Children (NI) Order 1995	26	£26,366	37	£85,666	34	£32,783	60	£84,737	44	£36,570
Ext or Discharge Emergency Protection Order Article 64, Children (NI) Order 1995	0	£0	2	£4,535	9	£4,474	7	£12,840	9	£13,028
Interim Care Order	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0
Interim Care Order Article 57 under Children (NI) Order 1995	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	8	£4,590
Investigation into a Child's circumstances Art 56 under Children (NI) Order 1995	24	£17,124	21	£27,564	21	£19,210	23	£30,860	28	£9,125
Letter before Proceedings	0	£0	0	£0	31	£16,605	189	£106,147	147	£163,849
Non Attendance at School	6	£1,491	4	£752	2	£6,528	6	£4,107	4	£5,354

Case Type	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Volume	Net Total	2008-09	2009-10	2009-10	2010-11	2010-11	2011-12	2011-12	2011-12
Non Molestation Order under The Family Homes & Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998	2,819	£1,535,948	2,954	£1,633,640	3,001	£1,854,646	3,045	£1,950,420	2,766	£1,704,486
Occupation Order under The Family Homes & Domestic Violence (NI) Order 1998	26	£13,877	40	£18,681	65	£34,559	65	£40,427	66	£48,478
Orders for Financial Relief for Children Art 15 under Children (NI) Order 1995	1	£195	8	£4,228	6	£5,802	9	£2,148	7	£4,625
PACE case	23	£8,946	39	£17,814	37	£14,969	18	£7,897	21	£8,813
Parent Responsibility Order Article 7 under Children (NI) Order 1995	39	£24,748	45	£35,645	41	£36,815	41	£47,874	43	£46,199
Pre-Proceedings Meeting	0	£0	0	£0	13	£6,927	74	£39,929	96	£66,670
Proceedings before Prison Board of Visitors	0	£0	0	£0	1	£8,669	0	£0	0	£0
Proceedings for Arrears of Maintenance	14	£3,316	8	£1,713	5	£958	2	£494	1	£206
Proceedings for Arrears of Maintenance	0	£0	3	£1,895	0	£0	1	£562	1	£206
Proceedings for variation of maintenance	23	£4,868	33	£10,346	22	£5,662	20	£3,187	12	£2,294
Proceedings under Articles 44 or 45 of the PACE (Northern Ireland) 1989	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	2	£827	2	£624
Proceedings under Mental Health Tribunal	174	£33,936	123	£24,851	150	£87,159	122	£87,222	147	£110,432
Proceedings under paragraphs 29 or 36 of section 8 of the Terrorism Act 2000	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	9	£5,410	3	£1,075
Prohibited Steps Order Article 8 under Children (NI) Order 1995	51	£39,964	46	£39,024	46	£44,836	51	£45,756	57	£53,620
Recovery of cost of assistance or benefit from a person liable for maintenance	0	£0	2	£1,089	0	£0	1	£0	0	£0

Case Type	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Volume	Net Total	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2010-11	2011-12	2011-12	2011-12
Recovery Order Article 69 under Children (NI) Order 1995	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	1	£207
Representation (Parties to be Joined)	20	£45,140	19	£40,287	10	£13,357	23	£31,017	0	£0
Representation in Art 44 (Parties to be Joined) under Children (NI) Order 1995	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	1	£1,770
Representation in Art 50 (Parties to be Joined) under Children (NI) Order 1995	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	19	£41,241
Representation in Article 52 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995	0	£0	0	£0	1	£308	0	£0	1	£1,012
Residence Order Article 8 under Children (NI) Order 1995	1,029	£883,921	1,102	£1,126,304	1,190	£1,198,742	1,588	£1,748,363	1,664	£2,095,305
Revival Summons	0	£0	4	£217	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0
Revocation/Discharge of an Order	0	£0	2	£2,172	7	£6,008	13	£8,307	5	£6,312
Section 8 of the Terrorism Act 2000	0	£0	9	£3,722	27	£16,559	0	£0	0	£0
Secure Accommodation Article 44 under Children (NI) Order 1995	89	£74,306	95	£74,165	76	£52,542	91	£99,956	82	£100,171
Separation & Maintenance Proceedings	287	£87,843	273	£95,676	233	£86,281	191	£70,320	143	£56,754
Sex Offenders Order	1	£80	0	£0	39	£11,473	18	£4,910	16	£4,597
Specific Issue Order Article 8 under Children (NI) Order 1995	48	£19,159	66	£39,821	78	£53,624	108	£96,549	73	£51,268
Supervision Order Article 50 under Children (NI) Order 1995	25	£33,758	33	£35,592	31	£34,744	53	£81,373	30	£48,666

Case Type	2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11		2011-12	
	Volume	Net Total	2008-09	2009-10	2009-10	2010-11	2010-11	2011-12	2011-12	2011-12
Tariff hearing under the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) Order 2001	0	£0	0	£0	4	£12,967	4	£28,129	2	£10,843
Variation and Discharge of Non Molestation Order	35	£14,117	32	£9,575	60	£18,564	57	£20,989	49	£19,263
Variation and Discharge of Occupation Order	4	£1,726	7	£1,337	4	£1,012	0	£0	3	£631
Variation of Sex Offenders Order	0	£0	0	£0	0	£0	2	£423	2	£432
<b>Total:</b>	<b>7,074</b>	<b>£5,726,399</b>	<b>7,745</b>	<b>£7,011,504</b>	<b>8,294</b>	<b>£7,367,644</b>	<b>9,917</b>	<b>£9,903,109</b>	<b>9,418</b>	<b>£9,767,655</b>

## Legal Aid Mileage and Travel Time Rates

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether lawyers set their own legal aid mileage and travel time rates, or whether there is a fixed rate.

**(AQW 7368/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Lawyers do not set their own rates. Legal aid mileage and travel time rates are either set in legislation or, where no statutory rate has been set, the rates are determined by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission.

## Attempted Escape of Gerard Donnegan

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the circumstances surrounding the attempted escape of Gerard Donnegan from an appointment at Belfast City Hospital, including (i) the number of staff who accompanied him to the appointment; (ii) whether any of the staff sustained any injuries; (iii) the offence for which Mr Donnegan was imprisoned; and (iv) whether he had a record of attempted escape or assault on Prison Service staff prior to this incident.

**(AQW 7377/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** An attempted escape occurred on 22 January 2012 whilst Mr Donegan was under escort by two Night Custody Officers at Craigavon Area Hospital. The circumstances surrounding the attempted escape are currently subject to a full investigation by a senior Governor from Prison Service Headquarters. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the circumstances until the investigation is completed.

Mr Donegan was imprisoned for a Breach of a Probation Order and is remanded in custody on a range of other alleged offences. He has a history of assault and attempted escape.

## Legal Aid Budget

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to list the expenses that lawyers are entitled to claim from the legal aid budget; and how much has been paid out in each category in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7378/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The expenses which lawyers are entitled to claim are travel, mileage and car parking for journeys within Northern Ireland subject to them being deemed reasonable on assessment by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) or by the Taxing Master.

Lawyers can also apply to the NILSC to incur travelling and subsistence for journeys outside Northern Ireland. In such cases the lawyer must satisfy the NILSC that such expenses are necessary and must provide an estimate of the expenses to be incurred. If the NILSC determines that the request to incur the expense is reasonable, the NILSC will assess the estimates provided to ensure value for money.

The table below shows expenses paid from the legal aid fund to solicitors and counsel for travel and mileage in the last three financial years. It is not possible to identify all instances of travel and mileage and other sundry expenses such as car parking without an exercise to examine individual files. Such information could not be obtained without incurring disproportionate costs.

Business Area	Expense	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
ABWOR	Travel Time	£34,045	£38,679	£42,544
	Mileage	£15,088	£18,675	£19,472
Children Order	Travel Time	£234,242	£226,066	£312,924
	Mileage	£114,827	£117,073	£164,488

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Expense</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
LAA	Travel Time	£313,467	£268,110	£411,469
	Mileage	£118,103	£101,048	£154,731
Civil	Travel Time	£72,867	£95,564	£165,953
	Mileage	£54,431	£71,401	£115,513
Criminal	Travel Time	£1,238,706	£1,127,641	£1,192,635
	Mileage	£749,194	£671,281	£718,848
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,944,970</b>	<b>£2,735,538</b>	<b>£3,298,577</b>

### **Lisnevin Juvenile Justice Centre in Millisle**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to outline his plans for the future of Lisnevin Juvenile Justice Centre in Millisle.

**(AQW 7417/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Prison Service is giving consideration to contingency arrangements to deal with the rise in the prison population. No firm decision has yet been taken on the site but it will remain an option for future planning.

An oral briefing on the Estate Strategy is due to be delivered to the Justice Committee on the 29 March.

### **Whiplash Claims**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice what is the average court settlement for a successful whiplash claim.

**(AQW 7419/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Information is not available to answer this question. A claim for a whiplash injury will usually be incorporated within a cause of action of road traffic accident or personal injury and the specific nature of any injury will not form part of the court record.

### **Anti-Social Behaviour Orders**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the effectiveness of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in tackling anti-social behaviour in the long-term.

**(AQW 7426/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** In Northern Ireland anti-social behaviour orders are only one part of graduated response to anti-social behaviour which includes measures such as Neighbourhood Watch schemes, Community Safety Wardens, intergenerational projects, priority youth intervention programmes, warning letters, and acceptable behaviour contracts.

The recent consultation on a new Community Safety Strategy provided an opportunity for local consideration of the current approach to anti-social behaviour orders and obtaining views on their use as well as alternative approaches to addressing anti-social behaviour.

A range of views were received, which were reflected in the consultation response document, but I should stress that there was no consensus of opinion as to the effectiveness of anti-social behaviour orders.

The Criminal Justice Inspectorate Northern Ireland has commenced its inspection of the Criminal Justice System's approach to addressing anti-social behaviour, which includes a follow up to the 2008 report into the operation and effectiveness of anti-social behaviour orders. This process will be completed in the coming months.

I await the outcome of this inspection and will consider any recommendations arising from it when assessing the effectiveness of anti-social behaviour orders in tackling anti-social behaviour.

### **Legal Aid Costs for the Trial of Aidan Grew**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) legal aid costs to date of the trial of Aidan Grew for taking part in an illegal procession; and (ii) estimated final costs, broken down by (a) solicitor; and (b) counsel costs.

**(AQW 7454/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** No legal aid application has been made in respect of Mr Grew's trial for taking part in an illegal procession.

### **Marian Price**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice could Marian Price be accommodated in Hydebank Wood Women's Prison were she to relinquish her republican separated prisoner status.

**(AQW 7462/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The decision to accommodate Marian McGlinchey (née Price) in Maghaberry Prison was as a result of her Category 'A' security status. She is for all intents and purposes a republican separated prisoner. If she were to request a transfer to integrated conditions in Hydebank Wood that would be subject to the outcome of a full risk assessment.

### **Double Yellow Lines Outside Enniskillen Court House**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 6390/11-15, to detail the number of consultation responses received from local traders, broken down by those (i) in favour; and (ii) against the introduction of the yellow lines.

**(AQW 7464/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Following receipt of security advice from the Centre for Protection of the National Infrastructure NICTS took the decision to introduce double yellow lines outside and opposite Enniskillen Courthouse.

While no widespread public consultation process was undertaken, a NICTS official visited ten business premises in East Bridge Street, and issued letters to eight business premises explaining the need to introduce the parking restrictions. Contact was also made with a representative of Enniskillen Presbyterian Church.

No written responses were received to these letters, but in response to concerns raised by elected representatives I asked NICTS officials to meet with those representatives and local business owners.

All those who attended the meeting expressed opposition to the double yellow lines.

Following further consideration of alternative physical security measures a decision was taken to remove the double yellow lines.

### **Sex Offender Treatment Programme**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 6441/11-15, how many of the people convicted, reoffended by committing a (i) similar offence; and (ii) any other offence; and, of these, how many had participated in the Sex Offender Treatment Programme.

**(AQW 7466/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Of the 640 people convicted of sexual offences, seven were re-convicted for similar offences. Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) records indicate that none of the seven prisoners reconvicted of a similar offence completed a Sex Offender Treatment Programme (SOTP) during their original time in custody.

A comprehensive manual analysis of each case would be needed in order to assess how many have been re-convicted of any other offence. This could only be carried out at disproportionate cost to the public purse.

There are a number of potential reasons why an individual may not have participated in an SOTP

First, in order to be eligible to participate in an SOTP, a prisoner must be sentenced and not in denial of their offence. Where possible, NIPS may be able to offer alternative programmes to those who are awaiting trial, which although not specifically designed for such offences, will assist in addressing reoffending, for example the Enhanced Thinking Skills Programme. However, there may also be other constraints for those who are awaiting trial or who have been on remand for a lengthy period of time, such as insufficient time to complete the programme. It should also be noted that some prisoners may be unable to complete the programmes due to learning difficulties.

## **Terrorist Convictions**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the total number of convictions secured for involvement in terrorist activity for each year since 1969, broken down by (i) the nature of the terrorist convictions; (ii) the county of residency of the offender at the time of conviction, with the cities of Belfast and Londonderry accounted for separately; and (iii) the religion of the person convicted.

**(AQW 7485/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Terrorism statistics are a matter for the NIO.

## **Historical Enquiries Team cases**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice (i) for his assessment of the importance of forensic investigations in delivering a successful outcome, in terms of convictions, in Historical Enquiries Team cases; (ii) to detail the total budget allocated to the Historical Enquiries Team for forensic investigations since its inception; and (iii) the total amount spent to date.

**(AQW 7487/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Forensic investigation is very important in delivering a successful outcome in terms of convictions in Historical Enquiry Team (HET) cases. Modern forensic techniques have offered the HET the opportunity to reinvestigate crimes that would not have been amenable to such investigation at the time of their occurrence. These advances include, amongst others, enhanced microscopic ballistics examination, improved instrumental analysis methods and, most prominently, DNA analysis. However, there are many factors other than forensic evidence alone that impact upon the rate of convictions. Although relatively few cases have been brought to judicial proceedings, those cases which have been brought, have, by and large, been as a result of forensic investigation.

The HET forensic budget forms part of the overall budget. However the HET has separate arrangements with Forensic Science Northern Ireland, and since its formation the HET has assigned £3,060,000 for forensic work. The total amount spent to date for forensic work is £1,588,898.

## **Historical Enquiries Team**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice whether the Historical Enquiries Team will be provided with additional funding, should the need arise, to enable it to conclude all cases registered under its remit.

**(AQW 7489/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I view the work of the Historical Enquiries Team as critically important. I believe that it has been resourced sufficiently to complete its task but will consider seriously any request for additional resources, should that prove necessary to enable the Team to conclude all cases within its remit.

## **On-the-Run from Prison**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice how many people convicted of a paramilitary offence since 1969 are currently considered to be 'on-the-run' from prison.

**(AQW 7494/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Records indicate that since 1969, 46 prisoners are 'Unlawfully at Large'. It is not possible to determine in all cases whether or not the offences were linked to organisations connected with the affairs of Northern Ireland.

## **Justice and Security Green Paper**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the implications for open justice and fairness in Northern Ireland arising from the Justice and Security Green Paper.

**(AQW 7515/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Justice and Security Green Paper addresses a range of issues, many of which fall outside my area of responsibility. The main area of interest for Northern Ireland relates to the Coroners' Court and the conduct of certain inquests.

In my response to the consultation exercise, which has been shared with the Justice Committee, I have raised the question of whether the proposals are, in relation to inquests, Article 2 compliant.

Consultation in respect of the Paper ended on 6 January 2012 and the Government is considering responses before reaching decisions in relation to implementation of the proposals. Open justice and fairness principles would, of course, have to be carefully considered when deciding on any changes arising as a result of the Green Paper.

I would expect to be consulted on any implications for matters within my Ministerial remit before final decisions are taken.

## **Mobile Phone Applications**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by his Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7541/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** No mobile phone applications have been developed by the Department or its agencies and arm's length bodies for use by members of the public.

There are no mobile phone applications currently being developed.

## **Sex Offenders Treatment Programme: Prisoner Participation**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 6441/11-15, in relation to the seven prisoners who accepted responsibility but refused to participate in the Sex Offenders Treatment Programme, (i) whether this was taken into consideration before their release; and (ii) what additional measures were imposed on them to ensure public safety.

**(AQW 7568/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Of the seven prisoners who accepted responsibility but refused to participate in the Sex Offenders Treatment Programme (SOTP) two remain in custody. One is serving a Determinate Custodial Sentence (DCS) and the release date is determined by the court conviction. The other prisoner is serving an Extended Custodial Sentence (ECS), which is a discretionary sentence and the decision to release will be taken by the Parole Commissioners following their assessment of the level of risk the individual presents and whether the risk can be safely managed in the community. For ECSs release will be automatic when the custody expiry date is reached.

Determinate Custodial Sentences, Indeterminate Custodial Sentences and Extended Custodial Sentences include a period on licence, and while it would not be appropriate to discuss individual cases, various additional measures can be imposed in addition to standard conditions to ensure public protection.

Examples of some of these additional measures include:

- Residency requirement in approved accommodation
- Curfew and/or Electronic Tagging
- Active participation in named programme
- Total ban on Alcohol and/or misuse any Drug
- Alcohol and/or Drug testing
- Bar on owning or using internet or any device with a camera
- Not to contact or engage with victim(s) or families

Adherence to licence conditions will be monitored by PBNi and/or PSNI, and any failure to comply may lead to the prisoner being recalled to custody.

### **Lawyers' Legal Aid Payments Dispute**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether the dispute over lawyers' Legal Aid payments in 2011 contributed to the delay in cases being processed through the justice system; and what percentage of cases this affected.

**(AQW 7569/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Last year's dispute over legal aid payments had a potential impact on delay in the Crown Court. The extent to which any delay can be attributed to the legal aid dispute is not, however, quantifiable as a range of factors can contribute to delay.

Court statistics indicate that in the period January to March 2011 86% of defendants were arraigned in the Crown Court within six weeks of committal and 78% started their trial within a further twelve weeks. The equivalent performance statistics for the period April to August 2011, when the legal aid dispute was ongoing, were 77% and 63% respectively.

### **Prisoner Assessment Unit Staff**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 6083/11-15, (i) on what date the two members of staff were charged under the NIPS Code of Conduct; (ii) what was their rank; (iii) what was the charge; and (iv) how were they disciplined.

**(AQW 7570/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Two Governors were charged under the NIPS Code of Conduct and Discipline on 28 October 2011. They were charged with contributing to the reputational damage of the Northern Ireland Prison Service under Section 3 of the Code of Conduct and Discipline. Both Governors were found guilty and given a written warning.

### **Prison Service Museum**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice what progress has been made on the future of the Prison Service Museum.

**(AQW 7581/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Prison Service continues to assess a number of options for the future of artefacts currently being held at the Prison Service College. These include use of the former Maze site and the new joint training facility at Desertcreat.

## **Contraband at Roe House, Maghaberry**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Justice on how many occasions prisoners at Roe House, Maghaberry Prison have been found with contraband since the devolution of justice.

**(AQW 7592/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Since the devolution of justice on 12 April 2010, prisoners at Roe House Maghaberry Prison have been found with contraband on 41 occasions.

26 relate to Roe 1 and 2 and 15 relate to Roe 3 & 4.

## **Prison Officers: Contraband**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Justice on how many occasions prison officers at Maghaberry Prison have been found with contraband since the devolution of justice.

**(AQW 7593/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Since the devolution of justice on 12 April 2010 no prison officers at Maghaberry Prison have been found with contraband.

## **Human Trafficking**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister of Justice (i) what discussions he has had in 2012 with (a) the UK Government; and (b) the Government of the Republic of Ireland in relation to human trafficking; and (ii) what assistance is available for people who are rescued from traffickers.

**(AQW 7601/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:**

- (i)(a) I have had no meetings to date in 2012 but have accepted an invitation to the Home Office led Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Human Trafficking in April.
- (i)(b) I hosted a trilateral meeting with Alan Shatter, Justice Minister of the Republic of Ireland and Kenny MacAskill, Cabinet Secretary for Justice in Scotland, on 1 February. Human trafficking was one of a range of topics discussed.
- (ii) The service for adult victims of human trafficking includes safe and appropriate accommodation in Northern Ireland, help with day-to-day living and travel costs, information in a language victims can understand, help to access health care and other services around support, immigration, advice, counselling etc. The support service is provided by Women's Aid and Migrant Helpline.

DHSSPS are in the lead for child victims and have detailed guidance for Trusts in place. All child victims of trafficking are entitled to the full range of services afforded to 'looked after children' under the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

## **Trevor Hamilton**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 7057/11-15, whether Trevor Hamilton was released from custody under the same circumstances prior to the introduction of the Criminal Justice Order (NI) 2008.

**(AQW 7655/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Hamilton was sentenced to a Custody Probation Order on 19 September 2001 for offences of rape, indecent assault of a female, assault with intent to commit buggery and threats to kill. He was released from prison on 18 August 2003, having served 3 ½ years of his determinate sentence, and on release was subject to supervision by the Probation Board. As this case predated changes to the laws on sentencing provided for by the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008, which made available indeterminate and extended custodial sentences where certain offenders present a significant risk of serious harm, his release date was not subject to consideration of risk by the Parole Commissioners.

## **Sexual Offender Treatment Programme**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many people, who are currently serving a custodial sentence for rape or sexual assault and are classed as being in 'complete denial', have refused to participate in a Sexual Offender Treatment Programme; and whether their refusal to co-operate with a programme will be considered by the Parole Commissioners.

**(AQW 7657/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There are 26 people currently serving a custodial sentence for rape or sexual offence who are classed as being in 'complete denial'. They have not completed a Sexual Offender Treatment Programme.

The Northern Ireland Prison Service is required to provide the Parole Commissioners with all current and relevant information on each case they consider. However, the manner in which this information is used to inform decisions about release dates and/or licence conditions is a matter entirely for the Parole Commissioners.

## **Prisoners: Christmas Leave**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how many of the prisoners who were granted Christmas leave in 2011 were serving a custodial sentence of five years or more.

**(AQW 7659/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** A total of 52 prisoners who were serving custodial sentences of five years or more were granted leave over the Christmas period.

Of these 52 prisoners, 35 were released under the Christmas Home Leave Scheme, while the remaining 17 were granted leave as part of their participation on a pre-release programme.

## **Review of the Provision of Prison Accommodation**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice when a decision will be made on the Review of the Provision of Prison Accommodation.

**(AQW 7668/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** NIPS is in the process of finalising a refreshed Prison Estate Strategy, which will take into account the recommendations of the Prison Review Team's final report, published in October 2011, as well as other factors, such as the forecast growth in prisoner population, and the demands that this places on the current accommodation.

The Strategy is due to be delivered to the Minister by 15 March with an oral briefing to the Justice Committee to follow on the 29 March. It is envisaged that the Strategy will go through a process of public consultation before being finalised later this year.

## **Policing and Community Safety Partnerships**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice what is the projected total cost of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in 2012/13.

**(AQW 7671/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The projected total cost of the new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) in 2012/13 is approximately £5,828,000. This figure includes programme funding, staffing, administration and expenses.

## **Policing and Community Safety Partnerships**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice how much is projected to be spent on allowances for members of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships in 2012/13.

**(AQW 7672/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There will be no allowances along the lines of those provided to members of the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) made available to PCSP members. However, I can confirm that a 'meeting expense payment' of £60 for up to 20 meetings per year will be made available to members in order to cover any costs associated with their attendance at, and membership of, a PCSP.

### **Policing and Community Safety Partnerships**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice whether all of the costs associated with allowances for members of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships will be met by the Policing Board; and if not, what proportion of the costs will be met by local Councils.

**(AQW 7674/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As stated above, there will be no allowances for PCSP members. The costs of the 'meeting expense payment' described above will be met by both the Department and the Policing Board, as they have joint oversight of the new partnerships.

Councils will have the discretion to make additional payments to members over and above the funding provided by the Department and the Policing Board for 20 meetings per year; however they are not obliged to do so.

### **Departmental Revenue Expenditure**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice whether his departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to his capital budget allocation.

**(AQW 7681/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Although in practice spending areas in the Department of Justice with the largest revenue budgets will have large capital budgets, there is not necessarily a direct correlation between revenue expenditure and capital budget allocations. Revenue and capital budgets are each allocated in line with Ministerial priorities.

### **National Offender Management Service**

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice whether his Department makes any indirect financial contribution to the National Offender Management Service, and, if so, to provide details.

**(AQW 7683/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not make any indirect financial contribution to the National Offender Management Service. It does however, in line with normal practice, reimburse the costs of any staff seconded to NIPS.

### **Courthouses**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, over the last five years, how much has been spent on refurbishing or upgrading each of the five courthouses that are now being considered for closure.

**(AQW 7684/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The table below provides the expenditure on refurbishment or upgrade, including security and statutory compliance requirements, in each of the five Hearing Centres being considered for closure over the past five years. The figures for the current year (2011/12) are for the ten months from April 2011 to January 2012 and have not yet been audited.

	<b>2007/08</b> £	<b>2008/09</b> £	<b>2009/10</b> £	<b>2010/11</b> £	<b>2011/12</b> <b>(10 months)</b> £	<b>Total</b> £
Bangor	Nil	11,824.59	84,434.23	28,125.89	10,323.64	134,708.35

	<b>2007/08</b> £	<b>2008/09</b> £	<b>2009/10</b> £	<b>2010/11</b> £	<b>2011/12</b> (10 months) £	<b>Total</b> £
Limavady	Nil	4,063.62	85,601.96	49,615.25	6,911.43	146,192.26
Magherafelt	Nil	17,301.94	86,247.96	10,018.27	31,598.18	145,166.35
Larne	Nil	36,008.23	88,675.31	27,357.47	10,305.06	162,346.07
Strabane	13,395	18,110.23	2,536.42	32,166.10	101,074.32	167,282.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,395</b>	<b>87,308.61</b>	<b>347,495.88</b>	<b>147,282.98</b>	<b>160,212.63</b>	<b>755,695.10</b>

This work was initiated prior to the Hearing Centre consultation and was necessary to protect the health and safety of all users of court accommodation, including members of the public, NICTS staff, judiciary, legal profession, PSNI and NIPS.

### Department's Equality Unit

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) number; and (ii) annual cost of staff employed in his Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7716/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Department of Justice does not have an Equality Unit. Statutory and other equality responsibilities and duties are co-ordinated for the DOJ by the Central Management Unit. The DOJ's Personnel and Office Services Division leads on diversity for the Department. Equality issues will also feature in day to day HR operational matters. Equality and diversity issues are therefore delivered by a number of staff alongside other duties.

### Unlawful Animal Fighting

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice how many convictions have been secured for unlawful animal fighting or participating in unlawful animal fighting in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 7730/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The table below gives the number of convictions for the calendar years 2004 to 2008 (the latest year for which figures are currently available).

During this period, animal fighting offences could be prosecuted under Sections 19(1)(a), 19(1)(c), 19(1)(f), 19(2) of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 and Article 19(2)(a) of the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983.

Number of convictions for animal fighting offences, 2004-2008

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of convictions</b>
2004	0
2005	1
2006	0
2007	1
2008	0

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Data for 2004-2006 should not be directly compared with data from 2007 to 2008 as the data sets are sourced from different systems.

### **Killings of Six Men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland**

**Ms Ritchie** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the PSNI regarding the progress of the inquiry into the killings of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994. **(AQW 7736/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The ongoing investigation into the killing of six men at O'Toole's Bar, Loughinisland on 18 June 1994 is an operational matter for the PSNI and as such it would be inappropriate for me to become involved.

I have however informed the Chief Constable of the member's ongoing interest in this case.

### **Police Stations: Irish Language**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Justice how the PSNI plans to make stations and services more welcoming for Irish language speakers.

**(AQW 7762/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The management of police stations is an operational 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.

### **Civil Service Posts in the Department**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Justice how many Civil Service posts existed in his Department at the beginning of 2012 at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, broken down by local Council area.

**(AQW 7766/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** A breakdown of Civil Service posts within the Department of Justice and its Agencies, by local Council area, at 1 January 2012 is as below:

<b>Council</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of posts (Full Time Equivalent)</b>
Antrim	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Executive Officer/Grade C	5.5
	Administrative Officer	6.26
Ards	Grade 7/Principal	1
	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	2
	Executive Officer/Grade C	8.88
	Administrative Officer	17.06
	Administrative Assistant	2
Armagh	Staff Officer/Grade B2	0.95
	Executive Officer/Grade C	2.17
	Administrative Officer	3.7

<b>Council</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of posts (Full Time Equivalent)</b>
Ballymena	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	1
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	2
	Executive Officer/Grade C	4.9
	Administrative Officer	2
	Administrative Assistant	9.63
Banbridge	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Administrative Officer	1
	Administrative Assistant	1
Belfast	Grade 6	7
	Grade 7/Principal	61.7
	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	125.44
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	187.68
	Executive Officer/Grade C	310.35
	Administrative Officer	422.08
	Administrative Assistant	67.49
Carrickfergus	Grade 6	1
	Grade 7/Principal	3
	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	5
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	4.9
	Executive Officer/Grade C	11.33
	Administrative Officer	23.63
	Administrative Assistant	0.8
Coleraine	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Executive Officer/Grade C	2.8
	Administrative Officer	5.34
Craigavon	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	1
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Executive Officer/Grade C	6.8
	Administrative Officer	11

<b>Council</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of posts (Full Time Equivalent)</b>
Derry	Grade 7/Principal	1
	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	1
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	4
	Executive Officer/Grade C	9.65
	Administrative Officer	24
	Administrative Assistant	1.1
Down	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Executive Officer/Grade C	4.91
	Administrative Officer	5.41
Dungannon and South Tyrone	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Executive Officer/Grade C	5
	Administrative Officer	10.6
Fermanagh	Executive Officer/Grade C	1
	Administrative Officer	3.28
Limavady	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	1
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	2
	Executive Officer/Grade C	8
	Administrative Officer	22.7
	Administrative Assistant	5
Lisburn	Grade 7/Principal	1
	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	3.9
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	9
	Executive Officer/Grade C	21.52
	Administrative Officer	45.41
	Administrative Assistant	12.04
Newry and Mourne	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	1
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	2
	Executive Officer/Grade C	7.3
	Administrative Officer	10.54
Newtownabbey	Administrative Officer	0.78

<b>Council</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number of posts (Full Time Equivalent)</b>
North Down	Staff Officer/Grade B2	1
	Executive Officer/Grade C	0.88
	Administrative Officer	5.99
	Administrative Assistant	2
Omagh	Deputy Principal/Grade B1	1
	Staff Officer/Grade B2	2
	Executive Officer/Grade C	6.8
	Administrative Officer	10.58

The department is in the final stages of a grading review of all Grade C / EO posts to establish if they are equivalent to EO1 or EO2 grade. This exercise is due to be completed by the end of March 2012; until then we cannot provide a split between EO2 and EO1 grades.

### **Courthouse Closures**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, in light of the proposed courthouse closures, what consideration has been given to the potential increase in arrest warrants that will have to be issued, and the associated costs including police resources, if defendants do not arrive in time for court hearings.  
**(AQW 7774/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** It is not anticipated that the proposed closure of any of the courthouses which currently operate as Hearing Centres will result in an increase in the issuing of arrest warrants. The issue of an arrest warrant is a judicial decision based on the individual circumstances of each case.

### **Prison Officer Exit Scheme**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Justice whether the tax implications for the prison officers who are availing of the Prison Officer Exit Scheme will fall in the 2011-12 or the 2012-13 tax year.  
**(AQW 7783/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Prison officers will be treated according to tax rules laid down by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). If individuals leave NIPS during the 2011/12 financial year they will be taxed within that year.

### **Wildlife Liaison Officers**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice how many Wildlife Liaison Officers are currently employed by the PSNI.  
**(AQW 7797/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The deployment of officers is an operational 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.

### **Redevelopment of Magilligan Prison**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Justice what plans his Department has for the phased redevelopment of Magilligan Prison.  
**(AQW 7826/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** An Outline Business Case has been produced which considers the options for the potential development of Magilligan Prison. Consideration of the business case has been delayed pending the completion of a refreshed Prison Estate Strategy. It is planned that the Strategy will be presented to the Justice Committee at the end of March 2012.

### **Cross-Departmental Strategic Framework to Tackle Serious Organised Crime**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice if there are any plans to develop a cross-departmental strategic framework to tackle serious organised crime.

**(AQW 7867/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Organised Crime Strategy for 2012 to 2014 was published on 2 February 2012 ([www.octf.gov.uk](http://www.octf.gov.uk)). This document sets the strategic direction for the Organised Crime Task Force which is a multi-agency partnership involving relevant Northern Ireland Departments, law enforcement agencies, the Policing Board, the legal community, the business community and others.

### **Driving Without Insurance**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, given that the fine imposed for driving without insurance is minimal compared to the cost of insurance, whether he intends to increase the fine so that it is comparable to the cost of insurance, instead of the standard basic fine with penalty points.

**(AQW 7874/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Whilst motor car insurance levels can be high, driving without insurance can already attract a fine of up to £5000, 6 months imprisonment or both. Whilst I have no immediate plans to increase the penalties further I will keep the matter under review.

### **Mileage Claims from Lawyers**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 7070/11-15, AQW 6318/11-15 and AQW 6260/11-15, given that the travel time rate costs for lawyers grossed higher than the mileage costs (i) whether this will impact on the Legal Aid budget of lawyers who will have to travel greater distances if the proposed court closures proceed; and (ii) whether there is a set travel time rate for lawyers.

**(AQW 7877/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** For the reasons stated in my recent answer to AQW7070/11-15 I do not anticipate any significant impact on the overall legal aid budget allocation for travel and mileage.

Legal aid mileage and travel time rates are primarily set in legislation. Where no statutory rate exists, the rates are set by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission.

### **Proposed Redundancies in the Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs on the proposed redundancies in the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

**(AQW 7907/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Officials in the Northern Ireland Prison Service have been in discussions with HM Revenue and Customs for a number of months through a range of channels. These discussions have been in relation to which payments are taxable and subject to National Insurance Contributions, how staff will be taxed, the timing of applications to reclaim any overpaid tax, and the responsibility of each individual in declaring their taxable income.

## Forensic Science Northern Ireland

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether working on dissident republican criminal activity evidence takes precedence over all other cases at Forensic Science Northern Ireland (FSNI); and for his assessment of having a dedicated department at FSNI to deal specifically with this type of crime.

**(AQW 7921/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The PSNI engages with Forensic Science Northern Ireland (FSNI) to prioritise cases for examination in line with ongoing investigations. As part of the investigation process by FSNI, it is often necessary to deploy a range of different forensic specialisms from across the Agency. It would therefore not be practical to have a separate section devoted to investigating cases related to one particular area of criminal activity.

## Prison Officers: Redundancy

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether he is aware that prison officers who wish to avail of the redundancy options may not be aware of the tax implications of choosing option B; and (ii) what tax advice his Department is providing to officers in relation to this matter.

**(AQW 7959/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Civil Service Pensions in the Department of Finance and Personnel provided information about the taxation arrangements in respect of the different elements making up the Compensation Lump Sum Payment in Option B. This information was set out in personal illustrations which were issued to all individuals who expressed an interest in the Exit Package.

The Cabinet Office has confirmed that the information provided is in line with the information they provided in respect of the equivalent compensation scheme in the Home Civil Service in Great Britain.

The closing date to submit a formal application for the Exit Package is Friday 17 February. To date we have received 453 formal applications. No-one has chosen option B. To date officials have not received any queries regarding the implications of choosing Option B. However should individuals have questions in relation to this issue it would be appropriate for them to contact Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs for advice.

## Stationery Costs in Replying to Assembly Written Questions

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice how much his Department has spent on stationery costs in replying to Assembly Written Questions, including the price of the envelopes and paper used, in (i) 2010; and (ii) 2011.

**(AQW 8048/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** My department does not keep a record of the proportion of the stationery budget that is spent on replying to Assembly Written Questions.

## Prison Officers: Redundancy

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether he is aware of the deadline of 17 February 2012 for prison officers who wish to avail of a redundancy package; and (ii) what tax advice his Department is providing to officers in advance of this date.

**(AQW 8050/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I am aware of the deadline of 17 February for prison officers to make an application for the Exit Package. Eligible staff were provided with an illustration of their early retirement financial package on 20 January 2012 and given four weeks to make their decision.

The Department does not provide tax advice. It is the responsibility of individuals to ensure that they pay the correct tax to HM Revenue and Customs.

## **Carjacking: Belfast**

**Mr Newton** asked the Minister of Justice how many car-jacking incidents have occurred in the Belfast area since the beginning of 2012.

**(AQO 1291/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Chief Constable has advised me that there have been 18 incidents of car-jacking in the Belfast area since 1 January 2012. I am sure that Members will join me to condemn these incidents and to encourage motorists to implement the personal security advice that has been given by the Police to help prevent this type of crime.

I would also encourage anyone who has information on the perpetrators of these crimes to inform the PSNI or the Crime Stoppers Charity, which have offered £1,000 reward.

I am also aware that the PSNI has recently issued an information note to all Councillors and MLAs in Greater Belfast informing them of progress made in tackling this issue.

This matter is an operational issue for the Chief Constable. I would suggest that any specific questions on operational matters should be directed to him.

## **Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme**

**Mr Byrne** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has any plans to review the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme.

**(AQO 1294/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I have no current plans to review the Northern Ireland Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. However, Members may be aware that the Ministry of Justice published proposals recently for changes to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Schemes that apply in England, Wales and Scotland.

The Northern Ireland Scheme broadly mirrors those schemes and my Department will examine the Ministry of Justice proposals to assess their relevance for Northern Ireland, particularly in terms of practical support for victims. Consideration will also be given to the recommendations from the Inquiry by the Justice Committee into the services available to victims and witnesses of crime.

## **Office of the Police Ombudsman: Interim Chief Executive**

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the legislative provisions under which the outgoing Police Ombudsman appointed an Interim Chief Executive to the Office of the Police Ombudsman.

**(AQO 1296/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Responsibility for the appointment of a Chief Executive, whether in a permanent, interim or acting capacity, rests with the Police Ombudsman as set out in paragraph 3 of Schedule 3 to the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998.

## **Rural Crime**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Justice what action he is taking to address the growing problem of rural crime.

**(AQO 1297/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Building safer communities is a priority issue for my Department. Rural communities face unique issues around crime and anti-social behaviour, such as livestock and machinery theft, and isolation, alongside those issues faced by urban areas.

I recently met with the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development to discuss the issue of rural crime, and my Department is represented on DARD's Rural White Paper Project Board to ensure that issues around rural crime are reflected in the Rural White Paper.

The forthcoming Community Safety Strategy will support efforts to make rural communities safer through preventing and reducing rural crime. At a local level Community Safety Partnerships deliver initiatives in rural areas across Northern Ireland that contribute to the reduction of crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

These include local Neighbourhood Watch and Rural Watch schemes, and crime prevention advice to rural groups.

Many Community Safety Partnerships have held successful trailer marking schemes tailored to the particular needs of the rural community, with over twenty events held in the past six months and further events planned throughout the year.

There is often a cross-border element to rural crime, and the PSNI is working in partnership with An Garda Síochána under the Cross Border Strategy to combat rural crime along the border.

The new Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, will have a key role in engaging and empowering individuals and communities to find solutions to locally identified concerns. Organisations representing the rural community will have the opportunity to engage with their local Policing and Community Safety Partnership, ensuring that their voice is heard.

### **Prisons: Full-body Searches**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Justice if he will publish the findings of the study into Recommendation 8 of the Review of the Northern Ireland Prison Service, relating to the practice of full-body searching of prisoners entering and leaving prison.

**(AQO 1298/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I do not propose to publish the report findings. The report contains security and commercially sensitive material and could not be published without extensive redaction which would make it meaningless.

## Department for Regional Development

### **Contracts for New Buses**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the names and addresses of the companies that were awarded contracts for new buses in each of the last five years; and for a breakdown of the value of each contract.

**(AQW 7307/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** Since 2007/08 the following contracts have been awarded by Translink:

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Name and Address of Company awarded contract</b>	<b>Value of Contract</b>
2007/08	NI Trucks, 3 Mallusk Road, Newtownabbey and NU Track Ltd, Steeple Industrial Estate, Antrim	£1.181m
2007/08	Volvo	£12.4m
2007/08	Volvo	£5.9m
2007/08	Volvo	£13.1m
2007/08	Volvo	£7.34m
2007/08	Scania	£6.21m

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Name and Address of Company awarded contract</b>	<b>Value of Contract</b>
2007/08	Volvo	£6.23m
2007/08	Volvo	£3.54m
2009/10	Scania	£6.62m
2009/10	Volvo	£7.7m
2010/11	Scania	£4.0m
2011/12	Volvo	£2.534m
2011/12	Volvo	£4.455m
2011/12	Scania	£7.805m

Volvo and Scania Suppliers' address details are as follows:

Volvo Bus Limited	Delaware Drive
Wedgnock Lane	Tongwell
Warwick	Milton Keynes
CV34 5YA	MK15 8HB

The vehicles were supplied and commissioned through local dealers in Northern Ireland. Under subcontracting arrangements, Wrightbus has produced bodies for the Translink vehicles, as part of their arrangements with both Scania and Volvo, for a substantial number of bus replacement projects.

### **Parking Tickets**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many parking tickets were issued in (i) Ballymena; (ii) Ballymoney; and (iii) Ballycastle in December 2011.

**(AQW 7369/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that details of the number of Penalty Charge Notices issued in Ballymena, Ballymoney and Ballycastle during December 2011 are shown in the table below:-

#### **PENALTY CHARGE NOTICES ISSUED DURING DECEMBER 2011**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Number</b>
Ballymena	744
Ballymoney	90
Ballycastle	9

### **Bus Shelters at the Harbour Road and Marine Road in Carnlough Village**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Regional Development why a decision has not yet been made on the request for bus shelters at the Harbour Road and Marine Road in Carnlough village.

**(AQW 7379/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that the current contract with Adshel for the provision and maintenance of bus shelters in Northern Ireland has delivered over 1,350 new bus shelters since 2001, at no cost to my Department.

Whilst the current contract does not expire until 2015, it does not make provision for any new shelters after 2010 and this will remain the case until the contract terminates in 2015. To ensure the future

provision of bus shelters, my Department will establish new contractual arrangements which are expected to be in place for 2015.

However, I understand that a number of existing bus shelters in the Larne area have been identified, by Translink, as no longer being used by the public and that there may be scope to re-site these shelters into other locations in the borough where requests have been made. This option is at present being discussed with Adshel.

I should also explain that local Councils can provide bus shelters, should they wish to do so.

### **Rathlin Ferry: SMS Alert Service**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department has any plans to include the Rathlin Ferry in the new free SMS Alert Service, so that passengers can receive service updates.  
**(AQW 7392/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** An SMS Alert Service was introduced on the Rathlin Island Ferry Service in July 2008. This is a service provided by the operator, Rathlin Island Ferry Limited.

### **Private Car Parks**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister for Regional Development how private car parks are regulated in general, and particularly in relation to making parking charges for, and imposing penalties on, motorists who use them.

**(AQW 7422/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department has no authority or responsibility in relation to the regulation of car parks on private land.

I understand that the Department of Justice is looking at the future regulation of the private security industry in Northern Ireland, including issues arising from parking enforcement on private land.

### **Community Based Transport Schemes**

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much funding his Department will provide to community based transport schemes during the current mandate; and how much of that funding is earmarked for (i) Newry and Mourne Community Transport; and (ii) Down Community Transport.

**(AQW 7477/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Within the budget period up to 31 March 2015 the annual allocation to the Rural Transport Fund, from which funding is provided to rural community transport partnerships is £3.75 million. This figure is subject to review annually but currently this is in part allocated to Translink to provide rural stage carriage services which are deemed socially necessary. The bulk of the funding, however, is paid to the partnerships to provide services in their operating areas.

Newry and Mourne Community Transport is now part of a voluntary working agreement with two other partnerships Armagh Rural Transport and Down/Armagh Rural Transport. The combined amount of grant covering these three partnerships for 2011/12 is currently estimated at £0.4 million. Based on the grant allocation for 2010/11, Newry and Mourne Community Transport receives about 26% of this combined grant

Based upon the Business plan submitted by Down Community Transport for the financial year 2011/2012, my Department has to date awarded funding to this organisation of approximately £0.4 million.

Allocations for the next three years will not be determined until Business plans from the partnerships to cover that period are received and agreed.

## Road Schemes Planned for Monkstown and Jordanstown

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road schemes planned for (i) Monkstown; and (ii) Jordanstown over the next twelve months.

**(AQW 7479/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Information on completed and proposed schemes for the current financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

[http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils](http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils)

With regard to proposed schemes for the next financial year, Roads Service is currently finalising details of its proposed works programmes for 2012/13. The Spring Council Reports, which are to be presented to local Councils during April and May of this year, will contain details of the agreed work programmes. These reports will also be accessible from the above website after they have been presented to local Councils.

## Road Schemes Planned for Larne

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road schemes planned for Larne over the next twelve months.

**(AQW 7480/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Information on completed and proposed schemes for the current financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

[http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils](http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils)

With regard to proposed schemes for the next financial year, Roads Service is currently finalising details of its proposed works programmes for 2012/13. The Spring Council Reports, which are to be presented to local Councils during April and May of this year, will contain details of the agreed work programmes. These reports will also be accessible from the above website after they have been presented to local Councils.

## Road Schemes Planned for Carrickfergus

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road schemes planned for Carrickfergus over the next twelve months.

**(AQW 7482/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Information on completed and proposed schemes for the current financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

[http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils](http://www.drndi.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils)

With regard to proposed schemes for the next financial year, Roads Service is currently finalising details of its proposed works programmes for 2012/13. The Spring Council Reports, which are to be presented to local Councils during April and May of this year, will contain details of the agreed work programmes. These reports will also be accessible from the above website after they have been presented to local Councils.

In addition you will be aware of the recent announcement by the Finance Minister which will allow me to bring forward a balanced programme of improvements to our strategic road network. I am pleased to advise you that this programme includes the long-awaited A2 project to widen 2.4 km of the existing

single carriageway between Jordanstown and Seapark. A procurement competition will be initiated as soon as possible which should see work commencing early in 2013.

### **Waste Water Treatment Works at Garrison, Co Fermanagh**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on plans to upgrade the Waste Water Treatment Works at Garrison, Co Fermanagh to Tertiary Level Status.

**(AQW 7508/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the Garrison Wastewater Treatment Works is compliant with consent standards set by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and there are no current plans to upgrade the Works.

Proposals to upgrade a wastewater treatment works are subject to a prioritisation process which is carried out in conjunction with the NIEA; and to the availability of funding. The ongoing prioritisation exercise for NIW's next programme of capital projects for the three year period up to 2015 has not identified this Works as a high enough priority for upgrade.

### **Caddy Road in Randalstown**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Regional Development when the Caddy Road in Randalstown was last resurfaced; and for his assessment of the current road surface.

**(AQW 7510/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no records to show when the Caddy Road was last resurfaced. However, the stretch between Ahoghill Road and Tamlogh Road was surface dressed in 2002 and the stretch between Tamlogh Road and Whitesides Road was surface dressed in 2011.

Roads Service officials carried out a recent inspection of the Caddy Road and found it to be in a reasonable condition. Some small localised areas of weakness in the road surface were identified and these will have appropriate remedial work undertaken, when their condition warrants intervention.

There are no plans at present, to resurface the Caddy Road.

### **Knock Airport, Co.Mayo**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) for his assessment of the importance of Knock Airport, Co.Mayo, for improving connectivity for people in border areas with the rest of the world; (ii) whether he intends to have any discussion with his counterpart in the Irish Republic about maximising the potential of the airport for people in border areas; and (iii) what consideration he has given to creating a bus route from Enniskillen to Knock Airport.

**(AQW 7573/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** People living in border areas have access to an open market for air services provided by airports both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Ireland West Knock Airport is privately owned and competes for business in this all island market.

I have no plans to discuss this commercial role with the Irish Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

There is also an open market for the operation of cross-border bus services to meet passenger demands. Bus Eireann already operates a limited bus service connecting Enniskillen with Ireland West Knock Airport via Sligo. It is open to other operators to apply for an international licence to offer alternative services, where a passenger demand can be identified.

## Site of the Former Grosvenor Barracks, Enniskillen

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to upgrade the sewage works to allow for additional demand as a result of the extra properties being added to the site of the former Grosvenor barracks, Enniskillen.

**(AQW 7577/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it has no current plans to upgrade the Enniskillen Wastewater Treatment Works. The Works was upgraded in 2009 and has adequate spare capacity to deal with any additional demand resulting from development on the site of the former Grosvenor Barracks, Enniskillen.

## Bus Routes between Derry and Dublin

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of whether there are sufficient bus routes between Derry and Dublin, given the Executive's commitment to increase economic development and tourism in the North-West region.

**(AQW 7591/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** International bus services between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are provided within an open market and I am aware that a number of operators, including Translink, offer bus connections to meet passenger demand for travel between Londonderry and Dublin.

Translink has assured me that the timetables of the services provided jointly by Ulsterbus and Bus Éireann on the route are kept under review to take account of seasonal variations in patronage and to ensure economic viability. The summer timetable for 2012 is currently under development.

## Use of Smartpasses on Cross-Border Routes

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the rules around the use of smartpasses on cross-border routes; and to explain the rationale behind these rules.

**(AQW 7626/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** On cross-border journeys with participating bus and rail carriers, my Department provides the following concessions:

- Holders of Senior SmartPasses (aged 65+), Registered Blind and War Disablement Passes travel for free for the entire journey;
- Holders of a 60+ SmartPass travel free as far as the final fare stage within Northern Ireland and pay full fare for that part of the journey through the Republic of Ireland;
- Holders of a Half-fare SmartPass receive a half-fare concession to the final fare stage within Northern Ireland and pay full fare for the remainder of the journey.

These provisions are consistent with the rules of the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares Scheme.

Under the All Ireland Free Travel Scheme, holders of Senior SmartPasses (aged 65+) are also eligible for free travel wholly within the Republic of Ireland. With the exception of arrangements under the All Ireland Free Travel Scheme, policy regarding entitlement to concessions on cross-border journeys made by holders of Irish Free Travel Passes or on parts of journeys within the Republic of Ireland made by Northern Ireland pass holders is a matter for the Irish Government.

## Bus Éireann: Reduced Ticket Prices

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he has any plans to raise the anomaly with the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport in Dublin, that passengers using Bus Éireann services can book their tickets online at a reduced price on all routes, but appear to be excluded if they get on or off at a destination north of the border.

**(AQW 7628/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** International bus services between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are provided within an open market and fare discounts on those services are commercial matters for the operators of those services. I have no plans to raise this issue with the Irish Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport.

### **Mobile Phone Applications**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) any mobile phone applications that have been designed by his Department, and its arm's length bodies, for use by members of the public; and (ii) any that are currently being developed.

**(AQW 7631/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Department's Roads Service is presently piloting a cashless payment scheme for parking charges using mobile phone technology. The scheme is currently operating in Belfast, Londonderry, Newry, Lisburn and Omagh.

Translink has developed an application called mlink that enables passengers to purchase and download rail tickets to their internet-enabled mobile phones.

There are no other such systems currently being developed.

### **Road Schemes Planned for Ballymoney, Ballycastle and Ballymena**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road schemes planned for (i) Ballymoney; (ii) Ballycastle; and (iii) Ballymena in the next twelve months.

**(AQW 7642/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Information on completed and proposed roads schemes for the current financial year can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following web address:

[http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/freedom\\_of\\_information/customer\\_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils](http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/freedom_of_information/customer_information/cinformationtype-results.htm?signpost=Customer+information&informationType=Roads+Service+reports+to+councils)

With regard to proposed schemes for the next financial year, Roads Service is currently finalising details of its proposed works programmes for 2012/13. The Spring Council Reports, which are to be presented to local Councils during April and May of this year, will contain details of the agreed work programmes. These reports will also be accessible from the above website after they have been presented to local Councils.

### **Road Schemes Planned for Villages in North Antrim**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road schemes planned for villages in North Antrim in the next twelve months

**(AQW 7643/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 7642/11-15.

### **A7 Upgrade**

**Mr Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the plans to upgrade the A7 near Doran's Rock outside Saintfield.

**(AQW 7644/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that while a preliminary design for a proposed on-line improvement scheme for the A7 has been developed, progress continues to depend on the availability of resources.

The limited funding available to my Department for capital improvement schemes has been fully committed to a programme of major improvement schemes on the strategic road network.

The timing of future road improvements will be dependent upon funding levels that materialise from the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-21, which is currently published for consultation.

I am currently unable to indicate when this scheme will be implemented.

### **Pedestrian Safety Railings at Windmill Street, Ballynahinch**

**Mr Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an assessment of the need to install pedestrian safety railings at Windmill Street, Ballynahinch.

**(AQW 7645/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I am aware of two accidents, one of which was fatal, that have occurred in Windmill Street, Ballynahinch during 2011 and I would like to express my deepest sympathy to the families affected.

Following further investigations, my Department's Roads Service discovered that both of these accidents took place only 35 metres from the nearby pedestrian crossing facility at the High Street junction.

Roads Service has advised that although guard rails do prevent pedestrians crossing the road at inappropriate locations, they often reduce the amount of available space on a footway and can also prevent delivery vehicles gaining access to shops.

Whilst I fully understand the concerns of local people when two similar accidents occur at the same location within a short period of time, Roads Service has fully investigated both accidents and not identified any comparable hazard. Therefore, it is not proposing to erect guard rails at this location on Windmill Street at this time but will continue to keep the situation under review.

### **NI Water's Proposed Upgrade of the System around Dermott Green, Comber**

**Mr Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the timescale and the budget for NI Water's proposed upgrade of the system around Dermott Green, Comber.

**(AQW 7646/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that it is planned to upgrade the sewerage system around Dermott Green as part of the Copeland Road, Comber project. The work, which is estimated to cost in the region of £200,000, is programmed to start onsite in May 2012 with an expected completion date of October 2012.

### **Procurement of Road Traffic Signs**

**Mr Givan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to provide details and the consequences of the legal challenge to his Department's procurement of road traffic signs which has impacted on the supply of road traffic signs, such as 30mph signs.

**(AQW 7660/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that it engaged in a public procurement competition for the award of 21 contracts for the Supply and Delivery of Permanent and Temporary Road Traffic Signs and Sign Posts in May 2010. This competition resulted in 'letters of intention to award' being issued on 21 July 2010 to three successful tenderers.

However, one of the successful tenderers commenced legal proceedings challenging the tender process and preventing the award of any of the contracts. This resulted in Roads Service being unable to procure any road traffic signs.

Following a lengthy court case dealing with the challenge, a judgement was issued on 4 February 2011, which ruled that three of the 21 contracts could not be awarded. After taking legal opinion, Roads Service proceeded to award 15 of the remaining 18 contracts on 21 March 2011. Roads Service

is currently engaged with the Central Procurement Directorate of the Department of Finance and Personnel in taking forward a further procurement competition for the remaining six contracts.

At present, Roads Service is able to procure standard speed limit signs, including 30mph signs. However, in some instances, speed limit signs are included within a more complex sign arrangement, for example, gateway signs to towns and villages. Roads Service is currently examining the options available for procurement of this type of sign.

## 2020 Cycle Targets

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the 2020 cycle targets, for distance cycled in kilometres per person per year, compared to the other regions of the UK and Ireland. **(AQW 7664/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The draft Active Travel Strategy, which is currently out to public consultation, proposes that one of our key objectives should be to 'increase the average distance cycled to be in line with our UK counterparts by 2020'.

The most recent NI Travel Survey (2008 – 2010) has found that the average distance cycled per person per year in Northern Ireland is 31km. This is less than half the distance cycled in Great Britain which was found to be 68km per person per year in 2010 (National Travel Survey for GB 2010). Comparable figures for the Republic of Ireland are not available due to differing survey methodology.

The objective for 2020 in terms of distance cycled per person per year is to at least double the current distance cycled.

## Railway Stations on the Belfast to Bangor Line

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any capital works planned for railway stations on the Belfast to Bangor line in the next three years. **(AQW 7675/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Translink advise that the following capital works are planned for railway stations on the Belfast to Bangor line in the next three years:

Projects	2012/13 £000s	2013/14 £000s	2014/15 £000s
<b>Bangor Integrated Station</b>			
Refurbishment of Public Toilets	40	0	0
Improvements to Rear Path and Fencing	30	0	0
Installation of Barriers	10	0	0

Translink revises capital plans each year taking account of updated budgets.

## Departmental Revenue Expenditure

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his departmental revenue expenditure varies proportionately to his capital budget allocation. **(AQW 7682/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My departmental revenue expenditure does not vary proportionally to the Department's capital budget allocation.

## Unadopted Roads

**Mr Doherty** asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the unadopted roads in the (i) Strabane; and (ii) Omagh District Council areas; and which of these roads have an outstanding road bond.

**(AQW 7745/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service advises that there are 57 unadopted roads in the Strabane District Council area, 48 of which have bonds in place and 60 unadopted roads in the Omagh District Council area, 51 of which have bonds in place.

The table below lists all the unadopted roads in each District Council area:

Council Area	Development Address	Bond in Place
Strabane	Breenvale	Yes
Strabane	Glenmore Drive	No
Strabane	Industrial Estate	No
Strabane	Park Road	No
Strabane	Melmount Mews	Yes
Strabane	Curlyhill Road	No
Strabane	Foyle Vale	Yes
Strabane	Whinn View	Yes
Strabane	Mount Carmel Heights	Yes
Strabane	Elmwood Green	Yes
Strabane	Ingleside	Yes
Strabane	Ferndale	Yes
Strabane	Dergvale	Yes
Strabane	Grieve Park	Yes
Strabane	Melvin Court	Yes
Strabane	Victoria Road	Yes
Strabane	Glebe Park	Yes
Strabane	Barnhill Court	Yes
Strabane	Berryhill Road	Yes
Strabane	Oldcastle Road	Yes
Strabane	Donaboe Road	Yes
Strabane	Barley Hill View	Yes
Strabane	Oak Burn	Yes
Strabane	Corrickmore Avenue	No
Strabane	Grangewood Manor	Yes
Strabane	Lismore Park	Yes
Strabane	Castletown Court	Yes

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Development Address</b>	<b>Bond in Place</b>
Strabane	Drumquin Road	No
Strabane	Urney Court	Yes
Strabane	Meadowhill	Yes
Strabane	Dublin Street	Yes
Strabane	Ashleigh Court	Yes
Strabane	Evisch Grove	No
Strabane	Abercorn Cottages	Yes
Strabane	Burnside Path	Yes
Strabane	Glenview	Yes
Strabane	Bellspark Road	No
Strabane	Garag Hill	Yes
Strabane	Sandville Court	Yes
Strabane	Hawthorn Grove	Yes
Strabane	The Hollow	Yes
Strabane	Branch Road	No
Strabane	Bradley Way	Yes
Strabane	Woodend Road	Yes
Strabane	Garvan Court	Yes
Strabane	Melmount Road	Yes
Strabane	Barnhill Road/Railway Street	Yes
Strabane	Brook Manor	Yes
Strabane	Main Street	Yes
Strabane	The Paddocks	Yes
Strabane	Glen Eden	Yes
Strabane	Linen Green	Yes
Strabane	Bridge End Park	Yes
Strabane	Whiterock Park	Yes
Strabane	Springwell Manor	Yes
Strabane	Castle Avenue	Yes
Strabane	Bessie Bell Court	Yes
Total	57	48
Omagh	Drumnaforbe Close	Yes
Omagh	Dergmoney View	Yes
Omagh	Gortin Road	Yes

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Development Address</b>	<b>Bond in Place</b>
Omagh	Circular Road	Yes
Omagh	Glenard Gardens	Yes
Omagh	Gleann Na Locha	Yes
Omagh	Churchdale Meadows	Yes
Omagh	Sheskinshule View	Yes
Omagh	Lisnagort Grove	Yes
Omagh	Killens Wood	Yes
Omagh	Killynure Court	Yes
Omagh	Farmhill Meadows	Yes
Omagh	Gortdale	Yes
Omagh	Drumnaforbe Heights	Yes
Omagh	The Orchard	Yes
Omagh	Drumman Glen	Yes
Omagh	Knockcarra	Yes
Omagh	Retreat Heights	Yes
Omagh	Castle Grove	Yes
Omagh	Mullaghmena Avenue	Yes
Omagh	Birchgrove	Yes
Omagh	Shanmullagh Drive	Yes
Omagh	Loughview Gardens	Yes
Omagh	Mullaghmena Meadows	Yes
Omagh	Drumragh Int College	Yes
Omagh	Ballybrack Road	Yes
Omagh	Hawthorn Grove	Yes
Omagh	Lambrooke Grove	Yes
Omagh	Craigavon Road	No
Omagh	The Croft	Yes
Omagh	Altamuskin Road	Yes
Omagh	Coolnagard Hollow	Yes
Omagh	Killybrack Heights	Yes
Omagh	Carraig Bheag	Yes
Omagh	Killybracken Glen	Yes
Omagh	Carnalea Road	Yes
Omagh	Loughmuck Meadows	Yes

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Development Address</b>	<b>Bond in Place</b>
Omagh	Creevanmore Meadows	Yes
Omagh	Hunters Crescent	No
Omagh	Millbrook	Yes
Omagh	River Walkway	No
Omagh	Moylagh Meadows	Yes
Omagh	Burrells Glen	Yes
Omagh	Drumnakilly Road	Yes
Omagh	Townview Avenue	No
Omagh	Creevenmore Close	No
Omagh	Shergrim Grove	Yes
Omagh	Main Street	Yes
Omagh	Rathronan	Yes
Omagh	Tattykeel	No
Omagh	Highfield Close	Yes
Omagh	Dooish Road	No
Omagh	The Hawthorns	Yes
Omagh	Camcosy Road	No
Omagh	Glenside	Yes
Omagh	Camowen Mews	Yes
Omagh	Woodside Avenue	No
Omagh	Altamuskin Road	Yes
Omagh	Glenhill Cottages	Yes
Omagh	Hazelhill	Yes
Total	60	51

### **Removal of Snow and Ice from Town Centre Footpaths**

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 5867/11-15, to detail which councils have now signed up to an agreement with Roads Service on the removal of snow and ice from town centre footpaths during periods of severe winter weather.

**(AQW 7862/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has confirmed that fourteen Councils have signed an agreement for the removal of ice and snow from town centre footways during severe winter weather. The Council's involved are listed below:

#### **COUNCILS THAT HAVE SIGNED AN AGREEMENT**

Armagh	Cookstown	Lisburn
Ballymena	Fermanagh	Newtownabbey

Belfast City	Larne	North Down
Carrickfergus	Limavady	Derry
Craigavon	Moyle	

In addition, working arrangements are in place with a number of other Councils and work is ongoing with others to confirm their position.

### Department's Equality Unit

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the current (i) number; and (ii) annual cost of staff employed in his Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7893/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** There are currently 1.75 full time equivalent (FTE) staff employed in my Department's Equality Unit. Details of the grades of staff and salary ranges are contained in the table below.

GRADE	FTE	Salary Range
DP	0.75	£34,163 - £38,893
SO	1	£27,115 - £30,520

### Street Lighting

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there is any new technology available to make street lighting less susceptible to metal thefts; and whether his Department has carried out a cost-benefit analysis to assess whether this represents value for money

**(AQW 7937/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that in order to make street lighting installations less susceptible to metal thefts, it has started to make use of special 'smart' grease to mark cables. In addition, Roads Service has also investigated the possibility of remotely monitored alarm systems and CCTV monitoring, and has changed the way it lays new street lighting cables, so that they are more difficult to remove.

However, while the use of 'smart' grease and revised cable laying arrangements were cost effective, the alarm and CCTV options were found to be prohibitively expensive for widespread use. Consideration is being given to selective use of appropriate theft counter-measures at vulnerable locations.

### Misuse of Disabled Car Parking Bays

**Mr Irwin** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) his position on the misuse of disabled car parking spaces; (ii) the penalties for such an offence committed in parking areas maintained by his Department, on or off-street; and (iii) any plans he has to raise awareness of the difficulties this misuse creates for people with a disability.

**(AQW 7956/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Decriminalised parking enforcement is provided by my Department's Roads Service through its contract with NSL Services Group. Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) are issued by NSL's Traffic Attendants where vehicles are detected as parked in a disabled person's parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge.

In the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2011, 7,542 PCNs were issued to vehicles parked in disabled person's parking spaces without clearly displaying a valid badge.

The amount charged for a PCN is £60, however a 50% discount is offered if it is paid within 14 days.

It is considered that public awareness in this area will continue to develop as enforcement continues to be provided and PCNs are issued where contraventions are detected.

### **Roads: Salt Reserves**

**Mr G Kelly** asked the Minister for Regional Development what is the annual cost of storing salt reserves in preparation for adverse winter weather.

**(AQO 1306/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I am pleased that weather conditions during the winter period to date have been considerably more favourable than those we experienced during the last two winters. However, there can be no grounds for complacency and my Department's Roads Service remains alert to the possibility of the onset of more adverse weather conditions and is ready to respond quickly to ensure our main routes remain open for all road users. I would also strongly encourage motorists to continue to exercise caution and drive with due care and attention and be mindful of the prevailing road conditions.

I can inform the Member that normal salt reserves are stored strategically, across Northern Ireland, in salt barns and external stores located within Roads Service depots. There are no direct costs associated with this storage other than annual maintenance of depot premises and associated security costs.

Following the severe weather conditions experienced over the last number of winters, a secondary resilience stock has been organised with storage sourced through the current salt provider. The cost of this storage has been determined through the contractual process and, as such, I am unable to disclose the details for reasons of commercial sensitivity, and in the interests of securing best value for money in future tenders.

### **Traffic Calming: Hillsborough**

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister for Regional Development how he will ensure that resident safety remains a priority when traffic-calming measures are introduced into the Culcavy and Halftown Roads in Hillsborough.

**(AQO 1304/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have had several meetings with the Member regarding local traffic issues in Hillsborough and I would assure her that road safety is, and will continue to be, a top priority for my Department's Roads Service.

I would advise that Roads Service has already provided gateway signage on Culcavy Road at the M1 bridge and on Halftown Road at Coronation Gardens. It also has plans for the next financial year, to enhance the existing gateway signage at both locations in order to highlight a reduction in the speed limit by refreshing the red carriageway markings and laying additional white speed limit roundel road markings adjacent to the existing upright speed limit signs.

Halftown Road is more rural in nature than Culcavy Road and is subject to a 40mph speed limit in the vicinity of Coronation Gardens. This speed limit has been recently reviewed and is considered to be appropriate to the surroundings. Road humps are not considered to be appropriate for roads with a speed limit in excess of 30mph as they are designed to encourage traffic speed in the region of 20mph.

The use of measures such as road humps, are not considered appropriate for Culcavy Road. However, if elected representatives are able to demonstrate that there is widespread support from local residents for a traffic calming scheme on Culcavy Road within the existing 30mph speed limit, to include the provision of vertical deflection measures such as road humps, Roads Service would consider this when prioritising schemes for possible inclusion within further works programmes.

### **DRD: Spending Priorities**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the withdrawal of money for the A5 project by the Irish Government, whether he will take the opportunity to review his spending priorities

and increase the proportion spent on maintaining our existing roads and improving our public transport infrastructure.

**(AQO 1305/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I am currently awaiting confirmation of the funding that will be available to my Department, following the deliberations surrounding the A5 and A8 projects. When the funding is confirmed, I intend to review the spending priorities across the whole of my Department, including that available to the roads maintenance programme and public transport infrastructure.

The strategy for the development of the transport system in Northern Ireland is framed in the Regional Development Strategy and developed in the Regional Transportation Strategy. As you are aware both documents are currently under review.

I am a keen supporter of sustainable transport but I am also aware of the importance of our roads infrastructure. A programme of infrastructure renewal is required for our future competitiveness and as a catalyst for future economic growth. It is a significant and important source of employment for the Northern Ireland economy.

Over the past few years, my Department's Roads Service has made considerable efforts to resurface and strengthen the main traffic routes across Northern Ireland, particularly the strategic road network linking the more heavily populated urban areas.

It has been independently established that some £116 million per annum (2011 prices) is needed to maintain the structural integrity of the entire network at good practice resurfacing frequencies. The structural maintenance budget for 2011/12 is currently some £110m, leaving a shortfall of just £6m.

I will continue to make strong bids for additional structural maintenance funds and Roads Service will continue to make the best use of resources available to it, to develop and maintain the road network.

### **Hillhall Road, Lisburn**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the reasons for the major road works taking place on the Hillhall Road, Lisburn.

**(AQO 1307/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that a minor improvement scheme currently ongoing on the Hillhall Road is now substantially complete. This scheme, which will enhance forward visibility for motorists through a series of bends, was identified through a Route Improvement Study.

The scheme will improve road safety by removing a number of roadside hazards, including trees and headwalls and also provide road widening in the vicinity of the bends to improve the consistency of road widths along the length of the Hillhall Road.

### **E-WAY Rapid Transit Scheme**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an overview of the responses to the public consultation on the emerging preferred route options for the Belfast EWAY Rapid Transit Scheme.

**(AQO 1308/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Public Consultation on the route options for Belfast Rapid Transit, which I launched on 12 October 2011, ended on 6 January 2012. We received some 200 responses to the consultation and officials are currently collating these responses and considering the issues raised. A Consultation Report will then be produced which will provide a factual account of the consultation process and provide my Department's responses to the main issues. This Consultation Report will be issued to all respondents.

Whilst it would not be appropriate for me to comment on individual responses whilst the analysis of all the issues raised is ongoing, I can say that, in relation to East Belfast, a large number of respondents expressed their support for the emerging preferred route option and for not using the Comber Greenway for Belfast Rapid Transit.

## **Railways: Belfast to Dublin**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the upgrade of the Belfast to Dublin railway line.

**(AQO 1309/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Northern Ireland Railways and Irish Rail have developed a long term vision for the service for a significantly enhanced service and journey time but it is now recognised that this requires updating in light of budgetary and other constraints. In relation to a long term objective to upgrade the Belfast to Dublin railway line Translink has been asked to undertake a Feasibility Study to establish options and potential costs. Translink will seek the comments of Irish Rail. This is an issue I will have to discuss in more detail with Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in the Republic of Ireland. Upon receipt of a Project Initiation Document, my officials will also consider what EU funding opportunities are available to fund the completion of a Feasibility Study for this project.

In the short term measures can be taken forward to improve service reliability and even journey times by ensuring that projects undertaken move us towards that long term objective.

For example my Department provided capital grant of just over £1.5 million for a project to fund the overhaul and reconfiguration of four generator vans from Irish Rail and to use these to power the heat and light on the Enterprise service. Subject to final approval from the Irish Railway Safety Commission, this project is scheduled for completion in March 2012 and will result in improved fuel efficiency and reliability of Enterprise locomotives.

The Department are also currently considering an appraisal from Translink proposing to relocate the signalling and telecoms lines along the track from Lisburn to Lurgan to ducts. One of the objectives of this project is to facilitate the planned track renewal works between Knockmore and Lurgan.

Translink is also looking at options to develop a new Transport Hub at Great Victoria Street. One potential benefit, if that project is taken forward, is a reduced journey time between Belfast and Dublin by rail.

The vast majority of line speed restrictions which were introduced on the line in 2011 have now been cleared. In addition, Translink continue to upgrade rail stations along the route including the recently announced major refurbishment for Portadown station.

Discussions about a move to an hourly service have taken place but the revenue support to facilitate this remains an obstacle.

## **Public Transport: Irish Open**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline his plans to ensure that NI Railways and Translink can cope with increased demand during the Irish Open golf tournament at Royal Portrush this year.

**(AQO 1310/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I refer to the answer given to AQW 6512/11-15 which outlines the preparations being made by the Translink bus and rail companies.

I should point out that, normally, the onus rests with the organisers of events to ensure that any special transport requirements of their participants and visitors can be met. It is open to the organisers to arrange private hire with bus and coach operators, including Translink, and to private operators to offer excursions or special services, subject to them holding the appropriate licences.

## **A5: Reallocation of Funding**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the projects on which he now plans to spend the £450 million which had been allocated to the A5 project.

**(AQO 1311/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I welcome today's announcement by the Finance Minister which will allow me to bring forward a range of measures which will greatly benefit both the construction industry and the wider economy.

Following a series of meetings with Executive colleagues and work by Departmental officials, I have reviewed spending priorities across my Department and I am pleased that sufficient funding has been allocated to allow me to bring forward a balanced programme of improvements to our strategic road network over the next four years, that will make a significant difference to the people of Northern Ireland.

The revised Budget that has been agreed will enable me to bring forward two significant elements of the A5 dual carriageway project, between Londonderry and Strabane, and between Omagh and Ballygawley, along with the A8 Belfast to Larne project and a long-awaited scheme to dual the A2 Shore Road at Greenisland.

### **Road Service: Slippage Moneys**

**Mr McLaughlin** asked the Minister for Regional Development what level of slippage monies is available to Roads Service annually, and how this is distributed near the end of the financial year.

**(AQO 1312/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** It is assumed that the term 'slippage monies' used by the Member refers to additional funding that my Department's Roads Service has secured through in-year monitoring rounds. In-year monitoring provides Roads Service with the opportunity to bid for additional funds for pressures which are inescapable or high priority, however the success of such bids is not guaranteed.

The Member will be aware that the Executive determines the priorities when issuing any additional funding to meet Departmental pressures based on a number of factors. While the amount of funds surrendered by other Departments is a significant factor in the monitoring round, provision of additional funding is not guaranteed, or predictable. Therefore, it is not possible to indicate if or how much funding, which could be termed 'slippage monies', is available to Roads Service on an annual basis.

In 2011/12 Roads Service received £20 million of additional funding through the monitoring round process and £20.2 million during 2010/11.

These additional monies were primarily sought to address pressures on the maintenance budget and were allocated on the basis of need using a range of weighted indicators tailored to each maintenance activity, such as resurfacing, structural drainage, patching, gully emptying and grass cutting etc. Roads Service Divisions use these indicators when apportioning funding to ensure, as far as possible, an equitable distribution of funds across the whole of Northern Ireland.

### **Roads: Maintenance**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the adequacy of the road maintenance budget in meeting demand for road repairs.

**(AQO 1313/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service has advised that some £116.5 million per annum (2011 prices) is needed to maintain the structural integrity of the entire network at good practice resurfacing frequencies. Roads Service officials further advise that the structural maintenance budget for 2011/12 is currently estimated at £110m leaving a shortfall of £6 million.

If more funding was available, more maintenance work would be carried out, and I can assure the Member that Roads Service will continue to make strong bids for additional structural maintenance funds. In the meantime, Roads Service will continue to make the best use of resources available to it to develop and maintain the road network.

## Department for Social Development

### People Registered as Homeless

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people are currently registered as homeless by the Housing Executive, broken down by constituency.

**(AQW 6251/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the table below gives details of the number of applicants currently accepted as homeless (Full Duty applicant) by District Council area.

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>Accepted as homeless (Full Duty applicant)</b>
Antrim Borough Council	388
Ards Borough Council	455
Armagh City and District Council	122
Ballymena Borough Council	498
Ballymoney Borough Council	102
Banbridge District Council	145
Belfast City Council	2766
Carrickfergus Borough Council	260
Castlereagh Borough Council	434
Coleraine Borough Council	347
Cookstown District Council	85
Craigavon Borough Council	307
Derry City Council	932
Down District Council	299
Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council	322
Fermanagh District Council	159
Larne Borough Council	128
Limavady Borough Council	130
Lisburn City Council	862
Magherafelt District Council	121
Moyle District Council	100
Newry & Mourne District Council	324
Newtownabbey Borough Council	556
North Down Borough Council	425
Omagh District Council	92
Strabane District Council	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>10443</b>

The Information provided is an Official Statistic. The Production and dissemination of all such Statistics is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

## Department for Work and Pensions

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister for Social Development what discussions he, or his senior officials, have had with the Department for Work and Pensions between October and December 2011, in relation to the implementation of welfare reform.

**(AQW 7274/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Since becoming Minister for Social Development I have met with Department for Work and Pensions Ministers on a number of occasions to discuss welfare reform, including meeting Maria Miller, the Department for Work and Pensions Minister for Disabled People on 16 November 2011, where I was accompanied by the Acting Head of the Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division. Discussions included reform of the child maintenance system in relation to the implementation of welfare reform.

During the period October to December 2011 senior officials from my Department have also been involved in extensive discussions with officials from the Department for Work and Pensions including Robert Deveraux, Department for Work and Pensions Permanent Secretary and Noel Shanahan, Child Maintenance and Enforcement Division Commissioner.

Senior officials have also participated in a number of meetings/forums including:

- Universal Credit Stakeholder Board
- Universal Credit Implementation and Delivery Steering Group
- Universal Credit Service Design Steering Group
- Universal Credit Implementation Assurance Group
- Universal Credit Pension Age Project Checkpoint
- Universal Credit Migration
- Incapacity Benefit Reassessment Project Board
- Incapacity Benefit Reassessment Delivery Board
- Personal Independence Payment Project Board
- Personal Independence Payment Central Authority/Delivery Implementation Steering Group
- Personal Independence Payment Senior Management Team
- Personal Independence Payment Implementation Programme
- Personal Independence Payment User Centred Design presentation Strand 1 Findings
- Employment and Support Allowance Legislative Changes Project Steering Committee
- Fraud and Error Programme Board
- Fraud and Error Programme – Overpayments/Decision/Calculations & Appeals/Sanctions
- Fraud and Error Programme – Sanctions & Civil Penalty Update
- Fraud and Error Programme – Debt Update
- Fraud and Error Programme – Single Fraud Investigation Service Update
- Fraud and Error Programme – Credit Reference Data Update/User Group
- Working Age to Pension Age Operational Readiness Review Out of Cycle Programme Board
- Social Fund Policy

## Housing Associations

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what powers he has to ensure that housing associations maintain properties in a suitable condition and to a standard suitable for tenants.

**(AQW 7317/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Association Guide sets out the Department's guidelines for Registered Housing Associations requiring robust policy and procedural standards across all Associations and equitable quality service provision for social housing tenants.

As stated in the Housing Association Guide, the Tenancy Agreement between the Association and its tenant determines the obligations of the landlord and the tenant. Both parties to the agreement are required to fulfil their responsibilities with regards to the maintenance of the dwelling.

The DSD Inspection Team carry out periodical inspections on registered Housing Association's to ensure compliance with procedures laid down in the Housing Association Guide. Failure to comply with the Guide will result in the suspension of payment of grant from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (Development Programme Group) provided by DSD.

Where the inspection reveals continuous failure, failure of a serious nature or if it considers there has been misconduct or mismanagement, the Department may invoke the powers under the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 to initiate an Inquiry.

## Warm Homes Scheme

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many households in the North Down area have benefited from the Warm Homes scheme to date.

**(AQW 7394/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Since the introduction of the new Warm Homes Scheme in July 2009 until 31 January 2012, 841 households in the North Down Council Area have received assistance from the Warm Homes Scheme.

## Derelict Housing in the Millisle Area

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what action he is taking to redevelop derelict housing in the Millisle area.

**(AQW 7398/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is committed to bringing back into use all social housing that can be meaningfully restored and has a programme of work already underway. However, the Housing Executive has no long term voids in the Millisle area, but has three vacant properties. Two are currently undergoing repair and have been offered to applicants and the third is awaiting adaptation works for a person with a disability.

## Boiler Replacement Scheme

**Mr Lynch** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have applied for the Boiler Replacement Scheme to date, and the percentage who were eligible.

**(AQW 7400/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** At 31 January 2012 a total of 3,263 applications were received for the pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme. 1,369 (42%) applicants met the qualifying criteria and 1,275 applicants have received formal approval to commence replacement works. The pilot scheme will close on 31 March and I would urge any applicants waiting for work to be carried out in their home to make contact with their preferred installer urgently to ensure the work is completed as soon as possible.

## State Pensions

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development what measures he is taking to address the 25 percent of women who will not be entitled to a full state pension when they reach the age of retirement. **(AQW 7443/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** In the past, an incomplete recognition of caring responsibilities, especially when tied to the different labour market experiences of men and women, made women's State Pension outcomes worse than men's.

The Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 introduced reforms of the State Pension aimed at narrowing the gender gap and assisting carers, frequently women, to build pension entitlement. Changes included a reduction in the number of qualifying years required for a full basic State Pension to thirty, the introduction of a single contribution condition and the carer's credit. The reforms are expected to increase the proportion of women entitled to a full basic State Pension to over 90 per cent by 2025.

The Pensions (No. 2) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 introduced provision for the automatic enrolment of eligible employees into workplace pension schemes, beginning from 2012. This will enable low to moderate earners, who might not previously have had the opportunity, to build up a private pension income to supplement that received from the State. Employee contributions will be matched by employer contributions and a contribution from the State in the form of tax relief.

Assistance is available for those with low incomes through State Pension Credit, which remains a key part of the overall strategy for tackling pensioner poverty. An integral part of the Social Security Agency's benefit uptake programme is ensuring that as many people as possible claim their State Pension Credit entitlement.

These measures are to the benefit of the women in question.

## Sale of Land in the North Down Area

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the sale of land in the North Down area by the Housing Executive. **(AQW 7446/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has confirmed that they have no land for sale on the open market at present within their Bangor District office area.

## Bangor Town Centre Economic Regeneration

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development when his Department intends to organise a conference on Bangor town centre economic regeneration. **(AQW 7473/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is fully committed to working in partnership with all interested parties to take forward the economic regeneration of all our towns and cities including Bangor. I am currently considering Mary Portas's report on How to Revive the High Street to see what the implications are for Northern Ireland. I intend to invite Mary Portas to Northern Ireland to meet with representatives of business, local government and Ministerial colleagues to develop a NI Executive action plan to boost the performance of Northern Ireland's high streets.

## Social Security Benefits

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been paid out, in total, in social security benefits in each of the last five years. **(AQW 7476/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Expenditure on social security benefits paid by the Department for Social Development for the last five years is detailed in the table below.

YEAR	Amount (£000s)
2006-07	3,938,282
2007-08	4,099,185
2008-09	4,366,618
2009-10	4,722,659
2010-11	4,888,404

## State Pensions

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) how much was paid out in state pensions in each of the last four years; and how much of this was subsidised each year by the UK Government.

**(AQW 7530/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Expenditure on state pensions for each of the last four years is detailed in the table below. This includes the amounts for State Pension contributory benefit, State Pension non-contributory benefit, and State Pension Credit.

YEAR	State Pension (contributory) (£000s)	State Pension (non-contributory) (£000s)	State Pension Credit (£000s)	Total (£000s)
2007-08	1,374,732	1,854	314,710	1,691,296
2008-09	1,464,468	1,900	329,035	1,795,403
2009-10	1,591,547	2,068	351,396	1,945,011
2010-11	1,665,265	2,325	351,996	2,019,586

There is no breakdown of the direct subsidisations. However there are two sources of funding for pension benefits:

- State Pension non-contributory benefit, and State Pension Credit are funded from the NI Consolidated Fund. The NI Consolidated Fund consists of money from HM Treasury, local revenues and other non tax receipts.
- State Pension contributory expenditure is funded from the NI National Insurance Fund which is financed from NI National Insurance Contributions. The NI National Insurance Fund funds the range of contributory benefits payable by the Department, and similar arrangements also exist in Great Britain whereby GB contributory benefits are payable from the GB National Insurance Fund. Transfers between the two funds take place; however it is not possible to break down the transfers to one specific category of contributory benefit.

## Employment and Support Allowance Claims

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) how many people have had their initial Employment and Support Allowance claim disallowed in each of the last three years; and (ii) how many appealed (a) successfully; and (b) unsuccessfully.

**(AQW 7531/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:**

- (i) The table below shows a breakdown of the total number of claims where entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance has ceased in each of the last three years. In some

instances customers may have lost their entitlement on more than one occasion and therefore the Department cannot provide the specific information requested.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Employment and Support Allowance*</b>
Apr 09 to Mar 10	12,827
Apr 10 to Mar 11	17,672
Apr 11 to Dec 11	14,807

- \* The figures provided have been derived from scans of the Department's Matching Intelligence Database Analysis and General Matching Service systems and include cases where a customer has been found fit for work, has failed to attend a medical assessment or has not provided the required information. The figures also include claims where entitlement has ceased following changes in a customer's circumstances including when a customer returns to work, claims an alternative benefit or the death of a customer.
- ii) The information requested regarding appeals is not available in the format requested. However details of all appeal results, which includes claims where entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance has ceased, is set out in the table below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Appeals upheld in customer favour</b>	<b>Appeals upheld in Department's favour</b>	<b>Total Appeals results</b>
2009-10	354	861	1215
2010-11	1410	3374	4784
2011-Jan 2012	1639	3000	4639
<b>Total</b>	<b>3403</b>	<b>7235</b>	<b>10638</b>

### **Disability Living Allowance Claims**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) how many people have had their initial Disability Living Allowance claim disallowed in each of the last three years; and (ii) how many appealed (a) successfully; and (b) unsuccessfully.

**(AQW 7532/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The table below details the total number of Disability Living Allowance initial claims that were unsuccessful in each of the last three years.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Unsuccessful applications</b>
2008/09	12,000
2009/10	12,016
2010/11	9,978

Appeals are received from applicants who have been unsuccessful in their application for Disability Living Allowance (nil award) and from those who have been awarded the benefit but are dissatisfied with the level of the award made. Disability Living Allowance appeals are recorded on an overall number basis and not distinguishable by the circumstances of the decision under appeal.

The table below details the total number of Disability Living Allowance appeals received in the Appeals Service and the outcome of those appeals in each of the last three years. Appeals may not be dealt with in the same year that they are received.

Year	Number of Appeals received in the Appeal Service	More Advantageous Decision	Less Advantageous Decision
2008/09	7,016	1,942	3,811
2009/10	5,636	1,836	3,311
2010/11	5,580	1,651	2,956

### Employment and Support Allowance Claimants

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Employment Support Allowance claimants, to date, have had their entitlement changed to Jobseekers Allowance following review.  
(AQW 7533/11-15)

**Mr McCausland:** A customer's entitlement is not automatically changed to Jobseekers Allowance following loss of entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance. Customers may choose to claim Jobseekers Allowance following loss of entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance, but are not required to do so. Therefore the Department cannot provide the specific information requested.

### Social Housing Waiting List

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what consideration he has given to using vacant, privately owned homes to ease the social housing waiting list.  
(AQW 7543/11-15)

**Mr McCausland:** I am determined to ensure that any scope to meet housing need through effective use of empty homes should be maximised.

The reasons houses are left empty can be complex and range from the individual who for some reason is unable or unwilling to do anything to bring the house back into use, to houses being situated in areas where people do not want to live. Therefore a variety of approaches have been developed such as advice and signposting, practical help such as grants and loans, and the threat and use of enforcement powers.

I have tasked the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to test the effectiveness and cost of these interventions in two pilot areas and the results will inform a revised empty homes action plan for Northern Ireland.

### Vacant Privately Owned Homes

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development for an estimate of the number of privately owned homes which are vacant.  
(AQW 7544/11-15)

**Mr McCausland:** Data on the number of privately owned homes is held by the Department of Finance and Personnel, Land and Property Services. As at 22 January 2012 there were 40,889 vacant residential properties in Northern Ireland. This figure is reduced to 37,736 when Housing Executive and Housing Association voids are removed.

### Solid Fuel and Economy 7 Heating

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development, in light of the Housing Executive's commitment to replace solid fuel and Economy 7 heating with gas central heating, whether he has any plans to upgrade heating systems in housing association properties.  
(AQW 7584/11-15)

**Mr McCausland:** Housing Associations' plans to replace Economy 7 and solid fuel heating systems vary. A number have either replaced or are in the process of replacing Economy 7 and solid fuel heating systems, through the Cosy Homes programme, subject to available funding. Other Associations plan to replace their existing heating systems over the next five to seven years with mains gas, where it is available and subject to the agreement of the tenant. One Association is considering the replacement of its existing Economy 7 heating systems as these systems reach the end of their designated life. This decision takes into account the result of energy performance assessments carried out on the property and the potential benefit to the tenant - however, in the absence of mains gas, Economy 7 heating may sometimes remain the only realistic form of heating for some social housing tenants.

### **Unclaimed Pension Credit**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the level of unclaimed pension credit in each of the last four years.

**(AQW 7594/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information requested is not available as there is no current reliable data source that can be used to accurately estimate how many people do not claim the pension credit to which they could be entitled.

Promoting benefit uptake is a key priority for the Department and the Social Security Agency has taken a proactive approach to increasing uptake since 2005.

The Social Security Agency, through its annual Benefit Uptake Programmes, has used a range of direct targeting, promotional and community outreach approaches to increase the uptake of all benefits. This work has generated an additional £37.6 million in annual benefit and arrears for over 11,000 people to date. Based on available research evidence the main focus of benefit uptake activity since 2009 has been older people, those living with disability and carers. The total annual benefit generated since 2005 for over 60s is £30.8m. Over 5,000 additional Pension Credit claims have been generated.

In 2011/12 significant additional investment has been made in benefit uptake, taking the annual spend to in excess of £1.3m across 4 complementary approaches:

- 25,000 people, selected from existing customer data, have received a personal invitation to have a full benefits assessment through a contracted partner in the independent advice sector. 21,700 of these are aged 60 and over and the exercise has involved 8,100 customers receiving State Pension but not State Pension Credit.
- A promotional outreach to older people approach at council and community level involving trusted partners such as community and older peoples' groups, general practitioners, pharmacies and church/faith based groups. Entitlement checks are delivered by telephone with home visits offered to those who require assistance with making a claim.
- The "Make the Call" advertising campaign - a television, radio, press and outdoor advertising campaign aimed at older people. Over 10,000 calls have been received to date and ongoing monitoring indicates that around 40% of callers have potential entitlement.
- A £375,000 Innovation Fund for Increasing Benefit Uptake has funded 7 projects led by the community and voluntary sector partners to test new and innovative ways of reaching people with potential unclaimed benefit entitlement.

A wide range of general services are also in place to make people aware of their potential entitlement to benefit. These include the production of specific publications, some in minority ethnic languages; NI Direct website; an online Benefits Adviser Service; general assistance with information available through our network of local and centralised offices.

At August 2011 the total number of claimants of Pension Credit was 97,040. Total number of beneficiaries was 120,550 (includes partners of claimants).

## Unclaimed Benefits

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to provide a breakdown of the level of unclaimed benefits in each of the last four years.

**(AQW 7595/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information requested is not available as there is no current reliable data source that can be used to accurately estimate how many people do not claim the benefits to which they could be entitled.

Promoting benefit uptake is a key priority for the Department and the Social Security Agency has taken a proactive approach to increasing uptake since 2005.

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A wide range of general services are also in place to make people aware of their potential entitlement to benefit. These include the production of specific publications, some in minority ethnic languages; NI Direct website; an online Benefits Adviser Service; general assistance with information available through our network of local and centralised offices.

## Improvement and Repair Scheme in Clanmil Developments

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to the improvement and repair scheme in Clanmil developments, including Sinton Court, Cookstown, when the tender process (i) began; (ii) was due to be completed; and (iii) is expected to be completed.

**(AQW 7599/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Clanmil Housing Association has advised that, following a stock condition survey, re-improvement works were identified to be undertaken at Sinton Court, Cookstown and at a number of their other schemes. Contractors for this work were procured in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations. Tenders were invited on 12 December 2011 and were returned to Clanmil on 12 January 2012. Clanmil has evaluated all the tender submissions for the scheme at Sinton Court and has now identified a successful contractor. The successful contractor cannot be appointed until pre contract meetings have occurred and the contractors credentials have been confirmed in line with Clanmil Housing governance procedures and NI public procurement guidance. The tender evaluation process,

and subsequent recommendation to appoint, will be concluded by the 29 February 2012 at the latest, at which point a contractor will be appointed

### **Housing Executive Properties: Repairs**

**Mr S Anderson** asked the Minister for Social Development how his Department monitors the standard of repairs carried out on Housing Executive properties.

**(AQW 7602/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I have been advised by the Housing Executive that with regard to heating installations in Housing Executive properties, the Housing Executive has a number of steps in place to ensure the quality of the work carried out by the contractor. The contractor and Housing Executive inspectors agree a list of items to be checked on completion of the work. The contractor is compelled to carry out this check on every property in each contract. Housing Executive inspectors then carry out audits of the work completed by the contractor. Inspectors then either sign off a property as satisfactory or as a failure. Failures are referred back to the Contracts Manager to initiate the necessary repairs and challenge the relevant installation team on the quality of the workmanship. Only properties that are satisfactorily completed and signed off can be processed for payment and submitted to the Housing Executive. The proportion of failures by the contractor is also constantly monitored and measured as one of a number of Key Performance Indicators. Housing Executive tenants are asked to sign a "Satisfaction Form" which rates the contractor (from very dissatisfied through to very satisfied) in various categories such as: -

- Consultation by Contractors tenant liaison officer prior to installation.
- Contractor's timekeeping performance.
- The standard of workmanship.
- How tidy were the workers.
- Attitude of the workers.
- Did they provide an explanation on the operation of the new heating system?
- Overall satisfaction.

In relation to Planned Revenue Replacement Schemes (for example kitchen or window replacement) and External Cyclical Maintenance Schemes, these are delivered in accordance with a documented scheme delivery process and specification. Project management and an inspectorate ensure work is delivered in accordance with the Housing Executive's procedures and the contract requirements. Key Performance Indicators are used to measure contractor performance. Compliance is assured by a series of technical, procedural and quality audits carried out and reported on a regular basis.

With regard to Response Maintenance Repairs, the Housing Executive carries out a programme of post inspections on completed Response Maintenance Repair work. These inspections check both the quality of completed work and the accuracy of the contractors' claim for payment. The number of completed jobs inspected is determined by job value and the work content. In addition to these on site inspections, the Housing Executive also has in place a telephone post inspection process for small value jobs. These are carried out by staff at our customer service units and if the tenants are dissatisfied with the completed work they are referred back to the contractor or Housing Executive technical staff on site.

The inspection programme is further supported by annual audits which carry out sample inspections on work completed by contractors throughout the year

The results of all inspections, both telephone and site inspections, are fed into a total of six key performance indicators (KPI's). These KPI's measure contractor monthly performance against: -

- Satisfactory Workmanship
- Accurate Payment Claims

- Timeliness of Completion
- Customer Satisfaction.

Failure to reach a satisfactory score in any of the KPI's will require the contractor to agree an improvement plan with the Housing Executive. If there is not an improvement in the performance of the contractor the Housing Executive will take steps to terminate the contract under the contract conditions.

### Neighbourhood Renewal Projects

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 6885/11-15 to provide a breakdown of funding by (i) specific project; and (ii) project provider which his Department has allocated to Neighbourhood Renewal Projects in (a) Portadown; (b) Craigavon; and (c) Lurgan in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 7603/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is as follows:

#### LURGAN

Applicant	Project	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
CLAN NA GAEL GFC	Sports Development Officer	£45,398.38		
	Clan Na Gael Multi Use Games Area and pitch refurbishment	£292,392.91	£195,573.08	
NIHE	Mourneview & Grey Estates community office	£71,500.00		
	Mourneview Community House furnishing		£8,454.50	
	Beaumont Square & Prospect Way	£6,000.00		
	Wakehurst Alleygating	£22,361.44	£3,569.50	
	Environmental Improvements - Kilwilkie / Lurgantarry	£5,500.00		
	Manor Park car parking		£6,000.00	
	Lurgantarry improvements		£29,500.00	
	Oakfield Car Parking			£6,479.37
	Lurgan Glenholme Fencing and Footpath			£12,781.57
DRD	Kilwilkie Roads and Pathways resurfacing			£253,860.69
Albert Street & Lough Road Community Assoc.	Community office running costs	£7,012.00	£2,004.00	
Shankill (Lurgan) Community Projects Ltd	Equipment for Mount Zion - computers	£20,469.00		

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>
Taghnevan Sports Ltd	Provision of sports facility	£423,700.00	£57,186.00	
Clann Eireann GFC	External site improvements	£50,389.70		
Springwell Centre	Site acquisition and new facilities	£55,007.20		
CIDO	Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation (CIDO) - Exploring Enterprise Programme	£6,757.50		
Southern Education and Library Board	Education Other Than At School (EOTAS)		£15,025.00	
	Naiscoil Chois Locha	£52,689.67		
Craigavon Borough Council	Craigavon Partnerships Building the Capacity	£1,583.33		
	Craigavon NR Officer	£28,882.53	£36,588.19	£3,468.26
	Craigavon Multi Sports Games Areas - Churchill Pk, Taghnevan and Clonmeen	£144,319.81		
	Craigavon Community Sport Programme		£25,128.72	
	Craigavon Retail Capacity Building			£74,520.00
	Craigavon - Graffiti Removal		£14,790.00	
	Craigavon - Pest Control		£1,375.50	£2384.00
	Craigavon - CBC - Technical Assistance 4			£24,332.08
	Graffiti Removal and Prevention Project			£12,750.00
	Craigavon Sport in the Community (2011-2014)			£31,955.93
	Citizen 21		£2,000.00	£32,800.00
	Mourneview MUGA *			£174,000.00
Southern Regional College	Education and Social Exclusion	£25,765.63	£15,080.26	£7,262.40
	Success to Employment (Health Trust)		£7,224.00	
	Craigavon - TOPS			£44,252.70
	Southern Region - Practice Firms			£11,002.94
	Craigavon - Steering to Success		£29,357.53	£33,882.46
	Southern Region - Cancerwise			£406.00

Applicant	Project	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012
SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST	Craigavon Health and Well-being programme	£22,085.40	£100,826.52	
	Craigavon Health Improvement Project			£51,000.00
SOUTHERN EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD	Social Renewal Educational programme 2	£130,219.83	£115,877.10	£7,614.04
	SELB - Inclusion in Education			£46,794.19
	SELB - Youth Engagement			£38,336.12
	SELB – St Mary’s Family Learning Room			£57,063.88
DRD ROADS SERVICE	DRD – Levin Road Repairs		£122,000.00	
	DRD – Donard Gdns/Gracey Drive Repairs		£41,500.00	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,412,034.33</b>	<b>£829,059.90</b>	<b>£926,946.63</b>

\* Project originally scheduled for 2011/12 financial year but will now be moved to 2012/13 because of delay in securing planning approval.

#### BROWNLOW PROJECTS

Applicant	Project	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/12
NIHE	Drumbeg physical improvements - fencing of gables	£2,096.00		
	Brownlow additional car parking	£48,370.00		
	Rosmoyle and Russell Drive fencing		£14,000.00	
	Brownlow Estates - entrance features	£19,420.00		
	Parkmore beacon		£9,500.00	
	Clanrolla and Clonmeen - additional carparking			£53,279.07
	Enniskeen Community House - refurbishment			£30,000.00
	Drumellan Family Learning Centre - refurbishment			£118,850.00
Brownlow Ltd	Bluestone Business Park	£715,057.00	£12,470.00	
Craigavon Borough Council	Brownlow Outdoor Pursuits Instructor Training Programme			£13,600.00
	Drumbeg Community Arts Project	£85,000.00		

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Dept For Regional Development	Brownlow - Drumgask 2 footways improvements 2	£50,000.00	£155,551.00	
	Brownlow - West Brownlow Environmental Improvements			£70,474.44
Business In The Community	Brownlow - Adopt a School	£15,118.50	£5,039.50	£0.00
Craigavon Amateur Boxing Club	Boxing club			£31,525.25
Moyraverty Arts And Drama Society	St Anthony's Hall - refurbishment		£5,000.0	£405,509.44
Craigavon Borough Council	Craigavon Partnerships Building the Capacity	£1,583.33		
	Craigavon NR Officer	£28,882.53	£39,424.65	£3,468.26
	Craigavon Multi Sports Games Areas - Churchill Pk, Taghnevan and Clonmeen	£126,644.66		
	Craigavon Community Sport Programme		£17,245.20	
	Craigavon Retail Capacity Building			£32,360.00
	Craigavon - Graffiti Removal		£10,150.00	
	Craigavon - Pest Control		£1,375.50	£1,636.00
	Craigavon - CBC - Technical Assistance 4			£35,831.96
	Graffiti Removal and Prevention Project			£8,750.00
	Craigavon Sport in the Community (2011-2014)			£28,044.91
Southern Regional College	Education and Social Exclusion	£17,682.30	£10,349.20	£4,984.00
	Success to Employment (Health Trust)		£4,958.00	
	Craigavon - TOPS			£35,369.50
	Southern Region - Practice Firms			£16,002.94
	Craigavon - Steering to Success		£20,147.33	£23,252.67
	Southern Region - Cancerwise			£406.00

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Southern Health And Social Care Trust	Craigavon Health and Well-being programme	£15,156.65	£69,194.67	
	Craigavon Health Improvement Project			£35,000.00
Southern Education And Library Board	Social Renewal Educational programme 2	£89,366.55	£79,523.50	£5,225.33
	SELB - Inclusion in Education			£32,113.66
	SELB - Youth Engagement			£26,309.11
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,214,377.52</b>	<b>£453,928.55</b>	<b>£1,011,992.54</b>

**NW PORTADOWN PROJECTS**

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
Drumcree Community Trust	Learning through Play	£11,844.86		
	Physical enhancement of Drumcree Community Centre	£16,867.05		
NIHE	Woodside access road	£49,500.00		
	Woodside Darby & Joan Club	£11,000.00		
	NW Portadown Environmental Improvements			£56,115.95
Southern Education And Library Board	Naiscoil na Banna	£63,000.00		
	Ballyoran PS Community Learning Room & Early Years facility			£144,706.53
St Mary's Youth Centre	Refurbishment Phase 1 - Consultancy			£44,500.00
	St Mary's Boxing Club		£6,290.70	
Edgarstown Residents Association	Edgarstown community IT equipment	£3,498.28		
	Edgarstown Community Base refurbishment			£74,200.00
Drd Roads Service	Park Road/ Edgarstown Footbridge	£155,000.00		
	Edgarstown Carriageway & Footpath Improvements			£61,105.00
Craigavon Borough Council	Arts development – Shared history of Garvaghy		£15,000.00	
Bannside Community Assoc	Bannside Refurbishment		£15,446.80	£5,600.00

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>2009/2010</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/12</b>
St Johns Scouts	St John's Scouts – Regeneration			£22,000.00
Craigavon Borough Council	Craigavon Partnerships Building the Capacity	£1,583.33		
	Craigavon NR Officer	£13,883.52	£16,354.76	£3,468.26
	Craigavon Multi Sports Games Areas - Churchill Pk, Taghnevan and Clonmeen	£57,977.36		
	Craigavon Community Sport Programme		£6,898.08	
	Craigavon Retail Capacity Building			£10,120.00
	Craigavon - Graffiti Removal		£4,060.00	
	Craigavon - Pest Control		£1,375.50	£654.50
	Craigavon - CBC - Technical Assistance 4			£24,332.08
	Graffiti Removal and Prevention Project			£3,500.00
	Craigavon Sport in the Community (2011-2014)			£2,639.93
Southern Regional College	Education and Social Exclusion	£7,072.92	£4,139.68	£1,993.60
	Success to Employment (Health Trust)		£1,983.00	
	Craigavon - TOPS			£12,147.80
	Southern Region - Practice Firms			£11,002.94
	Craigavon - Steering to Success		£8,058.93	£9,301.07
	Southern Region - Cancerwise			£406.00
Southern Health And Social Care Trust	Craigavon Health and Well-being programme	£6,062.66	£27,677.87	
	Craigavon Health Improvement Project			£14,000.00
Southern Education And Library Board	Social Renewal Educational programme 2	£35,746.62	£31,809.40	£2,090.13
	SELB - Inclusion in Education			£12,845.46
	SELB - Youth Engagement			£10,523.64
<b>Total</b>		<b>£422,036.60</b>	<b>£139,084.72</b>	<b>£527,252.89</b>

### Jobseekers Allowance

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of people currently in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance, broken down by constituency.

**(AQW 7605/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The table below shows the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance by Assembly Area at August 2011.

<b>Assembly Area</b>	<b>Number of claimants</b>
Belfast East	2,640
Belfast North	4,840
Belfast South	3,260
Belfast West	4,830
East Antrim	2,310
East Londonderry	3,340
Fermanagh And South Tyrone	2,740
Foyle	5,430
Lagan Valley	2,180
Mid Ulster	2,690
Newry And Armagh	4,520
North Antrim	3,010
North Down	2,010
South Antrim	2,240
South Down	3,410
Strangford	2,250
Upper Bann	3,730
West Tyrone	3,320
Unknown	550
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,310</b>

Data source Northern Ireland Benefits Statistics Summary August 2011

### **Green Investment Bank**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the potential to obtain funding through the Green Investment Bank; and whether it could help fund the Green New Deal.  
**(AQW 7610/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** A Cross Departmental Group which is chaired by my Department and includes representatives from DETI, DARD and DFP have developed a full economic appraisal to determine the most cost effective way of delivering a Green New deal solution with the £12m that has been set aside by the NI Executive, ensuring that the maximum benefit is realised from the expenditure.

When the economic appraisal has been approved a detailed forward work programme will be developed for the preferred option within the appraisal. The forward work programme will include the potential to exploit other funding streams to increase additional funding for a Green New Deal solution over and above the £12m that is currently available. Obtaining funding from The Green Investment Bank (GIB) will be one of the funding streams that will be explored once greater detail is known about the establishment of the bank and the funding that it has at its disposal.

## Carbon Monoxide Monitors

**Mr Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many carbon monoxide monitors the Housing Executive intends to install in properties in (i) Newtownards; and (ii) Down district council areas in this financial year.

**(AQW 7641/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive advises that they intend to install carbon monoxide detectors in their properties within the Newtownards and Down District Council areas as follows:-

- Newtownards 1,920 dwellings
- Downpatrick 267 dwellings

The contractor has already started installations and intends to complete by the end of May 2012.

## Work Capability Assessments

**Mr Molloy** asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to the ATOS healthcare professionals who conduct Work Capability Assessments for people on Employment and Support Allowance (i) to provide a definition of healthcare professionals; and (ii) the qualifications required for the post.

**(AQW 7703/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The definition of a healthcare professional and the qualifications required have been agreed by the Department and Atos Healthcare and are included within the terms of the Medical Support Services Agreement. Specific details are set out below.

- (i) The Medical Support Services Agreement defines a healthcare professional as:
- (a) a registered medical practitioner;
  - (b) a registered nurse;
  - (c) an occupational therapist or physiotherapist registered with a regulatory body established by an Order in Council under section 60 of Health Care Act 1999; or
  - (d) a member of such other profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 as the Secretary of State may prescribe.

Currently only registered medical practitioners or registered nurses are employed in the provision of the service to the Department for Social Development.

- (ii) The qualifications required of healthcare professionals are:
- (a) in the case of a Medical Practitioner:
    - to hold a current registration to practice in the United Kingdom;
    - to have 3 years post-registration full-time equivalent experience across a range of relevant clinical disciplines (within the last 6 years prior to an advertisement for positions being placed); and
    - to hold a full and unconditional registration with the United Kingdom General Medical Council.
  - (b) in the case of a nurse:
    - to be fully registered, without restrictions or conditions, with the Nursing and Midwifery Council; and
    - to have a minimum of 3 years post registration experience.
  - (c) for all other healthcare professionals:
    - to be fully registered, without restrictions or conditions, with the relevant licensing body;
    - to have a minimum of 3 years post registration experience;

- to possess good communication skills;
- to have an understanding of customer care issues; and
- to have an understanding of disability issues.

### **Vacant Housing Executive Properties**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive properties are currently vacant.

**(AQW 7803/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** There are currently 2,032 Housing Executive properties vacant.

### **Department's Equality Unit**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) number; and (ii) annual cost of staff employed in his Department's Equality Unit.

**(AQW 7807/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Equality issues are dealt with by my Department's Corporate Services Unit. Staff costs in relation to equality issues cannot be desegregated from other activities for which this unit has responsibility.

### **Fuel Hedging**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department, and its arm's-length bodies, are engaged in fuel hedging to manage fluctuations in fuel prices.

**(AQW 7898/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Neither the Department for Social Development nor its arm's length bodies are engaged in fuel hedging.

### **Strategy on Volunteering**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Social Development when his Department's strategy on volunteering will be published.

**(AQW 7902/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Northern Ireland's first ever Volunteering Strategy Action Plan is expected to be launched in early March.

### **FirstBuy NI Pilot Scheme**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the level of funding allocated to the FirstBuy NI pilot scheme; (ii) the timescale for the delivery of the scheme; and (iii) how much money had been allocated under the scheme to home buyers at 1 February 2012.

**(AQW 7963/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department allocated £3.25m to the FirstBuy NI pilot scheme. This funding was made available to Co-Ownership Housing for the 2011/12 financial year and the pilot will, therefore, close on 31 March 2012.

It is disappointing that no applications for assistance have been received. Given this, the funding has been re-allocated to support purchases under the main Co-Ownership Scheme. Any applications for assistance under FirstBuy NI that are received before 31 March 2012 and qualify for help will be accommodated from this funding within the main scheme.

## Portrush Regeneration Scheme

**Mr McQuillan** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Portrush regeneration scheme.

**(AQO 1316/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Station Square public realm scheme in Portrush, which is being funded by my Department, Coleraine Borough Council and Northern Ireland Tourist Board, will be completed in time for the busy and exciting schedule that lies ahead for the town this year.

- The section in front of Barry's is to be completed by 16 March.
- The section in front of the old Train Station building and the portion of the scheme around the amphitheatre is to be completed by 9 April.
- The remainder of the scheme will be completed by 2 May. There may be a slight delay in the completion of the mosaic for the base of the new amphitheatre, as it has to be laid in dry conditions, but that will not delay the scheme being opened to the public.

## Housing: Improvement Grants

**Mr Sheehan** asked the Minister for Social Development what grants are currently available to home owners who wish to make improvements.

**(AQO 1321/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I am determined to increase not just the quantity but also the quality of housing stock in Northern Ireland.

My Department continues to fund the Warm Home Scheme which offers a range of insulation and heating measures to vulnerable householders. A pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme is also being delivered which offers a grant of up to £1,500 towards the cost of installing a new boiler. Approximately 1,330 boilers will be replaced before the end of this financial year.

Applications for Disabled Facilities Grants have not been affected by the reduction in the funding available for Private Sector Grants and they are being processed as normal by the Housing Executive. Home Repair Assistance Grants for people who are infirm or have a disability and who need small scale improvements, repairs, adaptations or basic security measures carried out to their property can be approved if the Housing Executive's Exceptional Circumstances Committee agree that there is a serious and imminent risk to the occupier if the work is not carried out.

There is also a need to identify new and more sustainable ways to finance repair and improvements and encourage home owners to more effectively help themselves while also making the best use of limited public money.

Home owners would benefit from practical advice and sign posting to a range of services including access to other forms of private finance including equity release. My officials have been exploring how such an approach could and should be introduced and I intend to use the forthcoming Housing Strategy to more fully discuss this issue.

As well as looking for opportunities from within our existing budget allocations, I will consider the use of monitoring rounds to seek additional funding for grants.

## Community Care Grants

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Community Care Grant applications were received and granted in the last twelve months.

**(AQO 1320/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** 47,652 Community Care Grant applications were received between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2011, of which 24,403 resulted in a successful award.

## Welfare Reform: Benefit Cap

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many families will be affected in Northern Ireland if a £26,000 benefit cap is introduced.

**(AQO 1322/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The coalition Government is proposing to introduce a cap on the amount of benefit a household, the vast majority of which will be families, can receive of £26,000 per year after tax and National Insurance or £35,000 per year before Tax and National Insurance.

This equates to £500 net a week and is based on average earned income. The principle behind the introduction of a cap is that people on benefits should not receive more in social security benefits than is earned by those who are working and paying their taxes.

Those entitled to Working Tax Credit, as well as households with someone receiving Disability Living Allowance, are excluded from the benefit cap. Initially the intent is that the cap will be delivered through Housing Benefit payments however it will ultimately be administered as part of the new Universal Credit system.

Early analysis based on survey data indicates that when the cap is first introduced, approximately 99% of all households claiming Housing Benefit will not be affected by the cap.

Supplementary analysis of Housing Benefit administrative data indicates that at January 2012 there are 160,000 households claiming Housing Benefit.

## Crisis Loans

**Mr McGimpsey** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Crisis Loan applications were received and granted in the last twelve months.

**(AQO 1323/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** 156,765 Crisis Loan applications were received between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2011, of which 119,941 resulted in a successful award.

## Fuel Poverty

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Social Development what action he is taking to reduce fuel poverty.

**(AQO 1324/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Tackling fuel poverty is one of my main priorities and my Department has a range of initiatives in place to help householders who are in fuel poverty. In April 2011, my Department launched its fuel poverty strategy entitled "Warmer Healthier Homes". This strategy sets our vision for the future as "a society in which people live in a warm, comfortable home, and need not worry about the effect of the cold on their health". The strategy places significant emphasis on the partnership approach required to tackle fuel poverty and the cross-departmental nature of the whole area of fuel poverty.

In addition to continuing to deliver annual initiatives such as the Warm Homes Scheme, the Housing Executive's Heating Replacement Scheme, a Benefits Uptake campaign and making Winter Fuel Payments and Cold Weather Payments, my Department is also working on a number of new and exciting pilots.

I set aside £2 million to deliver a pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme which entitles eligible householders to a grant of up to £1,500 towards the cost of installing a new boiler. The pilot has been very successful and the Housing Executive is no longer taking applications for the pilot.

My officials are working with colleagues in Kingspan Renewables and Carillion Energy Services to deliver as Pay as You Go for Oil. This innovative approach is aimed at discouraging people for purchasing emergency oil drums. 20 homes will have the technology installed; 10 Housing Executive homes and 10 private homes in the Dungannon area.

The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is actively evaluating the feasibility of an energy brokering scheme in relation to discounted electricity for its tenants. However, there remain a number of legal, regulatory and practical issues that need to be examined before embarking on such a project. The Housing Executive is looking at a similar scheme already in place in Dundee to establish if it is practical to do a similar project here, or to implement a modified version that is more appropriate for its tenants.

### **Boiler Replacement Scheme**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the uptake of the Boiler Replacement Scheme.

**(AQO 1325/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I set aside £2 million to deliver a pilot Boiler Replacement Scheme which will assist in the region of 1,330 householders who previously have not been eligible for assistance from other energy efficiency schemes. I am delighted with the success of the pilot to date. The scheme will close on 31 March and therefore I would urge anyone still waiting for work to be carried out in their home to make contact with their preferred installer urgently to ensure the work is completed as soon as possible.

### **Social Housing: West Belfast**

**Ms J McCann** asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive homes in the West Belfast constituency are currently unoccupied.

**(AQO 1326/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency.

However, across the Housing Executive's District Offices in West Belfast, Shankill and Lisburn Dairy Farm, there were 303 vacant properties at 31 December 2011. Of these, 33 were categorised as awaiting relet, 218 pending sale/demolition, 49 undergoing repairs and 3 others which include SPED and squatters.

### **Social Housing: Upper Bann**

**Mr Moutray** asked the Minister for Social Development what plans the Housing Executive has in place for kitchen replacements in Upper Bann.

**(AQO 1327/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, the Housing Executive's Craigavon and Banbridge District Offices have the following kitchen replacement schemes programmed:-

2011/12: -

- 95 dwellings in Ballyoran Estate, Portadown
- 85 dwellings in Primrose Estate, Banbridge

2012/13 (subject to available funding)

- 85 dwellings in Hospital Estate, Lurgan
- 85 dwellings in Drumbeg Estate, Brownlow
- 74 dwellings in Redmanville Estate, Portadown
- 83 dwellings in Reilly Street, Banbridge

## Neighbourhood Renewal: Sport

**Mr Hilditch** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of how sport could contribute towards Neighbourhood Renewal Schemes.

**(AQO 1328/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy aims to address the range of social problems which characterise the most deprived areas. The benefits of a physically active society bring economic benefits in terms of: reduced health care costs; increased productivity; healthier physical and social environments; better performing schools and workplaces, reductions in levels of anti-social behaviour; and the promotion of active citizenship.

In recognition of the positive contribution sport can make, my Department has provided in

the region of £10.5 million between 07/08 and 11/12 to support projects and programmes that promote participation in sport and physical activity. However, more can be done and in planning for the future there is a need for Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships to recognise the positive contribution participating in sport can make across their communities and to make provision for this within the Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans.

## Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

### Parliament Buildings

**Mr McKay** asked the Assembly Commission what actions are being taken to make Parliament Buildings more welcoming to people from a nationalist or republican background; and how it will ensure that these political traditions will be reflected.

**(AQW 7303/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission is designated as a Public Authority under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Under section 75 (2) of this legislation, the Commission has a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different political opinions as well as of different races and religious beliefs. The current Equality Scheme was approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in February 2008 and a Revised Equality Scheme was submitted for approval in December 2011. Documentation relating to the Commission's equality work is published on the Assembly website including an Audit of Inequalities.

The Commission has recently undertaken an Internal Good Relations Audit and is currently considering its findings.

Furthermore, the Information and Outreach Directorate provide an outreach service to schools across Northern Ireland. In 2011, the Secretariat education staff welcomed 499 schools and / or educational establishments and visited 35 schools and/ or educational establishments across Northern Ireland.

### Vase to Commemorate the Coronation of HM the Queen in 1953

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission where the vase, made to commemorate the coronation of HM the Queen in 1953, and which formerly stood beside the staircase in the Great Hall, is now located.

**(AQW 7313/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The Elizabeth II Coronation Vase commemorating the coronation of HM the Queen is currently on display in the First Minister's office.

I hope that the above information provides the detail that you sought, however should you require any supplementary information I would be very happy to assist with your enquiry.

## Silverware Held by the Assembly

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission what items of silverware are currently held by the Assembly; and where these items are currently located.

**(AQW 7385/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** I can confirm that the following silverware items are held by the Assembly:-

Description	Location
Silver Collection on loan.	
The Royal Irish Rifles' McArdle Cup, London 1904	On display in the First Ministers office
The Turf Club Cup 1928	On display in the First Minister office
The Linfield Hurdle Cup 1928 - all owned by Lord Glentoran	On display in the First Minister office
A small oval dish from the Industrial College of Armed Forces, Washington DC - owned by the Andrews family	In secure storage at Mallusk
The Parliament Golf Handicap Challenge Cup 1927. Silver two-handled trophy dated 1926	On display in the First Ministers office
Silver cigar lighter presented by the Royal College of Nursing, Founders Day 1960	On display in the First Ministers office
Silver egg timer with crest of NI. Presented by Rt Hon Thomas Moles (first Chairman of Ways and Means) to the House of Commons.	In secure storage at Mallusk
Silver maces from the Commons and Senate. Made in London 1924	On display in the Speakers office
A Japanese officer's sword presented by Lord Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia	On display in the First Ministers office
Black Rod's Wand of Office, an ebony staff with silver-gilt mounts dated London 1923. 37 in long	On display in the First Ministers office

## Assembly's Portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission, pursuant to to AQW 7197/11-15, what plans the Commission has to equip Parliament Buildings suitably to mark the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

**(AQW 7496/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The role of the Assembly Commission is to provide the property, staff and services for the Assembly's purposes. As such, the Assembly Commission does not have a role in equipping Parliament Buildings in this regard. Official events and functions, on behalf of the Assembly, are normally hosted by the Speaker.

## Assembly Website: Smart Phones

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Assembly Commission whether any plans are in place to make the Assembly website more compatible with smart phones.

**(AQW 7509/11-15)**

**Mr McElduff (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The Assembly website is currently compatible with all major mobile phone operating systems. During 2011, less than 3% of visitors to the Assembly's website used a mobile device.

As stated in AQW 7302/11-15 the Assembly's Information Systems Office is currently developing a mobile web application which will improve access to AIMS-based procedural data from a range of web-enabled mobile devices. We hope to trial this web application before the summer recess.

There are currently no plans to introduce mobile apps.

### **Paintings, Statues and Other Art and Antiques**

**Mr McKay** asked the Assembly Commission whether consideration has been given to the procurement of paintings, statues and other art and antiques that reflect nationalist and republican history, given the make-up of the existing materials on display.

**(AQW 7763/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** Apart from the procurement of portraits of former First and deputy First Ministers and Speakers of the House the Assembly Commission has not, to date, given consideration to the procurement of paintings, statues and other art and antiques.

However, the Assembly Commission is designated as a public authority under

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and under Section 75(2) of the Act, the Commission has a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

## Written Answers Index

<b>Department for Regional Development</b>	WA 338	Use of Smartpasses on	
2020 Cycle Targets	WA 346	Cross-Border Routes	WA 343
A5: Reallocation of Funding	WA 354	Waste Water Treatment Works at	
A7 Upgrade	WA 344	Garrison, Co Fermanagh	WA 342
Bus Éireann: Reduced Ticket Prices	WA 343	<b>Department for Employment and Learning</b>	
Bus Routes between Derry and Dublin	WA 343	Capital Investment for the Further	
Bus Shelters at the Harbour Road and		Education Campus in Enniskillen	WA 257
Marine Road in Carnlough Village	WA 339	Catholic Certificate of Religious	
Caddy Road in Randalstown	WA 342	Education	WA 258
Community Based Transport Schemes	WA 340	Chairmanship of the Stranmillis	
Contracts for New Buses	WA 338	University College Board of	
Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 346	Governors	WA 255
Department's Equality Unit	WA 351	College Courses Towards Employment	WA 256
DRD: Spending Priorities	WA 352	Craft Skills Training in Omagh and	
E-WAY Rapid Transit Scheme	WA 353	Strabane	WA 259
Hillhall Road, Lisburn	WA 353	Further Education College in	
Knock Airport, Co.Mayo	WA 342	Coleraine	WA 257
Misuse of Disabled Car Parking Bays	WA 351	Further Education College: Staff	
Mobile Phone Applications	WA 344	Travelling Expenses	WA 258
NI Water's Proposed Upgrade of the		Government Sponsored Training	
System around Dermott Green,		Schemes	WA 260
Comber	WA 345	Made Not Born 2012 Leadership	
Parking Tickets	WA 339	Learning Series	WA 256
Pedestrian Safety Railings at		Mobile Phone Applications	WA 262
Windmill Street, Ballynahinch	WA 345	Private Catering Companies Operate	
Private Car Parks	WA 340	within University Buildings	WA 262
Procurement of Road Traffic Signs	WA 345	Proposed Merger of Queen's	
Public Transport: Irish Open	WA 354	University, Belfast and Stranmillis	
Railways: Belfast to Dublin	WA 354	University College, Belfast	WA 255
Railway Stations on the Belfast to		Regional Colleges in Omagh and	
Bangor Line	WA 346	Strabane	WA 259
Rathlin Ferry: SMS Alert Service	WA 340	Regional Colleges: Staff Travel	
Removal of Snow and Ice from		Expenses	WA 258
Town Centre Footpaths	WA 350	Teacher Training Provision	WA 261
Road Schemes Planned for Ballymoney,		Veterinary Medicine	WA 261
Ballycastle and Ballymena	WA 344	Winning in Europe: European	
Road Schemes Planned for		Priorities 2011-12	WA 256
Carrickfergus	WA 341	Work Placements	WA 257
Road Schemes Planned for Larne	WA 341	<b>Department for Social Development</b>	WA 356
Road Schemes Planned for		Bangor Town Centre Economic	
Monkstown and Jordanstown	WA 341	Regeneration	WA 359
Road Schemes Planned for Villages		Boiler Replacement Scheme	WA 358
in North Antrim	WA 344	Boiler Replacement Scheme	WA 377
Road Service: Slippage Moneys	WA 355	Carbon Monoxide Monitors	WA 373
Roads: Maintenance	WA 355	Community Care Grants	WA 375
Roads: Salt Reserves	WA 352	Crisis Loans	WA 376
Site of the Former Grosvenor		Department for Work and Pensions	WA 357
Barracks, Enniskillen	WA 343	Department's Equality Unit	WA 374
Street Lighting	WA 351	Derelict Housing in the Millisle Area	WA 358
Traffic Calming: Hillsborough	WA 352	Disability Living Allowance Claims	WA 361
Unadopted Roads	WA 347	Employment and Support	
		Allowance Claimants	WA 362

Employment and Support Allowance	
Claims	WA 360
FirstBuy NI Pilot Scheme	WA 374
Fuel Hedging	WA 374
Fuel Poverty	WA 376
Green Investment Bank	WA 372
Housing Associations	WA 358
Housing Executive Properties: Repairs	WA 365
Housing: Improvement Grants	WA 375
Improvement and Repair Scheme in Clanmil Developments	WA 364
Jobseekers Allowance	WA 371
Neighbourhood Renewal Projects	WA 366
Neighbourhood Renewal: Sport	WA 378
People Registered as Homeless	WA 356
Portrush Regeneration Scheme	WA 375
Sale of Land in the North Down Area	WA 359
Social Housing: Upper Bann	WA 377
Social Housing Waiting List	WA 362
Social Housing: West Belfast	WA 377
Social Security Benefits	WA 359
Solid Fuel and Economy 7 Heating	WA 362
State Pensions	WA 359
State Pensions	WA 360
Strategy on Volunteering	WA 374
Unclaimed Benefits	WA 364
Unclaimed Pension Credit	WA 363
Vacant Housing Executive Properties	WA 374
Vacant Privately Owned Homes	WA 362
Warm Homes Scheme	WA 358
Welfare Reform: Benefit Cap	WA 376
Work Capability Assessments	WA 373

#### **Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**

Abuse of Animals	WA 202
Animal Cruelty	WA 203
Animal Welfare Legislation	WA 205
Common Agricultural Policy	WA 206
Country Management Scheme	WA 202
Dairy Farmers	WA 209
Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 204
Draft Protection and Conservation of Sea Bass (NI) Regulations 2012	WA 207
Egg Producers	WA 205
Fishermen in Co. Down	WA 203
Fishing Industry	WA 204
Fishing Industry	WA 205
Hydraulic Fracturing	WA 210
Incidents of Dog Attacks	WA 206
Land Parcel Identification System Project	WA 203
Loifa Initiative	WA 210
Marine Organisms	WA 207
Microchip Implants in Animals	WA 208

Mill Street Coleraine	WA 205
Mobile Phone Applications	WA 203
Single Farm Payment	WA 202
Single Farm Payments	WA 209

#### **Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure**

	WA 210
100th Anniversary of the Founding of the Irish Volunteers	WA 215
All-Island Teams	WA 217
British Isles Teams: Competing in a Range of Sports	WA 218
Bushmills Research Station	WA 216
Bushmills Research Station	WA 217
Centenary of the Trial and Death of Roger Casement	WA 215
Civil Service Posts	WA 212
Cultra Station House	WA 213
Cultra Station House	WA 214
Cultra Station House	WA 214
Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 212
Department's Equality Unit	WA 212
East-West Linkages	WA 211
Football Association of Ireland Affiliated International Teams	WA 216
Football Association of Ireland Affiliated International Teams	WA 218
Library Opening Hours	WA 210
Ministerial Attendance at Soccer Games	WA 216
Mobile Phone Applications	WA 211
Ranunculus Fluitans	WA 217
Ranunculus Fluitans	WA 218
Recruitment Agencies	WA 214
Salmon Stocks	WA 215
Stationery Costs in Replying to Assembly Written Questions	WA 217
US-Ireland Alliance Annual Hollywood Event	WA 218

#### **Department of Education**

	WA 219
Accrued Money Held Within Schools	WA 247
Advisory Forum on Shared Education	WA 232
Advisory Group on Shared Education	WA 224
Age Weighted Pupil Unit	WA 224
Age Weighted Pupil Unit	WA 232
Age Weighted Pupil Unit	WA 245
Alternative Indicator of Social Deprivation	WA 249
Area Planning	WA 254
Chief Inspector's Report 2008-2010	WA 219
Chief Inspector's Report 2008-2010	WA 219
Civil Service Posts	WA 237
December Monitoring Round	WA 227
Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 226
Department's Equality Unit	WA 238

Department's Human Resources Section	WA 244	Statements of Educational Need	WA 234
Drumlins Integrated Primary School in Ballynahinch	WA 250	Stationery Costs in Replying to Assembly Written Questions	WA 249
Early Year Places	WA 221	Strategic Area Planning Process	WA 227
Education and Skills Authority	WA 226	Supervisory Assistants in Post-Primary Schools	WA 236
Education and Skills Authority	WA 226	Sure Start Scheme for North Down	WA 221
Education and Skills Authority	WA 253	Suspended Teachers	WA 224
Education and Skills Authority	WA 255	Teacher Redundancies	WA 219
Education: Area Plans	WA 253	Teachers' Negotiating Committee Negotiating Panels	WA 249
First Preference Applications	WA 221	Teachers' Pay	WA 245
First Preference Applications	WA 224	Total Spend on Hospitality	WA 250
Fuel Hedging	WA 246	Unofficial Selection Tests	WA 222
Future Planning of the Education Estate	WA 225	Vacancies for Teachers of English	WA 248
GCSE Agricultural Courses	WA 232	Vacancies for Teachers of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics	WA 242
Impact of Class Sizes on Pupils Development	WA 253	Vacant Education and Library Board Properties	WA 254
Integrated Schools	WA 239	Voluntary Severance Programme	WA 225
Irish-Medium Schools	WA 228	Woodlands Language Unit in the Foyle Constituency	WA 238
Local Management of Schools Budgets	WA 249		
Memento of Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee	WA 233	<b>Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment</b>	WA 263
Mobile Phone Applications	WA 222	Available Hotel Rooms	WA 266
Mobile Phones in Schools	WA 255	Bed and Breakfast Sector in Newry and Mourne	WA 268
New Builds for Schools	WA 222	Civil Service Posts	WA 274
Out-of-School Activities	WA 238	Climate Change Research	WA 276
Payment for Supervisory Assistants	WA 234	Credit Unions	WA 273
Places in Integrated Schools	WA 241	Credit Unions	WA 277
Pre-School Inspections	WA 220	Credit Unions	WA 277
Pre-School Provision	WA 220	Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 274
Primary Schools: Grounds	WA 228	Department's Human Resources Section	WA 276
Pupils' Dental Hygiene	WA 227	Electricity Interconnection	WA 279
Pupil to Computer Ratio	WA 243	Electricity Price Increases	WA 275
Recruitment Agencies	WA 231	Electricity Price Reductions	WA 272
Redundancy Package for Teachers	WA 231	Energy Efficiency Directive	WA 270
Retired Teachers	WA 233	Enterprise NI's Performance	WA 270
Retired Teachers	WA 247	Enterprise NI's Performance	WA 271
School Inspectors	WA 227	Fuel Shortage	WA 278
School Policy Announcements	WA 228	Green Investment Bank	WA 268
Schools Audit Process	WA 221	Green Investment Bank	WA 274
Schools' Budget	WA 244	High Energy Costs for Businesses	WA 273
Schools' Budgets	WA 245	Hydraulic Fracturing	WA 273
Schools Estate	WA 253	Industry Standard for the Oil Industry	WA 278
Schools in North Down in Need of Major Repairs	WA 243	Introduction of Social Tariffs	WA 272
School Transport	WA 246	InvestNI Start-Up Scheme	WA 267
School Transport	WA 246	InvestNI Start-Up Scheme	WA 268
School Trips	WA 225	Key Tourism Destinations	WA 266
School Visit Invitations	WA 250	Knock Airport	WA 263
Social Deprivation	WA 245		
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators	WA 230		
Spend on Fuel	WA 247		

Lands at Creagh and Station Road, Magherafelt	WA 271	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Staff	WA 292
Links Between Hydraulic Fracturing and Water Pollution	WA 264	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Staff	WA 292
Links Between Hydraulic Fracturing and Water Pollution	WA 265	Brendan Lillis	WA 300
Mobile Phone Applications	WA 274	Business Services Transformation Programme	WA 293
Mountain Biking	WA 267	Care Management Assessments	WA 296
New Hotel in Ballycastle	WA 264	Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland	WA 303
Outsourced Training	WA 263	Community Pharmacy Northern Ireland	WA 306
Profit Margin on a 20 Litre Drum of Home Heating Oil	WA 278	Compton Review	WA 289
Recovery of Training Costs	WA 263	Departmental Equality Unit	WA 307
Recruitment Agencies	WA 275	Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 291
Renewable Energy Sector	WA 277	Department's Human Resources Section	WA 304
Renewable Energy Targets	WA 278	Diabetes	WA 311
Renewal Heat Incentive Tariff on Bioliquids	WA 279	Director of Adult Services	WA 307
Shackleton Army Barracks at Ballykelly	WA 269	Domiciliary Care	WA 294
'The Gathering: An Irish Homecoming' Campaign	WA 266	Domiciliary Care Packages	WA 295
Tourism Related Projects in West Tyrone	WA 268	Domiciliary Care Packages	WA 299
United States National Football League	WA 272	Fuel Hedging	WA 305
Visitor Numbers	WA 276	Hospital Booking Lines	WA 290
Visitors to the Giants Causeway, Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge and the Bushmills Distillery	WA 269	Investigation into the Death of Joe McCloskey	WA 308
<b>Department of Finance and Personnel</b>	WA 285	Misuse of Disabled Car Parking Bays	WA 301
Deaths: Mephedrone Consumption	WA 288	MRI Scanner in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast	WA 294
Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 287	Multiple Sclerosis	WA 310
Department's Equality Unit	WA 288	Multiple Sclerosis: Newry and Armagh	WA 310
Guidelines on Credit Checks	WA 288	Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Tendors	WA 306
Hospitality: Spend	WA 289	Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Tendors	WA 306
Mobile Phone Applications	WA 286	Oasis Dental Care Limited	WA 302
Mortgage and Debt Arrears	WA 286	Oasis Dental Care Limited	WA 302
Peace III Funding	WA 287	Oasis Dental Care Limited	WA 303
Rates	WA 285	Payment of Invoices	WA 300
Rates Relief	WA 285	Payment of Invoices	WA 301
Reduced Rates for Vacant Properties	WA 286	Payment of Invoices to Businesses	WA 297
Response of Banks to the Needs of Businesses	WA 287	Payment of Invoices to Businesses	WA 298
Retired Civil Servants	WA 288	Pharmaceutical Contractors Committee	WA 302
Solicitors and Barristers: Debarred	WA 285	Physiotherapist Post at the Suffolk Day Centre, Belfast	WA 292
<b>Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety</b>	WA 289	Protect Life Strategy	WA 311
Antrim Area Hospital: Accident and Emergency	WA 309	Pseudomonas	WA 290
Ballymena Health and Care Centre	WA 309	Pseudomonas	WA 291
Bamford Review	WA 309	Pseudomonas Incident in Altnagevlin Area Hospital	WA 290
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Staff	WA 292	Pseudomonas Outbreak	WA 291
		Public Consultation on a Rare Disease Plan	WA 305
		Recruitment Agencies	WA 293

Recruitment to the Patient Tracker		Lawyers' Legal Aid Payments Dispute	WA 326
Positions in the Royal Victoria		Legal Aid Budget	WA 321
Hospital's Accident and Emergency		Legal Aid Costs for the Trial of	
Department	WA 289	Aidan Grew	WA 323
Residential Care Homes	WA 296	Legal Aid Mileage and Travel Time	
Respite Care	WA 305	Rates	WA 321
Shared Services	WA 306	Legal Services Commission	WA 314
Shared Services	WA 306	Legal Services Commission	WA 314
Social Care in a Residential Home	WA 299	Lisnevin Juvenile Justice Centre in	
South Tyrone Hospital: Minor Injuries		Millisle	WA 322
Unit	WA 310	Marian Price	WA 323
Speech and Language Therapists	WA 300	Mileage Claims from Lawyers	WA 335
Speech and Language Therapists	WA 304	Mobile Phone Applications	WA 325
Speech and Language Therapists	WA 304	National Offender Management	
Speech and Language Therapy	WA 304	Service	WA 329
Speech and Language Therapy	WA 308	Office of the Police Ombudsman:	
Stationery Costs in Replying to		Interim Chief Executive	WA 337
Assembly Written Questions	WA 308	On-the-Run from Prison	WA 325
Stereotactic Ablative Radiotherapy	WA 308	Police Part-Time Reserve Gratuity	
Suicide and Alcohol or Drug Addiction	WA 296	Scheme	WA 311
Tackling Alcohol and Drug Addiction	WA 297	Police Stations: Irish Language	WA 331
Ten Day Prompt Payment of Invoices	WA 297	Policing and Community Safety	
Tristel Product	WA 307	Partnerships	WA 328
Tyrone County Hospital	WA 303	Policing and Community Safety	
		Partnerships	WA 328
<b>Department of Justice</b>	WA 311	Policing and Community Safety	
Anti-Social Behaviour Orders	WA 322	Partnerships	WA 329
Attempted Escape of Gerard		Prisoner Assessment Unit Staff	WA 326
Donnegan	WA 321	Prisoners: Christmas Leave	WA 328
Carjacking: Belfast	WA 337	Prison Officer Exit Scheme	WA 334
Civil Legal Aid	WA 313	Prison Officers: Contraband	WA 327
Civil Legal Aid	WA 313	Prison Officers: Redundancy	WA 336
Civil Legal Aid	WA 314	Prison Officers: Redundancy	WA 336
Civil Service Posts in the Department	WA 331	Prison Service Museum	WA 326
Contraband at Roe House,		Prison Service's Strategic Efficiency	
Maghaberry	WA 327	and Effectiveness Programme	WA 312
Courthouse Closures	WA 334	Prisons: Full-body Searches	WA 338
Courthouses	WA 329	Proposed Redundancies in the	
Criminal Injuries Compensation		Northern Ireland Prison Service	WA 335
Scheme	WA 337	Redevelopment of Magilligan Prison	WA 334
Cross-Departmental Strategic		Representations to the Parole	
Framework to Tackle Serious		Commissioners in Relation to	
Organised Crime	WA 335	Marian Price	WA 312
Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 329	Review of the Provision of Prison	
Department's Equality Unit	WA 330	Accommodation	WA 328
Double Yellow Lines Outside		Revocation of Marian Price's Licence	WA 313
Enniskillen Court House	WA 323	Robert Black	WA 311
Driving Without Insurance	WA 335	Rural Crime	WA 337
Forensic Science Northern Ireland	WA 336	Sex Offenders Treatment Programme:	
Historical Enquiries Team	WA 324	Prisoner Participation	WA 325
Historical Enquiries Team cases	WA 324	Sex Offender Treatment Programme	WA 323
Human Trafficking	WA 312	Sexual Offender Treatment	
Human Trafficking	WA 327	Programme	WA 328
Justice and Security Green Paper	WA 325	Stationery Costs in Replying to	
Killings of Six Men at O'Toole's Bar,		Assembly Written Questions	WA 336
Loughinisland	WA 331	Terrorist Convictions	WA 324

Trevor Hamilton	WA 327	<b>Northern Ireland Assembly Commission</b>	WA 378
Unlawful Animal Fighting	WA 330	Assembly's Portrait of Her Majesty	
Whiplash Claims	WA 322	Queen Elizabeth II	WA 379
Wildlife Liaison Officers	WA 334	Assembly Website: Smart Phones	WA 379
<b>Department of the Environment</b>	WA 279	Paintings, Statues and Other Art	
0845 Numbers	WA 279	and Antiques	WA 380
Ballyholme Beach and Groomsport		Parliament Buildings	WA 378
Beach	WA 281	Silverware Held by the Assembly	WA 379
Clause 2 of the Rates (Amendment) Bill		Vase to Commemorate the Coronation	
	WA 280	of HM the Queen in 1953	WA 378
Cost of Clean-Ups	WA 279	<b>Office of the First Minister and</b>	
Cost of Repairs to Thatched Roofs	WA 283	<b>deputy First Minister</b>	WA 195
Discharge Consents for the Glynn		After School Clubs	WA 196
River	WA 284	After School Clubs	WA 197
Draft Northern Area Plan	WA 284	Age Discrimination Legislation	WA 201
George Best Belfast City Airport		Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan	WA 196
Planning Agreement	WA 282	Childcare Fund	WA 199
Grant Aid for the Repair of Windows	WA 283	Child Poverty	WA 200
High Hedges Act (Northern Ireland)		Departmental Revenue Expenditure	WA 199
2011	WA 284	Former Ballykelly Army Base	WA 196
Legislative Proposals	WA 281	Immigrants	WA 201
Listed Buildings	WA 283	Planning Appeals Commission	WA 196
Planning Application B/2011/0057/F	WA 284	Programme for Cohesion, Sharing	
Planning Service: Complaints	WA 280	and Integration	WA 200
Planning Service: Definition of Land	WA 280	Recruitment Process for the Police	
Snaring Regulations	WA 282	Ombudsman	WA 195
Snaring Regulations	WA 282	Social Investment Fund	WA 195
Snaring Regulations	WA 282	Social Investment Fund	WA 200
Uninsured Drivers	WA 281	Social Investment Fund	WA 201
Unwanted Apartment Blocks in		Social Investment Fund	WA 201
Groomsport	WA 281	Strategic Support Fund application	
		by FAIR	WA 19





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