

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 28 September 2012

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Contents

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	WA 159
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 165
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 178
Department of Education	WA 181
Department for Employment and Learning.....	WA 189
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	WA 197
Department of the Environment.....	WA 205
Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 211
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.....	WA 218
Department of Justice	WA 234
Department for Regional Development.....	WA 247
Department for Social Development	WA 270

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

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 28 September 2012

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Time Limits for Answering Written Assembly Questions

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why they do not comply with the requirements of Standing Orders with regards to the time limits for answering written Assembly Questions.

(AQW 5960/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): Every effort is made to respond to written Assembly Questions as expeditiously as possible.

Photographic Services to the Executive

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how much has been spent on the provision of photographic services to the Executive since May 2007, including the award of the contract for Project 5873 to 6 photographic companies in January 2012.

(AQW 9484/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Figures are not available in all Departments for the years 2007/08 and 2008/09. For the 3 years from 2009/10 to 2011/12 inclusive, £349,740 has been spent across all 11 departments in 2009/10, and all 12 departments in 2010/11 and 2011/12 on the provision of photographic services.

AQW 116/11-15

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why AQW 116/11-15, which was due for answer on 8 June 2011, remains unanswered.

(AQW 11350/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A response to AQW 116/11-15 was issued on 17 September 2012.

Special Ministerial Advisors

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why AQW 1550/11-15, which was due for answer on 20 July 2011, remains unanswered; and when they will provide the answer to same.

(AQW 11420/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A response to AQW 1550/11-15 was issued on 17 September 2012.

Meetings of the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy Working Group

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the attendance of (i) MLAs; and (ii) party representatives at meetings of the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy Working Group to date.

(AQW 11690/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Department does not hold the information in the form requested though individuals on the group may have retained an attendance record.

Tickets for the Jubilee Garden Party

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many tickets for the Jubilee Garden Party on 27 June 2012 were allocated to (i) the First Minister; (ii) the deputy First Minister; (iii) their Department; and (iv) its arm's-length bodies.

(AQW 13122/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Our Department, in common with all other departments, was invited by the Northern Ireland Office to submit a total of 150 names of adults and children who wished to attend the Diamond Jubilee event in the Stormont Estate on Wednesday 27 June 2012. There was no separate allocation of tickets for the First Minister or deputy First Minister or for arm's length bodies and the Departmental allocation included its arm's length bodies.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Flanagan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail, for each of the last three financial years, (i) the number of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received by their Department; (ii) the number of FOI requests responded to within the 20 working day requirement; (iii) the number of FOI requests that have taken longer than 20 working days to complete; and (iv) the number of FOI requests which were refused, broken down by the reason for refusal.

(AQW 13768/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The information requested is published in a series of FOI Annual Reports which are on the basis of calendar years, not financial years. The reports can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at:

http://www.ofmdfmni.gov.uk/index/improving-public-services/information_management_and_central_advisory_branch/annual-reports-and-statistics.htm

The statistics for 2011 are provided on a quarterly basis and cannot be seen as fully validated until the publication of the 2011 FOI Annual Report.

Ballykelly

Mr McClarty asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what land and property on the former Ballykelly Army Base site will be made available to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

(AQW 13857/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Our officials are currently working with officials from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to identify what parts of the site it will require for its headquarters, including associated services such as car parking.

New Chairperson and Chief Executive of Ilex

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the appointment process for the new Chairperson and Chief Executive of Ilex; and when this process will begin and both positions will be filled.

(AQW 13877/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A competition to find a new Chairperson was undertaken in early 2012. The competition failed to attract a suitably wide field of candidates and as a result a new public appointment competition will be advertised later this year.

The current Chief Executive of Ilex recently announced her intention to step down from the post with effect from 31 October 2012. Arrangements to secure a suitable successor are currently being considered.

AQW 11698/11-15

Mr Dickson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why priority question AQW 11698/11-15 has not yet been answered.

(AQW 13910/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A response to AQW 11698/11-15 was issued on 17 September 2012.

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether there is, or will be, a stakeholder group with which the Maze Regeneration Board will be expected to consult; and what its functions will be and who will serve on the group.

(AQW 14066/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation has been established with the statutory objective of securing the regeneration of the 347 acre site and in so doing maximising its economic, historic and reconciliation potential. It will be for the Development Corporation to decide on how it will engage with a wide range of stakeholders as it progresses plans for the overall development of the site.

Appointments to the Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister who comprised the interview panel for appointments to the Maze Regeneration Board.

(AQW 14130/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The panel members for the first Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation Board competition in October 2011 were:

- Noel Lavery, Director OFMDFM – Chair
- Terence Brannigan, CEO Connected Health Ltd
- Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive NICVA
- Francesca Graham, Independent Assessor.

The panel members for the second Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation Board competition in March 2012 were:

- Noel Lavery, Director OFMDFM – Chair
- Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive NICVA
- Frank Cushnahan, Former Banker
- Francesca Graham, Independent Assessor.

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what were the requirements placed on applicants to serve on the Maze Regeneration Board in terms of declaring political connections; and what are the consequences of non-compliance.

(AQW 14131/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The requirements for candidates appointed to public appointments are outlined in the Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments. These requirements do not include declaring membership of a political party. The Code requires the political affiliation of any appointee to be identified where an appointee falls into any of the following eight categories:

- 1 Has obtained office as a District Councillor, MP, MEP, MLA.
- 2 Has stood as a candidate for one of the above offices.
- 3 Has spoken on behalf of a political party or candidate.
- 4 Has acted as a political agent.
- 5 Has held office such as Chair, Treasurer or Secretary of a local branch of a political party.
- 6 Has canvassed on behalf of a political party or helped at elections.
- 7 Has undertaken any other political activity which the candidate considers relevant.
- 8 Has made a recordable donation or loan to a political party.

Any potential non-compliance would be investigated by OFMDFM and appropriate action taken in accordance with the nature of the matter.

Chairmanship of the Maze Regeneration Board: Recruitment and Appointment

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when Terence Brannigan declared his membership of the DUP during the recruitment and appointment process in respect of the Chairmanship of the Maze Regeneration Board.

(AQW 14132/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: In line with the Commissioner for Ministerial Public Appointments Code of Practice, there is no requirement for applicants to provide information on political party membership when applying for a public appointment position.

EC Regional Aid Guidelines

Mr P Ramsey asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what input the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels had in developing the EC Regional Aid Guidelines post 2013.

(AQW 14134/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: State Aid is a reserved matter for which lead responsibility falls to the Department for Business Innovation and Skills.

Within the Executive, the policy responsibility for Regional Aid Guidelines rests with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. DETI officials are working closely with Whitehall officials to ensure that our interests are reflected in the UK's interactions with the European Commission, and our office in Brussels provides on the ground support to the DETI Minister and her officials.

Maze Corporation Board

Mr Nesbitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to list the people who sat on the first and second interview panels for the Maze Corporation Board, including the Chairs and Deputy Chairs.

(AQW 14227/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The panel members for the first Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation Board competition in October 2011 were:

- Noel Lavery, Director OFMDFM – Chair
- Terence Brannigan, CEO Connected Health Ltd
- Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive NICVA
- Francesca Graham, Independent Assessor

The panel members for the second Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation Board competition in March 2012 were:

- Noel Lavery, Director OFMDFM – Chair

- Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive NICVA
- Frank Cushnahan, Former Banker
- Francesca Graham, Independent Assessor.

Neither panel has a deputy chair.

Drawdown of Competitive European Union Funds

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the drawdown of competitive European Union funds in 2011/12.

(AQW 14292/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We have nothing further to add to the figures provided by us at Question Time on 2 July 2012 (AQO 2284/11-15), Junior Minister Bell in his statement to the House following publication of the Executive's European Priorities 2011-2012 Implementation Report, or the previous answer provided to the Member on 28 May 2012 (AQW 6266/11-15).

Transgender Strategy

Mr Dickson asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister following the publication of 'Advancing Transgender Equality - A Plan For Action' by the Home Office and the meeting of the Junior Ministers with the Northern Ireland Transgender Forum, what steps are being taken to develop a transgender strategy.

(AQO 2418/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We are well aware of the Home Office's publication "Advancing Transgender Equality – A Plan for Action". There are, however, no plans to develop a separate local Transgender Strategy. Transgender issues will be considered during the review of the Gender Equality Strategy.

Forthcoming Visit to China

Mr Clarke asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the purpose of their forthcoming visit to China.

(AQO 2419/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: In November we will visit China. This is a follow-up to the visit of Madam Lui Yandong to Belfast in April this year and a subsequent invitation to visit China later this year.

Our Programme for Government includes a target to strengthen our economy by developing links with countries such as China and India and we are determined to do all we can to provide the assistance that our businesses need in establishing a presence in overseas markets.

In line with these objectives, we have been working closely with InvestNI and the higher education sector to ensure that our visit delivers the maximum benefit. Our visit is planned to coincide with, and assist, InvestNI with a Northern Ireland Trade Mission to Shanghai.

Social Investment Fund

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the implementation of the Social Investment Fund.

(AQO 2421/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Following Executive agreement to the final operation of the Social Investment Fund, we are in the process of establishing cross-sectoral Steering Groups, to co-ordinate the development of a strategic area plan in each social investment zone over the coming months.

We hope to be in a position to confirm membership of each Steering Group in the next few weeks.

In recognition of the need to expedite the area planning stage and the work involved, we have recently completed a tender exercise to establish a framework of service contractors to support the Steering Groups in developing the area plan.

Subject to business case approvals, they will be contracted to help identify, evidence and prioritise the needs, and propose relevant interventions for inclusion in the area plans, in consultation with the wider community.

It is our aim to have area plans submitted by the end of this calendar year with a view to commencing the delivery of approved projects early next year.

Childcare Strategy

Mrs Cochrane asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Childcare Strategy. (AQO 2424/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Subject to Executive agreement, we intend to publish a consultation document in the near future which will set out the vision and principles for a future Childcare Strategy. The consultation will enable all those with an interest to help shape the development and direction of the Strategy.

Devolution of Corporation Tax

Mr Douglas asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to provide an update on discussions with HM Treasury regarding the devolution of Corporation Tax. (AQO 2425/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A reduction in the rate of Corporation Tax would provide a major stimulus to the local economy; one of the key commitments in our Programme for Government is to press for the devolution of Corporation Tax and reduce its level. The Joint Ministerial Working Group examining the issues involved in devolving responsibility for the rate of Corporation Tax has met on three occasions, most recently on 25 June.

While some good progress has been made, there are a number of critical issues that remain outstanding. In particular, we are concerned that the approach currently being proposed by Treasury would result in the cost of a rate reduction being prohibitively expensive. Cost is a very important issue and this needs to be affordable if it is to work. We still need to agree issues in respect of the proposed approach to the Block Grant adjustment. The Working Group will next meet on 18 October with a view to resolving the outstanding issues. The UK Government will then decide on whether the Executive should be offered the opportunity to take responsibility for Corporation Tax.

Budget Review Group

Mr Brady asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Budget Review Group. (AQO 2426/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Budget Review Group will meet on 27 September 2012 to discuss the progress that has been made on its work programme since its previous meeting on 15 May 2012. It will receive updates on a range of issues, including alternative options for accessing finance, realising the value of surplus and under-utilised assets, and other priority areas on which work was commissioned. It will continue to meet on a quarterly basis and will make recommendations to the Executive in due course.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Red Meat Industry

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she intends to appoint an ombudsman to monitor the red meat industry.

(AQW 14063/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The regulation of issues affecting competition is a reserved matter. You will therefore appreciate that the appointment of an ombudsman to monitor the red meat industry is not within my direct remit. However,

I support fully the concept of fair pricing and welcome the publication by the British Government at Westminster of the draft Groceries Code Adjudicator Bill.

In view of the importance of this matter I, along with the DETI Minister, wrote to the British Minister who has responsibility for this draft Bill. We set out our support for the Bill and called for the early introduction of an Adjudicator with real power. Also, I understand that the Bill will soon be starting its passage through the Commons and it is anticipated that an adjudicator, who will act on behalf of all sectors including the beef sector, will be in place early next year.

I will continue to monitor the progress of the Bill and engage as necessary with the British Minister and Defra Secretary of State. My aim is to see a food industry where both farmers and other suppliers, both of whom make a very important contribution to the local economy, are getting a fair deal.

Producers and Processors of the Pork and Beef Industries

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans she has to assist producers and processors of the pork and beef industries to expand trade, particularly to China and Russia.

(AQW 14074/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Whilst the trade of pork and beef is a commercial matter, my Department works closely with DEFRA, which has responsibility for the negotiation of new export markets, and our industry, to assist export market negotiations to ensure our particular interests are taken into account. Both China and Russia are high priority export markets and much effort is being focussed on getting them opened to trade in both beef and pork.

I have discussed, with my ministerial colleagues in Britain and the south, how our Departments can best work together to benefit our industry in export market negotiation, particularly in respect of China. My officials have also met with their southern counterparts to draw on mutual experiences and will continue to do so in the future.

My Department and the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) are actively involved in the work of UK Export Certification Partnership (UKECP), an industry/government partnership which works to develop export health certification to third countries. My officials are working closely with exporters interested in the Chinese and Russian markets to ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place to facilitate plant approvals, where required, and also supported an inspection by Russian officials on beef and lamb exports earlier this year.

I am committed to making sure that every effort is made to make the Chinese market as economically beneficial to our industry as possible and am pleased to report that a pig meat certificate for China has recently been achieved.

In addition to this ongoing role, a senior DARD official recently visited China to discuss the country's certification requirements. This engagement is likely to involve further visits in order to build relationships and highlight the quality and traceability of agri-food products from the north.

Invest NI's annual programme of trade exhibitions and missions offers opportunities for companies to visit markets of potential. The 2012-13 programme to worldwide destinations includes China and

Russia, which are open to our food processing companies to join. However, companies must be alert to the restrictions currently in place by the countries involved.

The Agri-Food Strategy Board, which includes representatives from the red meat industry, has been established to develop an export-led growth strategy for the sector. I have no doubt that this will include how best to explore new and expanding markets for all of our local produce, including beef and pork.

Countryside Management Scheme

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) on how many occasions woodland areas on farm land have been classified as 'not eligible' for funding under the Countryside Management Scheme because the Forest Service did not verify if they are funding these areas; and (ii) the amount of money that has been deemed 'not eligible' because of this (a) in total; and (b) broken down by constituency.

(AQW 14081/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- (i) There was one occasion in the last three years where woodland areas on farmland have been temporarily classified as not eligible for funding under the NI Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS). This was in 2011.
- (ii) (a) The area described as 'not eligible' for this reason may be entitled to an annual Countryside Management Scheme payment of £1,072.
- (b) DARD does not hold this information broken down by constituency; however this NICMS agreement is in Co Antrim.

Grants for Farmers

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on what grants are currently available for farmers from her Department.

(AQW 14095/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The following table lists the grants available to farmers (subsidy schemes have been excluded from this information):-

Title of Grant Available to Farmers	Brief Description of Purpose/Objective of Grant
Farm Modernisation Programme	To provide financial support of up to £4k maximum towards investment in eligible plant, machinery or equipment to improve the competitiveness of the farm business.
Assistance with Succession advice as part of the Farm Family Options programme	Assistance of up to £250 is available to a farm business to avail of legal and/or financial advice as part of the Mentoring element of the Farm Family Options programme.
Supply Chain Development Programme Co-operation support Study Tours	50% funding to a maximum of £2,500 for professional advice to groups to establish the group as a legal entity. 75% of the cost per participant to a group maximum of £3,000 to avail of study tours linked to the groups needs.

Title of Grant Available to Farmers	Brief Description of Purpose/Objective of Grant
Manure Efficiency Technology Scheme (METS) Tranche 2	The METS provides grant aid to encourage farmers to invest in advanced slurry spreading systems. Investment in this technology will contribute to the overall objective of developing a more sustainable environment.
Agriculture and Forestry Processing & Marketing Grant Scheme (PMG)	The PMG Scheme provides grant aid to improve the economic performance and international competitiveness of the agri-food processing, horticulture and forestry sectors through the use of technology together with sound manufacturing and environment management practices.
NI Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) measures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3	<p>Farmers may avail themselves of funding under these measures, which aim to:-</p> <p>Assist farm households to diversify into non-agricultural activities and, as a consequence, maintain or increase the income of farm households and create employment opportunities (all on-farm applications must be under this measure).</p> <p>Create employment opportunities through promoting entrepreneurship and developing the economic infrastructure in rural areas by providing support to existing micro-enterprises or to persons wishing to set up a new micro-enterprise in a non-agricultural sector.</p> <p>Use the natural resources in the north of Ireland's rural areas to attract visitors and create new employment opportunities through the sustainable development of the rural economy by providing support to existing rural tourism enterprises or to persons wishing to set up a new sustainable tourism enterprise.</p>
NI Rural Development Programme (NIRDP) measures 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6	<p>Farmers and rural dwellers may avail themselves of funding under these measures, which aim to:-</p> <p>Support the improvement of basic services in rural areas, including cultural and leisure facilities and related small-scale infrastructure.</p> <p>Support animation and capacity-building within and between villages and surrounding rural areas in the formulation of integrated action plans to define the role of the village and fully develop the potential of villages and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Use the natural resources in the north of Ireland's rural areas to create new employment opportunities and develop the rural economy through supporting local village initiatives to preserve and upgrade their rural heritage.</p>

Title of Grant Available to Farmers	Brief Description of Purpose/Objective of Grant
*NI Countryside Management Scheme	This scheme aims to enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, enhance the landscape and mitigate climate change.
*Countryside Management Scheme	This scheme aims to enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, enhance the landscape and mitigate climate change.
*Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme	This scheme aims to enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, enhance the landscape and mitigate climate change.
*Organic Farming Scheme	The Scheme provides payments to help farmers with the additional costs and loss of income that occurs during the conversion period to organic production. It aims to help protect and enhance the rural environment, and help producers meet consumer demand for organic produce.
*Habitat Improvement Scheme	Participants receive funding to manage areas on their farm to create, protect or enhance wildlife habitats.
*Countryside Access Scheme	Participants receive funding to maintain walkways on their land.
European Fisheries Fund (Productive Investments in Aquaculture Measure)	To support the construction, extension, equipping and modernisation of aquaculture production installations, in particular with a view to improving working conditions, hygiene, human or animal health, and product quality, while reducing negative impacts or enhancing positive impacts on the environment.
Biomass Processing Challenge Fund (BPCF)	The BPCF aims to encourage agricultural and forestry businesses to install biomass fuelled technologies primarily to aid agricultural activities at farm level.
Woodland Grant Scheme; Farm Woodland Premium Scheme; and Short Rotation Coppice Scheme	Grant aid to farmers and other landowners for creation of new woodland.
Woodland Environments Grant	Grant assistance to support woodlands owners to encourage the management of woodlands to contribute to biodiversity objectives.
Sustainable Forest Operations Grant	To encourage good management of existing woodlands.
Replanting Grant	Grant assistance to support replanting of existing woodland after clearfelling.

Glenariffe and Ballypatrick Forests

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to Glenariffe and Ballypatrick Forests, what involvement the Forest Service has had with local communities about helping to design the forests and the benefits of having a forest on their doorstep, as outlined in the Forest Service Business Plan 2012-2013.

(AQW 14100/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: During the Antrim forest management planning review, which included Glenariffe and Ballypatrick forests, Forest Service held consultation meetings and open days at both a strategic and local level providing opportunities for local people to give feedback on the review of forest plans including information on their design and benefits.

Forest Service is keen to ensure that individual communities should be involved in designing forests and benefit directly from the presence of a forest on their doorstep and will continue to explore with stakeholders and partner organisations how best this might be done.

Current arrangements have the potential to be improved and to ensure that resources are being most effectively targeted, Forest Service has a business plan target for 2012/13 to 'Review the process of community engagement with forestry planning and activity in collaboration with partners in the south of Ireland.'

Glenariffe and Ballypatrick Forests

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why the Forest Service does not have an agreement with Moyle District Council on the development of the social use of Glenariffe and Ballypatrick Forests, given that both forests occupy strategically important positions within a tourist destination area, as outlined in the Forest Service Business Plan 2012-13.

(AQW 14105/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Forest Service is aware that some of our forests occupy strategically important positions within tourist destination areas and they have the potential to hold visitors within tourist areas as part of a longer visit.

My vision is for improved partnership working with local government and other bodies to make sure that forests play as full a role as possible in supporting regional and local recreational and tourism agendas.

Good progress has been made with several councils in the development of partnership arrangements, expressed in the form of memoranda of understanding and development licences. In the continuation of this work my officials in Forest Service have arranged to meet senior Moyle DC officials to discuss the council's recreation and tourism agendas and the type of agreements that may be used to deliver tourism and social use benefits in that tourism destination area.

Single Farm Payments

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many Single Farm Payments made after the 30 June deadline (i) were assessed for interest payments; and (ii) were not paid with interest because of the £50 minimum cap.

(AQW 14156/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have arranged for the review of approximately 600 inspection cases that were paid 2011 Single Farm Payments after 30 June 2012 in order to identify those cases where the delay in payment was caused solely by my Department and then to calculate the amount of interest accruing. The payment of interest will begin from late September 2012.

Figures in respect of the number of interest payments made and the number of cases in which interest is not payable will be available in November 2012.

Single Farm Payments

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, for each of the last three years, to detail the number of Single Farm Payment applicants who received late payments after 30 June deadline; (i) how many applicants were paid interest; and (iii) what was the total amount of interest paid.

(AQW 14157/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The number of Single Farm Payment claims not finalised after the 30 June deadline for each of the last three scheme years are:

2009	2010	2011
451	416	1,261

- i) There are a variety of reasons in any year for claims not being completed by 30 June, and in many instances these are beyond the control of my Department, for example, probate not completed, disputes between landowners and tenants about the availability of land to one of the parties, the same field claimed by more than one applicant and bank account details not provided to enable payment to be credited to a bank account.
- ii) While the EU rules governing the SFP require us to make payments in full by 30 June each year, there is no obligation within these rules to pay interest. However payments made after 30 June do provide a principled basis on which to pay interest where the delay in payment has been solely caused by my Department. Because of the general delay experienced in finalising inspection cases for the 2011 scheme year I have made a commitment to pay interest in those claims paid after 1 July 2012 where the delay was solely caused solely by my Department and the interest is a minimum of £50. Interest payments were not deployed for the 2009 and 2010 scheme years.
- iii) For the 2011 scheme year, the payment of interest that exceeds the £50 minimum cap value will begin from late September 2012. It is anticipated that figures in respect of the amount paid to farmers will be available in November 2012.

Spread of Phytophthora Ramorum in South Down

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on her Department's efforts to tackle the spread of Phytophthora ramorum in South Down.

(AQW 14191/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Phytophthora ramorum is a fungus-like pathogen which causes a serious plant disease which has the potential to attack a wide range of woody plants including rhododendron, viburnum and certain species of tree.

Previously limited to findings in plants in trade, the disease was first diagnosed in established plants in the South Down area on rhododendron at two private sites in late 2007. The first outbreak of the disease in larch in the area was confirmed at a public forest in the summer of 2010.

My Department has committed significant resources to control ramorum disease in that area. Felling of over 30 hectares of larch trees at two public forests and two private sites has been undertaken to contain the spread of the disease, along with an ongoing programme to monitor and control the disease in rhododendron at private sites. Programmes of surveillance including aerial and on ground inspections of both public and private woodland are also in place. Bio-security measures have been implemented at affected sites and arrangements put in place that have facilitated the movement and processing of over 9,000 cubic metres of affected wood. My Department remains committed to manage ramorum disease in trees, woodland and on other plants and is funding research, carried out by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), into the host/pathogen interactions.

Poxvirus and Adenovirus Among the Red Squirrel Population

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her Department's progress in dealing with the spread of Poxvirus and Adenovirus among the Red Squirrel population in Tollymore Forest.

(AQW 14192/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The first case of poxvirus within a red squirrel population in Tollymore forest was confirmed by laboratory testing on 16 March 2011. Since then close liaison has taken place between NI Environment Agency who are the relevant authority, Forest Service and members of the Tollymore Red Squirrel Group in carrying out actions to restrict the spread of the disease to the remainder of the red squirrel population.

This has included the immediate removal of sick red squirrels, close monitoring of the remaining red squirrel population and continued control of grey squirrels as they are carriers of the disease.

Members of the NI Red Squirrel Forum, which includes representatives of Red Squirrel Groups throughout the north of Ireland, relevant authorities in the south of Ireland, and the member organisations of the British Red Squirrel Forum were kept informed of the developing situation.

The re-emergence of young red squirrels at Tollymore Forest during 2012 coupled with the fact that the last observation of a red squirrel showing symptoms of the poxvirus was reported over one year ago provides optimism that the local red squirrel population is now recovering from the poxvirus outbreak of 2011.

The only detected case of adenovirus in a wild red squirrel in the north of Ireland was also confirmed in Tollymore Forest in October 2011.

Forest Service liaised with a leading expert on adenovirus infections of red squirrels and relayed his advice to others as appropriate. No further cases of the adenovirus occurring within a wild red squirrel population have been reported in the north of Ireland since.

Anti-Social Behaviour in Castlewellan and Tollymore Forest Parks

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) what specific measures have been employed by Forest Service to reduce anti-social behaviour in Castlewellan and Tollymore Forest Parks; (ii) what is Forest Service's assessment of the success of these measures to date; and (iii) whether any further measures are required to tackle anti-social behaviour in our forests.

(AQW 14194/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: (i) Forest Service employs staff at both Castlewellan and Tollymore Forest Parks who provide a forest park ranger service dealing with customer queries and incidents of anti-social behaviour as and when required. Forest Service also provide contracted in night-time security personnel at peak visitor periods. Additionally, Forest Service permission for events and activities carry a requirement that appropriate measures are taken by the organiser to mitigate anti-social behaviour.

- (ii) To date these measures are considered to be working well and, compared to previous years, complaints of anti-social behaviour within these sites are now rare.
- (iii) Forest Service keeps the level of anti-social behaviour / customer satisfaction under continual review and further measures are considered within this context. Forest Service places ongoing importance on engaging with local people and visitors; discussions with local PSNI officers regarding any incidents where improvements may be made and, clear lines of communication between Forest Service, contractors, event organisers etc. The need for further restrictions on night time vehicular access to these sites has been considered and is being kept under review.

Forestry Tourism

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on discussions between the Tourist Board and Forest Service Project Management Group on advancing Forestry Tourism. (AQW 14195/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The forest recreation strategy acknowledges that we will have to work with partners to realise the full potential of forests to deliver against wider objectives such as health, tourism, education and sport and my officials are working with other government agencies, local authorities and other recreational providers to ensure that opportunities are realised.

Within the context of this strategy, an assessment of the existing and potential tourism development opportunities available from forests in the north of Ireland has been jointly commissioned between the NI Tourist Board and Forest Service. The purpose of the study is to gather and analyse tourism information and provide evidence-based proposals for tourism development for forests in the north of Ireland. This will inform the Forest Service planning review process and assist the NI Tourist Board and other partners to support the case for tourism development in forests. The study is required to provide specific outputs for forests in the Mourne area and both Down District Council and Newry and Mourne District Council are represented on the project steering group.

Wind Farms in Departmental Owned Forests

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether Forest Service has explored the potential development of Wind Farms in departmental owned forests across South Down. (AQW 14196/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: During a market sounding exercise in 2009, a developer expressed interest in County Down as a potential location for wind farm development on forestry land. Much of this land is covered by environmental designations. An Outline Business Case has been developed for all forestry land. No decisions have been taken on whether to market test the potential for wind farm development on forestry land in South Down.

The Outline Business Case is now being considered, before I make a decision on whether to proceed on this or any part of the proposals.

Public Awareness of Animal Cruelty

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how her Department intends to increase public awareness of animal cruelty. (AQW 14274/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department has issued a number of press notices to inform the public about the commencement of the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 and the appointment of the new Animal Welfare Officers by Councils. The animal welfare contact points for DARD, the Councils' Animal Welfare Officers and the PSNI are publicised on my Department's website and similar information is available on the NI Direct website and local Councils' websites.

My Department has recently published revised Codes of Practice for the welfare of farmed animals such as beef cattle, sheep and meat chickens as well as new Codes of Practice for the keeping of other animals such as cats, dogs, horses, non-human primates and rabbits. These Codes of Practice, which contain useful guidance for animal owners, are available on my Department's website. Further revisions of the Codes are planned for pigs, dairy cows and laying hens. Similar information is available on the NI Direct website.

The Councils have also publicised the new Animal Welfare Officer contact points, by a combination of internet information and Council newsletters to rate payers. In addition, earlier this year Councils invited key animal welfare organisations to a number of meetings to update them on the Councils new role in animal welfare and to give them the opportunity to meet the new Animal Welfare Officers.

I have been very encouraged by the positive approach taken by Councils to their new responsibilities and by the close and effective partnership working between Council and DARD officials in putting the necessary arrangements in place.

In the first five months since the Councils commenced their new enforcement role in respect of domestic pets and horses they have received over 1800 animal welfare complaints from the public. This gives confidence that the public know who to contact if they have an animal welfare concern.

Over the coming weeks, my Department plans to issue a press release to remind farmers of the actions they should take to protect the welfare of their animals this winter.

Following the Assembly motion debate on 24 September regarding the offences and penalties contained in the Welfare of Animals Act 2011, I issued a press release restating the current position regarding the penalties for offences under the legislation, emphasising the importance of animal welfare and making it clear that causing unnecessary suffering to animals is completely unacceptable. I also took that opportunity to encourage the public to report any animal welfare concerns to the relevant enforcement Agency.

When the first cases under the new Welfare of Animals Act have been successfully prosecuted in the Courts, I will be encouraging the relevant enforcement Agency to widely publicise the outcomes of these cases to deter others from committing similar offences.

The general public will be left in no doubt that causing unnecessary suffering, including deliberate acts of cruelty to domestic pets, will not be tolerated and that the perpetrators will be punished.

Department's Headquarters: Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many departmental staff, who will be affected by the transfer of the Department's headquarters to Ballykelly, live within each parliamentary constituency.

(AQW 14287/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: A total of 845 DARD staff are currently headquartered at Dundonald House and Hydebank and are within the scope of the transfer to Ballykelly. Information in the form requested is not readily available as details of where staff live is held by postcode area rather than by parliamentary constituency area.

Attached, however, is a table showing the numbers of staff, by postcode areas, together with some electoral constituency information. A significant number of postcodes appear in more than one constituency.

Dundonald House and Hydebank Staff at 4 Sep 2012 (Excluding Forest Service)			
Post Code	Number	Post Code Location	Constituencies
None Held	51		
BT41	11	Antrim	North Antrim/Mid Ulster/South Antrim/East Antrim
BT60	2	Armagh	Upper Bann/Newry And Armagh
BT61	1	Armagh	Newry And Armagh
BT39	18	Ballyclare	North Antrim/East Antrim/South Antrim
BT42	9	Ballymena	South Antrim/North Antrim
BT43	5	Ballymena	North Antrim
BT53	3	Ballymoney	North Antrim/East Londonderry
BT24	13	Ballynahinch	Strangford/Lagan Valley/South Down

Dundonald House and Hydebank Staff at 4 Sep 2012 (Exlcuding Forest Service)			
Post Code	Number	Post Code Location	Constituencies
BT32	11	Banbridge	Lagan Valley/South Down/Upper Bann
BT19	37	Bangor	Strangford/North Down
BT20	24	Bangor	North Down
BT10	4	Belfast	Belfast South/Belfast West
BT11	7	Belfast	Belfast South/Belfast West
BT12	6	Belfast	Belfast South/Belfast West
BT13	4	Belfast	Belfast West/Belfast North
BT14	10	Belfast	Belfast West/Belfast North/South Antrim
BT15	11	Belfast	Belfast North
BT16	27	Belfast	Belfast East/North Down/Strangford
BT17	9	Belfast	Belfast South/Belfast West/Lagan Valley/South Antrim
BT29	8	Belfast	South Antrim
BT4	29	Belfast	Belfast East
BT6	22	Belfast	Belfast East/Belfast South/Strangford
BT8	35	Belfast	Belfast South/Lagan Valley/Strangford
BT2	1	Belfast	Belfast North/Belfast South
BT5	47	Belfast	Belfast East/Belfast South/Strangford
BT7	7	Belfast	Belfast South
BT9	10	Belfast	Belfast South
1050	1	Brussels	
1060	1	Brussels	
BT57	2	Bushmills	East Londonderry/North Antrim
BT68	1	Caledon	Fermanagh South Tyrone/Newry & Armagh
BT38	25	Carrickfergus	East Antrim/South Antrim
BT81	1	Castlederg	West Tyrone
BT31	3	Castlewellan	South Down
BT51	2	Coleraine	East Londonderry/North Antrim/Mid Ulster
BT52	2	Coleraine	East Londonderry
BT80	4	Cookstown	Mid Ulster
BT62	6	Craigavon	Fermanagh South Tyrone/Newry & Armagh/ Upper Bann
BT63	1	Craigavon	Newry And Armagh/Upper Bann
BT65	2	Craigavon	Upper Bann

Dundonald House and Hydebank Staff at 4 Sep 2012 (Exlcuding Forest Service)			
Post Code	Number	Post Code Location	Constituencies
BT66	8	Craigavon	Upper Bann
BT67	12	Craigavon	Lagan Valley/Upper Bann
BT21	12	Donaghadee	North Down/Strangford
BT30	35	Downpatrick	South Down/Strangford
BT25	7	Dromore	Lagan Valley/South Down/Upper Bann
BT70	6	Dungannon	Fermanagh South Tyrone/Mid Ulster/West Tyrone
BT71	3	Dungannon	Fermanagh South Tyrone/Mid Ulster/Newry & Armagh/Upper Bann
BT74	1	Enniskillen	Fermanagh South Tyrone/West Tyrone
BT92	3	Enniskillen	Fermanagh South Tyrone/West Tyrone
BT26	6	Hillsborough	Lagan Valley
BT18	16	Holywood	Belfast East/North Down
BT40	7	Larne	East Antrim
BT27	20	Lisburn	South Antrim/Lagan Valley
BT28	17	Lisburn	South Antrim/Lagan Valley/Upper Bann
BT47	3	Londonderry	East Londonderry/Foyle/West Tyrone
BT48	2	Londonderry	Foyle
BT46	1	Maghera	Mid Ulster/East Londonderry
BT45	9	Magherafelt	Mid Ulster
BT33	4	Newcastle	South Down
BT35	4	Newry	Newry & Armagh/South Down/Upper Bann
BT34	11	Newry	Newry & Armagh/South Down/Upper Bann
BT36	13	Newtownabbey	Belfast North/East Antrim/South Antrim
BT37	13	Newtownabbey	Belfast North/East Antrim/South Antrim
BT22	40	Newtownards	North Down/Strangford
BT23	111	Newtownards	Belfast East/North Down/Strangford
BT78	2	Omagh	Fermanagh South Tyrone/West Tyrone
BT79	3	Omagh	Mid Ulster/West Tyrone
BT56	2	Portrush	East Londonderry
BT82	1	Strabane	Fermanagh South Tyrone/West Tyrone
Grand Total	845		

Departmental Headquarters

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the benefits for the wider rural North West area resulting from her decision to relocate her Department's headquarters to Ballykelly.

(AQO 2476/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Mr Speaker, I am confident that the wider rural area around the North West will significantly benefit from this project in a number of ways.

As well as the construction jobs supported through the refit of the accommodation at the site, local businesses and suppliers in the area will benefit from a much larger customer base. The new headquarters will need to be serviced, with functions such as cleaning, catering and security services which will impact on employment in the area. I will also ensure that the development of the site benefits the local community – how that will be met will be included in the business case but I envisage, for example my Department being able to open up its conference rooms for community use.

As well as that this relocation will open up employment and promotion opportunities for the people living in the local area. It will also ensure greater accessibility to DARD services for those living in the region.

I believe that this relocation to Ballykelly emphasises that DARD is a Department that promotes regional economic re-balancing and is committed to the sustainability of rural communities.

Farming

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what steps her Department is taking to deal with the current crisis within the farming sector.

(AQO 2479/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I recognise that farmers in several sectors have been experiencing difficulty in achieving a level of profitability that they feel is sustainable. Farmers have been experiencing high livestock feed costs due to the high world price of grain and, in some cases, due to the wet summer weather. Meal for feeding livestock is expensive and, in many cases, more has been fed due to poor summer weather curtailing grazing.

Input costs are only half of the equation, the other half being prices received for produce. Producer prices across the milk, beef and sheep sectors have fallen during the course of 2012. The price farmers receive for their produce is a commercial matter over which my Department has no control. Nevertheless, I believe that farmers should receive a fair price for their produce.

My Department offers assistance in a number of ways to farmers striving to improve farm efficiency. Farmers are encouraged to use benchmarking, which is available within the Rural Development Programme. Farmers can also benefit from research undertaken by the Agri-food and Biosciences Institute. Advice on farm management and planning can be obtained from your CAFRE Development Advisers.

Rural Development Programme: GAA

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much money from the Rural Development Fund has been given to clubs or organisations that are part of the Gaelic Athletic Association in each county.

(AQO 2480/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department has not funded projects where the specific aim is the development and promotion of any sport. Financial support under these terms would not be eligible under the Rural Development Programme. However, through Axis 3 some rural community facilities have been funded where sports organisations have acted as the lead project sponsor. These projects are eligible under the terms and conditions of the programme where they are designed primarily to benefit the wider rural community by affording local people the opportunity to access facilities and undertake a vast range of community activities at suitable venues in their areas.

Rural Development Programme: Strategic Projects

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much funding she has allocated for strategic projects within the Rural Development Programme.

(AQO 2481/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have not allocated any funds under RDP to Strategic Projects. Rather in response to the continued build up of underspend across Axis 3, I announced a re-focus for the programme last year and asked the Local Action Groups to consider opening calls for strategic projects up to £1m in value. It is the responsibility of the LAG's to encourage enhanced opportunities for higher spend and most agree that strategic projects are a good way to help get more funds on the ground more quickly. All LAG's have availed of that opportunity and most are currently working towards taking the applications through the assessment process.

It will be the Local Action Groups together with the Joint Council committees who will making determine which strategic projects will be successful in the competitive assessment process and currently it is for them to determine how much to allocate to these successful strategic projects.

A5 Dual Carriageway: Compulsory Acquisition

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the impact on the agriculture industry in the west from the Minister for Regional Development's decision to proceed with the A5 dual carriageway and the compulsory acquisition of some 1000 acres of land.

(AQO 2483/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: It is the responsibility of the Department of Regional Development (DRD) to ensure the impact of any roads scheme is properly assessed. The Minister for Regional Development has advised me that his Department's Roads Service carried out Agricultural Impact Assessments for 282 farms across the entire A5 dualling scheme. The reality is that fewer than 20 percent of these farms will be substantially impacted.

I am content that, while this scheme will undoubtedly have a negative impact on some individual farm businesses, the overall impact on the agriculture industry will be minimal.

It is also important to bear in mind that the Executive approved this scheme.

National Parks

Mr McCallister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what discussions she has had with the Minister of the Environment about the possible introduction of National Parks.

(AQO 2484/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I met with the Minister of the Environment in May of this year to discuss his intention to bring forward proposals on enabling legislation for national parks.

My Department has consistently held the position that farmers and rural dwellers must be fully involved in any debate on establishing national parks, and that their concerns must be taken into account. I advised the Minister of this during our meeting.

I stressed it would be important that no additional controls should be placed on farming activities and that a national park could only proceed with the co-operation and support of farmers and rural dwellers.

I am aware of significant opposition to the Minister of the Environment's proposals among farmers and residents who live in areas that are being considered for national park designation.

Should any proposal come before the Executive, I will seek to ensure that the wide range of concerns of farmers and rural dwellers are at the forefront of considerations.

I believe that a national park could only proceed with the agreement of the people in that area.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Salmon Conservation

Mr Byrne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on her Department's plan to develop a salmon conservation policy.

(AQO 2491/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): My Department has carried out a public consultation process on a range of salmon conservation measures for both commercial netting and recreational angling. The consultation closed in July and a statistical analysis of the responses has been completed.

My officials are considering the outcomes of the public consultation, together with scientific and other advice, and I will decide on what actions are required to provide robust protection of wild Atlantic salmon stocks in the DCAL jurisdiction.

Following this, I will bring forward the necessary legislation and I would anticipate this coming into effect during 2013.

Líofa 2015

Ms Ruane asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what progress has been made on the Líofa campaign over the last year.

(AQO 2492/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Considerable progress has been made. When Líofa was launched on 5th September 2011 the initial target was to encourage 1000 people from all walks of life across the north to sign up to becoming fluent in Irish by 2015. Since then we have exceeded our second target of signing up 2015 people by 2015 and we have now set our sights even higher and aim to have 5000 people fluent in Irish by the year 2015. So far, over 2,300 people have signed up to the Líofa challenge.

Over the past year, I have seen how the appeal of the Irish language has widened. I have attended events across the north, heard people's stories and shared experiences. What is being built is a diverse and inclusive community of people who are united in their journey to learn Irish.

This demonstrates people are keen to explore our rich cultural heritage. The Irish Language is a vital part of our cultural mix and something that can be enjoyed and shared by all.

Departmental Arm's-length Bodies

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on her Department's review of its arm's-length bodies.

(AQO 2493/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Since updating the Assembly on the 28th May, I postponed completion of the stage 1 review of Sport NI (SNI) and asked SNI to carry out a detailed review of their internal governance and efficiency procedures. Their report is due for completion by end September / early October and subsequently the review team will complete stage 1 and stage 2 of the review.

The team are currently finalising stage 1 reviews for both National Museums NI (NMNI) and NI Museums Council (NIMC). Draft stage 1 reports will be issued to each body shortly for comment.

The team will commence the review of Arts Council by the end of September.

2012 Olympics: Training

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how many training camps hosted teams for the Olympic and the Paralympic Games.

(AQO 2494/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Seventeen countries chose the north of Ireland as their base for Pre Games training. The countries and sports are:-

- China - for the Men's and Women's Olympic Artistic Gymnastics, who were hosted by Salto Gymnastics Centre in Lisburn;
- Australia, Cuba, Canada, Ecuador, Puerto Rico and Argentina - for Olympic boxing, who were hosted by Queens University, Belfast;
- Ireland - Paralympics Team were hosted by Antrim Forum;
- Mexico, Qatar, Algeria, Djibouti, Oman, St Vincent and the Grenadines, and Egypt Olympic athletics Teams were also hosted by Antrim Forum;
- Jordan - Paralympics Team was also hosted by Antrim Forum; and
- South Africa - for Olympic badminton, who were hosted by Lisburn Racquets Club.

In addition to the camps there were three pre Games qualifying events held in the north of Ireland and five pre Games training events.

In total over one thousand international athletes prepared for the Games in the north of Ireland.

North/South Language Body

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the publication of accounts by the North/South Language Body.

(AQO 2495/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: A revised process to simplify and speed up the consolidation of Accounts was used for the first time to complete the 2008 accounts and these were laid in the respective Houses on 11 July 2012.

At the NSMC Languages meeting on 9 July 2012 Ministers sought assurances from both chairs and CEOs that the 2009 and 2010 reports and accounts of the Language Body will be laid before the Assembly and both Houses of Oireachtas by the 31 December 2012. Sponsor departments receive fortnightly reports from the agencies about progress towards the completion of the outstanding accounts to enable them to monitor the position and challenge any issues which might delay completion.

No significant issues affecting the completion and laying of the 2009 and 2010 accounts have been reported.

Boxing

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether Sport NI has made contact with all boxing clubs in the South Down area to establish their equipment needs so that they may benefit from the Boxing Strategy.

(AQO 2496/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI is currently taking forward an exercise to establish the equipment and facility needs of boxing clubs across the north of Ireland that are affiliated, or have recently been affiliated, to the boxing governing body, the Irish Amateur Boxing Association (IABA). This includes boxing clubs based in the South Down area. I understand that Sport NI has made contact with 9 clubs in South Down and to date has received responses from 2 of these.

Fishing

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans she has for the further development of rod fishing.

(AQO 2497/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department manages the Public Angling Estate which consists of some 63 coarse and game fisheries across the north of Ireland. The aim of the Public Angling Estate is to provide local and visiting anglers with high quality fishing at an affordable price. Officials keep under review the possibility of new fisheries being added to the Estate to enhance the product and currently are assessing a number of waters that may be taken on.

The Department has a programme of work to enhance access to and facilities at Public Angling Estate waters. A number of these are stocked trout fisheries and to support the stocking regime a new hatchery has been opened recently at the Department's fish farm at Movinagher near Kilrea.

The Department undertakes a range of promotional activities, such as participating in angling shows in the north and south of Ireland, Great Britain and Europe. The Department also works closely with other agencies in promoting angling and tourism and played an important role in the success of the recent World Pairs Angling Championship in the Lakelands & inland Waterways region which attracted anglers from around the World.

DCAL produces a guide, which promotes awareness of all waters in the Public Angling Estate and a separate guide detailing the facilities for disabled anglers.

Officials are currently carrying out initial work looking at new initiatives to further develop angling in the region.

DCAL will continue to encourage new anglers into the sport by supporting angling Club Open days and competitions where minority groups such as juveniles, disabled persons or females are encouraged to participate. The Department will consider requests from angling clubs for donations of free fish in support of such competitions and events.

DCAL Fisheries Officers will continue to provide Angling Clubs with free technical advice on a range of issues such as fish husbandry techniques and conservation measures, which will help sustain and improve fish stocks.

Marching Bands

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on her Department's research into marching bands.

(AQO 2498/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department produced a Study and Toolkit for Marching Bands which can be found on the DCAL website.

The document is designed for use by policy makers, marching bands and umbrella groups from all traditions who wish to develop their musical and cultural offering.

My officials met with the Confederation of Ulster Bands (who provided extensive input and oversaw development of the final documents) in October last year and were advised that the document had been warmly received by the sector, with early indications that the content was aiding development of the sector.

Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding her Department has made available for events and publications to celebrate the centenary of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant.
(AQO 2499/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The creative and cultural infrastructure and programmes already funded and supported by my Department will play a key role in telling the stories and different interpretations of significant anniversaries in the decade ahead.

The centenary of the signing of the Ulster Covenant will be examined by a diverse range of events across the libraries network; at PRONI and by exhibitions, dramas, literature and music at our museums and elsewhere.

On the eve of the anniversary, a landmark documentary on the BBC will explore the story of the Ulster Covenant. Supported by NI Screen, via the Ulster-Scots Broadcasting Fund, it will shine a light on the people, places and stories of that time.

Department of Education

School Places for Year 1 Pupils in the Ballyholme and Groomsport Areas of Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education what can his Department do to resolve the lack of school places for year 1 pupils in the Ballyholme and Groomsport areas of Bangor.
(AQW 14150/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): Both the primary schools within the Ballyholme and Groomsport area – Ballyholme PS and Towerview PS – were oversubscribed with applications for admission for September 2012 and had to apply their published admissions criteria to determine which pupils to admit. There are, however, sufficient places available in the controlled sector in Bangor as a whole and there are no plans to increase the admissions number of either of these schools.

Schools in the Ballyholme and Groomsport Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education what action he can take so that schools in the Ballyholme and Groomsport area include Groomsport in their catchment area for year 1 pupils.
(AQW 14151/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There are two primary schools in the immediate Ballyholme/Groomsport area; Ballyholme and Towerview Primary Schools. The admissions criteria used by these schools give priority to different circumstances and as a result both enrol pupils from outside what might be considered their natural catchment area, including from Groomsport. Proximity to the school is the third criterion for Ballyholme PS and fifth for Towerview PS.

It is the sole responsibility of the Board of Governors of a school to define the criteria they wish to use to select between applicants down to the last available place. In drawing up their criteria Boards of Governors must consider any representations made to it by – in the case of a controlled school – the appropriate Education and Library Board. Where schools are oversubscribed with applications for admission they have to apply their published admissions criteria to determine which pupils they can admit. It is an unfortunate, though an inevitable consequence of how the admissions process works however, that some children do not meet a school's choice of admissions criteria as well as others.

Amalgamation of Primary Schools

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education, over the past year, what permission has been given to the Belfast Education and Library Board to seek planning permission for the amalgamation of any primary schools.
(AQW 14164/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In undertaking planning for schools within its area it is a matter for the relevant Education and Library Board to consider whether to apply for planning permission. The Board does not have to seek the Departments permission to proceed with a planning application.

Co-operation Between Schools and the Manufacturing Industry

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education what action his Department will take to ensure greater co-operation between schools and the manufacturing industry.
(AQW 14241/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The promotion of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) is important to our future economic growth and as Education Minister I am committed to playing my part. At every level in our schools, I have been driving forward work to promote the uptake of STEM subjects, to foster links between schools and business (including manufacturing) and to promote the importance of high quality careers education that raises aspirations for all.

The revised curriculum, which is now in place across all grant-aided schools, provides much greater freedom for teachers to explore STEM-related learning with pupils. The full implementation of the Entitlement Framework in September 2015 will guarantee all young people at Key Stage 4 and at Sixth Form equality of access to a broad, balanced and more economically relevant pupil-centric curriculum. This increased choice is being supported with improved careers education, information, advice and guidance, with a particular focus on STEM-related career opportunities.

My Department directly funds a number of organisations each year to ensure that schools link with business. These organisations include Sentinus, which through partnership with business and industry provides opportunities for more than 50,000 pupils per annum to develop skills for the work place and discover the exciting range of careers available to them in science and engineering.

My Department is also a member of the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group that has recently been established by the Department for Employment and Learning with the aim of producing an action plan to address current and future skill needs of the sector.

Japanese Knotweed on South Eastern and Education Library Board Land

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education what work has been undertaken by the South Eastern Education and Library Board to ensure that Japanese knotweed, identified in the ecological report at its land on Old Belfast Road, Bangor, does not spread to adjacent properties.
(AQW 14247/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Any issues at the site are a matter for the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) to address in the first instance. SEELB has advised that the area has been sprayed with a herbicide specifically used to eradicate Japanese knotweed. Repeat spraying will be carried out when required.

Education Bill

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education whether the Education Bill was discussed at the first Executive meeting after recess, as promised by the First Minister and deputy First Minister in their statement of 19 July 2012; and when the Bill will be introduced in the Assembly.
(AQW 14249/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The content of Executive papers and all aspects of Executive business are confidential.

Empty School Desks

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how his Department calculates the level of empty school desks; and what is the difference between maximum school enrolment and maximum school capacity.
(AQW 14252/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department derives data on unfilled places (empty desks) in funded schools by comparing the approved enrolment number of each school against the actual enrolment of schools at the annual census date (October) in the same year. The figures exclude pupils in receipt of a statement of special educational needs, and pupils admitted on appeal, or those admitted by direction of the Exceptional Circumstances Body (ECB) (post-primary schools only), as they are admitted over and above a schools approved enrolment number.

The maximum enrolment capacity is the approved enrolment number of a school which is determined by the Department having regard to a number of factors and in particular to the teaching accommodation available at a school. The actual number of pupils in a school can exceed this figure for a number of reasons. Statemented pupils and pupils admitted on appeal or by direction of the ECB are supernumerary and do not count against the enrolment number. In addition, schools can apply to the Department for a temporary increase of their numbers which, if approved, would apply for one academic year only.

School Enrolments

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how frequently projected school enrolments are determined.
(AQW 14253/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department uses population projections published by the Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) as the basis to project school enrolments. Population projections are usually updated and published by NISRA on a biennial basis.

Road Cycle Training

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what action he is taking to ensure that every school has full access to road cycle training rather than training in playgrounds.
(AQW 14271/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department of the Environment (DOE) has a statutory responsibility for the delivery of road safety education in our schools. The DOE Road Safety Education Officer Service (RSEOS) provides the Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) to primary schools in the north of Ireland. The decision to take up the offer of the CPS lies with individual schools, as does the decision on whether to include on road / off road training. A total of approximately 580 (69%) Primary Schools (with an average of 8,800 children trained each year) have taken up the offer of running the CPS and between 5 and 10% of those schools choose to do the on road element.

A review of the CPS commenced in August 2012 and is due to be completed before the end of the year. The CPS continues to be offered to all primary schools while the review is in progress and schools offering CPS are fully supported by DOE RSEOs.

The revised curriculum provides opportunities for schools to address road safety which could include cycling. These opportunities are provided through the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding and the World Around Us Areas of Learning at primary level and through the Personal Development strand of Learning for Life and Work at post-primary level.

Whilst these opportunities exist, the revised curriculum is more flexible and it is a matter for schools to decide on the specific areas they wish to cover under the Areas of Learning which are detailed in the Education (Curriculum Minimum Content) Order (NI) 2007.

The Department wrote to all schools in March 2010 to remind them about the importance of ensuring the effective delivery of road safety messages through the revised curriculum and to inform them about the existing opportunities within the curriculum to highlight road safety.

84 Million Allocated to Early Years Services

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for a breakdown of the £84 million allocated to early years services in 2012/13.

(AQW 14335/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In 2012/13 the opening budget available for allocation for early years services amounts to £84.51m.

Provision	Funding 2012/13 £m
Statutory Nursery Schools	18.3
Primary schools with Nursery Classes (*Part funding only)	21.7
PSEEP – Voluntary/Private settings	15.7
Early Years Fund	3.145
Early Years – The Organisation for Young Children – Core funding	0.265
Sure Start – figure includes Programme for 2-3 Year olds and expansion	23.4
Capital	2.0
Total	84.51

* it is not possible to disaggregate all funding for Nursery Class pupils from overall funding provided to primary schools – figure relates only to core AWPU funds.

This includes over £55m for pre-school education in both the statutory and voluntary and private sectors; and £23m for Sure Start services targeted at our most disadvantaged families and children.

Principals' Salary Protection

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to explain the reasons for the difference in principals' salary protection in nursery and primary schools, within the LMS formula.

(AQW 14336/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There is no difference in the criteria applied using the Common Funding Formula for distribution of funding to schools under the Teachers' Salary Protection factor. This factor seeks to provide compensation for schools with above average teacher salary costs and is applied consistently across all phases.

Schools receive a compensatory amount for above average salary costs taking account of the number of teachers employed and the extent to which the school's salary bill is above average for the phase. Compensation is payable at 100% of the above average costs for schools of 4 teachers or less, tapering to 10% of the above average costs for schools of 30 teachers or more.

Full Complement of Governors

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education which schools do not have a full complement of governors, broken down by (i) type of school; and (ii) Education and Library Board.

(AQW 14339/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: This information is not readily available. However, it is being requested from schools by the Education & Library Boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and the Department. I will write to you with the information as soon as it is available.

St Colm's High School, Draperstown

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education how, and why, St Colm's High School, Draperstown was allocated eight additional pupil places, in the last year.

(AQW 14368/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The eight additional places at St Colm's High School, Draperstown in 2011-12 were as a result of successful appeals by parents to the Western Education & Library Board's Independent Appeals Tribunal. The role of the Appeals Tribunal is to assess whether a school applied its admissions criteria correctly during the admissions process when establishing its rank order to decide the awarding of places.

In each of the eight appeal cases, following representations from the parent backed by legal and political support, the Tribunal concluded that the school had incorrectly applied their admissions criteria due to the inexactness of a single word within one of the criteria. Where a Tribunal finds in favour of an applicant, the child is automatically awarded a place at the school over and above its approved admissions and/or enrolment numbers.

This is an entirely independent process and my Department had no involvement in the granting of these places.

Post-Primary Children

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to list, by school, the number of post-primary children who are resident in Belfast but who attend schools in another Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 14381/11-15)

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

POST-PRIMARY PUPILS WHO ARE RESIDENT IN THE BELFAST EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD AREA, BUT WHO ATTEND SCHOOL IN ANOTHER EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD BY SCHOOL ATTENDED – 2011/12

School name	ELB	Pupils
Antrim Grammar School	NEELB	*
Assumption Grammar School	SEELB	24
Ballyclare High School	NEELB	*
Ballyclare Secondary School	NEELB	*
Bangor Academy and 6th Form College	SEELB	*
Belfast High School	NEELB	20
Blackwater Integrated College	SEELB	7
Cambridge House Grammar School	NEELB	*
Carrickfergus College	NEELB	*
Carrickfergus Grammar School	NEELB	*
Crumlin Integrated College	NEELB	*
Down High School	SEELB	*
Downshire School	NEELB	*
Dunclug College	NEELB	*
Dundonald High School	SEELB	27

School name	ELB	Pupils
Dunmurry High School	SEELB	96
Edmund Rice College	NEELB	338
Fort Hill College	SEELB	143
Friends' School, Lisburn	SEELB	7
Glengormley High School	NEELB	128
Glenlola Collegiate	SEELB	*
Knockbreda High School	SEELB	246
Lagan College	SEELB	441
Larne Grammar School	NEELB	*
Laurelhill Community College	SEELB	*
Lisnagarvey High School	SEELB	*
Monkstown Community School	NEELB	36
Movilla High School	SEELB	*
Nendrum College	SEELB	*
New-Bridge Integrated College	SELB	*
Newtownabbey Community High School	NEELB	67
Newtownbreda High School	SEELB	285
Our Lady and St Patrick's College	SEELB	280
Parkhall Integrated College	NEELB	*
Priory College	SEELB	73
Regent House School	SEELB	5
Saintfield High School	SEELB	*
St Benedict's College, Randalstown	NEELB	*
St Colman's College, Newry	SELB	*
St Colman's High School, Ballynahinch	SEELB	59
St Colm's High School, Twinbrook	SEELB	27
St Columbanus' College, Bangor	SEELB	*
ST Killian's College, Carnlough	NEELB	*
St Malachy's High School, Castlewellan	SEELB	*
St Mark's High School, Warrenpoint	SELB	*
St Mary's Grammar School, Magherafelt	NEELB	*
St Mary's High School, Downpatrick	SEELB	*
St Patrick's High School, Lisburn	SEELB	5
Sullivan Upper School	SEELB	342

School name	ELB	Pupils
The High School Ballynahinch	SEELB	*
The Royal School Armagh	SELB	*
The Royal School Dungannon	SELB	*
Ulidia Integrated College	NEELB	5
Wallace High School	SEELB	*
Total		2,713

Source: school census

Note:

'*' denotes fewer than 5 pupils.

1 Figures relate to pupils for whom a valid postcode is held.

Competition to Appoint Members to the General Teaching Council

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to explain how seven breaches occurred during the competition to appoint members to the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland as highlighted in the Commissioner for Public Appointments Audit Report.

(AQW 14678/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have made 26 Ministerial appointments to bodies which are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. In making these appointments, my officials have worked closely with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments to ensure that the correct procedures are being followed at every stage of the appointments process.

On this one occasion, my Department's processes have clearly fallen short of the standards that the Commissioner rightly expects and that I as Minister also expect.

I am deeply disappointed that the Commissioners Report has identified breaches of the Code in relation to this process.

On examination of the report you will see that the issues identified relate to administrative errors by officials.

They do not in any way point to irregularity regarding the suitability of the appointments made. The Commissioner has not questioned their abilities or their appointment.

Nonetheless, I take very seriously indeed the breaches that the Commissioner has identified.

I am determined to ensure that, for those appointments to which it applies, all relevant aspects of the Code of Practice are adhered to in future. I have therefore asked the Department's Permanent Secretary to carry out an immediate review to establish how these breaches occurred and to make sure that lessons are learned and systems improved so that there can be no risk of recurrence.

My Department will be responding to the Commissioner on each aspect highlighted in the Report and on the measures required to ensure compliance with the Code. I will be working closely with my officials in this regard.

Parkhall Integrated College

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education why there has been a delay in awarding Parkhall Integrated College a new build.

(AQO 2508/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Parkhall Integrated College was not one of the schools included in my announcement of new builds on 25 June this year. I made it clear at that time that the projects being announced were those which had been future proofed and were also a priority for capital investment.

At that time the North Eastern Education and Library Board had initiated a public consultation on the future pattern of post primary provision in the Antrim/Ballymena area. Included in this were a number of proposals around the shape and size of Parkhall Integrated College. As such Parkhall Integrated College could not be considered at that time as there was a lack of clarity on the scale and type of provision which the Department of Education was being asked to provide funding for.

I met with the member, other local politicians and representatives from the school on Thursday 13 September 2012 to discuss the matter.

I indicated at that meeting that with clarity now provided around the proposed pattern of provision at Parkhall Integrated College that it could be considered alongside other proposals as part of any future announcement. However, I also made it clear that there could be no guarantee that it would be successful.

St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education when the Department will carry out urgent maintenance work at St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena.

(AQO 2511/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As part of the financial allocations funding for maintenance is included in the budgets allocated to Voluntary Grammar Schools. As such Voluntary Grammar Schools are responsible for maintaining their own premises and have discretion to decide on the amount of maintenance work carried out annually within their LMS budget

Post-primary Schools: Area Planning

Mr Anderson asked the Minister of Education what plans he has to extend the consultation period in relation to post-primary area plans.

(AQO 2513/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The five Education and Library Boards published the draft Post-primary Area Plans on their websites on 5 July for public consultation.

The consultation runs for 16 weeks from 5 July to 26 October. This exceeds the recommended minimum consultation period of 12 weeks and has been set to take account of the school summer holidays.

I am confident that this timetable allows ample time for interested parties to consider the area plans and make their views known. I therefore do not think it is necessary to extend the consultation period. I think it is more important to move forward and start refining the post –primary plans taking account of the views of the public.

Education and Library Boards: Departmental Policy

Mr Lynch asked the Minister of Education whether the response of the Education and Library Boards reflects and supports the implementation of departmental policies.

(AQO 2514/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: You provided clarification that your question is in the context of area plans and you mention that Professor Tony Gallagher has reported that different individuals and boards are engaging to varying degrees.

The Area Planning Terms of Reference state that the Boards and CCMS must ensure that they take account of the Department's commitments in the Programme for Government and that any proposals supports the delivery of Departmental Policies.

They require the Boards, working closely with CCMS to actively engage with the other school sectors in developing the area plans.

Also, the Boards' public consultations on the plans will ensure that all interested parties have the opportunity to provide comment before a final draft plan is submitted for my consideration.

The plans will report the extent of this engagement. And I will consider this when assessing the revised plans following the public consultation.

Department for Employment and Learning

Higher Education for Mature Students and Parents

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how his Department intends to improve access to higher education for mature students and parents, including provisions to assist them in completion of their courses.

(AQW 14091/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): I am fully committed to ensuring that higher education and the opportunities that it brings should be available to all of those who have the ability to benefit from it regardless of their background or location. With around 80% of the Northern Ireland workforce already having completed full-time education, it is clear that future skills needs cannot be met from the existing young graduate output. Increasing participation in higher education in order to upskill the existing workforce is therefore critical if Northern Ireland's skills needs are to be met.

It was with this in mind that I allocated an extra £1.3 million in 2012/13 to provide an additional 1,000 part-time Higher Education and Further Education places. This additional funding will provide mature students with even greater opportunity to access flexible, close-to home delivery of higher education through their local Further Education colleges.

In addition, I recently launched a Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education, Access to Success. A major focus of the strategy is on supporting mature learners in higher education and many of the initiatives and activities which will be implemented through the strategy are specifically aimed at, or are particularly relevant to, helping improve access to higher education for this particular group and to support them in completing their studies once they have commenced their course.

The strategy outlines the Department's plans to draw on and develop the experience and good practice of the traditional Adult Access courses in order to encourage HE institutions to develop a regional standard model for Access Courses across all institutions. These programmes, which could include modules on skills, employability and personal development, would provide alternative access routes, particularly suitable to adult returners, to allow them to meet the needs and admission requirements for entry to university.

Access to Success also details the Department's commitment to expand provision of Foundation Degrees. There is good evidence to suggest that the skills gap is most acute at a level that is represented by HE qualifications below degree level such as the Foundation degree. Foundation Degrees, higher education qualifications which combine academic and work-related learning, provide a close-to-home option for people who face barriers to participation in higher education and, because many courses are delivered on a part-time basis, they are more able to accommodate the diverse learning needs of the mature student.

Foundation degrees are also particularly relevant to mature learners as they allow potential students, who may not have a recognised formal qualification, to gain entry to a higher education programme through the Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) system. The APEL system, which Access

to Success aims to promote and expand, allows individuals without a recognised formal qualification to draw on their skills, experience and achievement to gain entry to higher education.

The strategy also outlines the Department's intention to make additional funding available to support outreach programmes with adult learners in the workplace and in local communities. Again, this will help facilitate improved access routes into HE for mature students and parents.

In addition, the recently published Higher Education Strategy, 'Graduating to Success', details my Department's plans to work with the HE and FE sectors to develop a pilot scheme for the creation of university bases at the FE colleges. The pilot scheme, which if successful will allow identified further education colleges to provide access to university resources by 2020, will give higher education students the opportunity to undertake distance learning at local further education colleges, with access to the university materials and resources they need, thus improving access for mature students and parents who are more likely to face travel or time-related barriers to participating in higher education.

Research indicates that mature students can often feel out of place in the university environment and find it difficult to involve themselves in student activities. The strategy recognises that once in the system, we need to ensure the continuation of students in higher education. This can be achieved through a range of supplementary support measures tailored to meet assessed individual needs and based on identified multiple disadvantage.

This might include targeted bursary payments, fee waivers and other forms of direct support to students who are on the lowest household income levels. These measures are in addition to the supplementary allowances already in place which are particularly relevant for mature students and parents, such as: fee loans and course grants for part-time undergraduate students who are studying at least 50% of an equivalent full-time course; Special Support Grant – a non repayable grant for students who may be eligible for means tested benefits; Parent Learning Allowance; and Childcare Grant.

The strategy will also encourage the development of non-financial support measures, many of which are likely to be of particular benefit to mature learners, for instance: institutions adopting flexible teaching, learning and assessment methods in light of the changing pattern of students' academic backgrounds; targeted mentoring and tutoring support; and enhanced induction and orientation programmes to introduce students to the institution, its staff and pastoral care arrangements.

Belfast Metropolitan College

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning why Belfast Metropolitan College is refusing to allow school leavers to take part in programme-led apprenticeship construction courses unless they have a work placement.

(AQW 14108/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Belfast Metropolitan College has advised that school leavers do not require a work placement in order to take part in a programme-led apprenticeship.

The college has 12 work placement officers working to secure work placements for its students, regardless of the route of study, in order that they can successfully complete their qualifications.

The college is happy to meet with school leavers to explore training options and if any wish to participate in a programme-led apprenticeship and meet the entrance requirements all efforts will be made to accommodate them.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he has any plans to widen the eligibility criteria of the Education Maintenance Allowance to support more students who seek to further their education.

(AQW 14160/11-15)

Dr Farry: I can advise the member that the policy intent for the introduction of the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme in September 2004 was to enable young people from lower income backgrounds to remain in post-compulsory education at school or college with the key objectives of raising participation, retention and achievement rates in the eligible group; and addressing the well-established link between low attainment and low income.

The future intention is to better target the scheme at those young people from lower income families who otherwise would not have carried on with their post-compulsory education without the incentive of Education Maintenance Allowance.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the effectiveness of the current Education Maintenance Allowance.

(AQW 14161/11-15)

Dr Farry: Findings from the joint review of the scheme by my Department and the Department of Education highlighted that only one-third of students in receipt of means tested Education Maintenance Allowance, EMA, indicated they would not have remained in education had they not received it. This suggests that the scheme could be better targeted and options to do so are out to public consultation at present.

The review established EMA does promote better attendance, timely completion of coursework and learner behaviour. That together with the encouragement given to a significant minority of learners to stay in full-time education has convinced me to give a commitment to retain the fundamental principles of EMA in a better targeted scheme.

84% of current Education Maintenance Allowance awards go to students living in the homes with household income of up to £22,331 or less. Therefore, the vast majority of the students receiving EMA are currently from lower income families.

My assessment of the means tested EMA scheme is that it should be retained. However, in future it needs to be more effectively targeted towards the most disadvantaged families and the options presented in the consultation document have been designed to achieve this.

Greater Co-Operation Between Universities and Schools

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action his Department will take to ensure greater co-operation between universities and schools.

(AQW 14240/11-15)

Dr Farry: The level of engagement and cooperation between the universities and the school sector remains primarily a matter for these institutions. However, my Department recognises that there are sections of our society which are currently under-represented in higher education and funds initiatives to widen participation and ensure fair access. The special project funding provided for the Step-Up and Discovering Queen's programmes allows the universities to develop partnerships with schools in disadvantaged areas, with traditionally low levels of participation in higher education.

Step-Up is a unique and innovative science-based programme which is delivered by schools in conjunction with the University of Ulster, industry and government. The aim of the programme is to encourage participation in higher education by disadvantaged students who have low attainment levels, relatively low expectations and who previously may not have considered higher education as an educational option. Step-Up pupils are supported during the two years of study for the Double Award GCE in Applied Science qualification, which is equivalent to two A-Levels. Pupils are also required to study an additional A-Level or GCE Applied six unit award within their own school. The programme has operated successfully at the Magee Campus in Londonderry since 2000 and in greater Belfast since 2006. By academic year 2010/11 over 1200 students will have participated in Step-Up, with a progression rate of 97% into higher education.

Discovering Queen's was introduced in 1999 and is also aimed at raising awareness and aspirations of potential students from disadvantaged backgrounds to consider higher education as an option. Activities include work in Primary Schools, non selective Secondary Schools and Further Education Colleges as well as targeted work with specific groups such as, with students who have a disability, teachers and support staff. Since 2000 Discovering Queen's has engaged with over 15,000 participants. A high proportion of school leavers from the Discovering Queen's schools progress to higher education each year.

The Department recently launched the integrated, regional strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education 'Access to Success'. A major focus of the strategy will be to make additional funding available, on a competitive basis, to all institutions offering higher education courses to encourage them to expand the range of aspiration and attainment raising programmes at school, college and in the community. My Department has allocated £2.5 million each year to help to widen participation from groups which are currently under-represented in higher education.

Co-Operation Between Universities and the Manufacturing Industry

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action his Department will take to ensure greater co-operation between universities and the manufacturing industry.
(AQW 14242/11-15)

Dr Farry: There is already a significant amount of co-operation between the universities and the manufacturing industry here in Northern Ireland. In continuing to develop and strengthen this cooperation I recently announced the creation of an Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group. The Working Group includes business leaders from the sector, employer representative bodies and representatives from our local universities and further education colleges together with officials from other Government Departments and agencies, including the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment, the Department of Education and Invest NI.

I chaired the first meeting of this Working Group on 19 September 2012 and the Group had productive discussions regarding the skills needs of the sector and areas of work that could be taken forward in order to address those skills needs.

Those initial discussions indicated a willingness between the manufacturing industry and the universities to work together to support the sector and to explore the possibility of, for example, increasing the interaction between university lecturers and the industry.

The Working Group is tasked with developing an Action Plan which will address the skills needs of the sector and will fully outline actions to ensure a closer collaboration between the universities and the manufacturing industry.

My Department has also, as part of the implementation of the Department's 'Employer Engagement Plan', initiated a project to scope the current level of employers offering placements and scholarships to people studying in further and higher education and consider how it can encourage more companies to offer these opportunities. The project will particularly focus on those studying science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects.

Higher Education Skills

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what higher education skills his Department is planning to target to boost the economy at present and in the future.
(AQW 14243/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Department's Skills Strategy, 'Success through Skills – Transforming Futures', identifies skills as a crucial ingredient in both rebalancing and rebuilding our economy. At the heart of the Strategy is the desire to up-skill the existing workforce and to increase the number of people with higher level skills within the workforce. This ambition is reflected as a key strategic goal in the strategy which reflects the likely level of demand from industry for higher level skills.

The Strategy was informed by Oxford Economics' 'Forecasting Future Skill Needs in Northern Ireland' report. The report predicts that the demand for higher level skills will increase significantly and that by 2020 a significant number of jobs will require post graduate or degree level qualifications. It is anticipated the main skill needs will be in areas such as business, engineering, technology, computer science, and biological science.

The Department's Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland – 'Graduating to Success', sets out the importance of ensuring that higher education learners not only undertake higher level courses in economically relevant subjects but also gain the skills, experiences and attributes needed to succeed within employment and ultimately benefit the Northern Ireland economy. The Strategy also highlights the need to ensure that all learners within higher education are provided with the opportunities to develop a portfolio of skills, attributes and experiences that will set them apart in the world of employment. This should include personal development, creative thinking allied to enterprise and innovation, international mobility opportunities and embedding employability within the curriculum.

Graduating to Success feeds into the implementation of the overarching Skills Strategy and reinforces the need to increase the proportion of those qualifying from Northern Ireland Higher Education Institutions with graduate and post graduate level courses in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects.

I have recently increased the funding available to the universities in the current academic year for economically relevant Masters courses. This has enabled the universities to increase recruitment on graduate conversion IT software development courses and on advanced food safety.

I have also introduced a new higher education research funding model which rewards world-leading and internationally excellent research whilst providing a premium for research in STEM and priority skills areas.

Job Seekers Allowance: Concessionary Fee for Part-Time Courses

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether Further Education Colleges and Higher Education Institutes are required to accept a letter from Jobs and Benefits offices so that people who have applied for Job Seekers Allowance can receive a concessionary fee for part-time courses.
(AQW 14296/11-15)

Dr Farry: For the purpose of securing a concessionary fee for a part-time course, I am advised that further education colleges and higher education institutions require written confirmation that applicants are in receipt of Jobs Seekers Allowance. This may take the form of a letter from the Jobs and Benefit office.

Apprenticeship Places

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many apprenticeship places have been made available to the South Eastern Regional College for the 2012/13 academic year.
(AQW 14348/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department's ApprenticeshipsNI programme is an employer-led programme and, as such, it is employers who create apprenticeship places. The training offered through the ApprenticeshipsNI programme is provided through the Department's contracted Training Suppliers, including the South Eastern Regional College.

At 24 September 2012, 298 apprentices were availing of training provided by the South Eastern Regional College through the ApprenticeshipsNI programme.

Educational Underachievement

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what action his Department is taking to address educational underachievement among working class Protestants.
(AQW 14351/11-15)

Dr Farry: The key to addressing educational underachievement is to fully engage with young people while at school in order to raise their academic attainment levels. Although this is primarily a matter for the Department of Education and the school sector, my Department provides special project funding for programmes such as, Step-Up and Discovering Queens. These programmes allow the universities to develop partnerships with non-selective, post-primary schools in disadvantaged areas to raise awareness of the benefits of higher education and to help pupils attain the necessary qualification for entry. Pupils from working class Protestant backgrounds are specifically targeted for inclusion in these programmes.

One of the aims of my Department's widening participation strategy "Access to Success" is to raise academic attainment among the most disadvantaged in our society. This will be achieved through the improved targeting of resources, an expansion in the range of attainment raising programmes in schools, colleges and in the community, and increased project funding for community outreach programmes. The strategy has identified young males from a working-class Protestant background from lower participation neighbourhoods as a clearly defined target group. My Department has allocated £2.5 million each year to help to widen participation from groups which are currently under-represented in higher education.

Job Losses at FG Wilson

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) whether there is any legal requirement for companies to inform her Department, in advance, of any redundancies, such as those recently announced by FG Wilson; and (ii) when his Department was informed of the job losses at FG Wilson that were announced on the 13 September 2012.

(AQW 14390/11-15)

Dr Farry:

- (i) Under the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, there is a statutory requirement for employers, who are proposing to make 20 or more employees redundant, to notify the Department in advance. This is done by means of completing an HR1 form, and forwarding it to my Department.
- (ii) The Department received informal notification of the proposed redundancies at FG Wilson on 11 September 2012, and received formal notification on 14 September through the standard HR1 notification processes.

DEL: One Plan

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline what work his Department has undertaken to assist Derry City Council in the implementation of the One Plan.

(AQO 2522/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has responded positively to the opportunities provided for working with Derry City Council and others by the One Plan for the regeneration of the city.

This has included participation in the city's Skills Directorate, support for the delivery of skills provision across the city by North West Regional College, the University of Ulster and others and the provision of services to help people find employment.

In particular, my Department has worked closely with Derry City Council in the provision of WorldHost training which has a key role to play in raising the standard of customer service provided to visitors to the city through the hospitality sector. This is crucial at this time with the City of Culture and other major events such as the All Ireland Fleadh coming to Derry in 2013. With the Department's support, over 900 people have been trained in WorldHost in Derry and I believe this lays a firm platform to support tourism in the city which is of major significance in the One Plan. It is a good example of co-operation across a range of bodies in the city to deliver training which will bring real benefits.

In addition, as part of the agreement on tuition fees the Executive has made funding available to my Department for additional places in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects.

The University of Ulster has been allocated a total of 322 additional places by 2014/15. The University has stated that all of these places will be deployed at the Magee campus. This therefore makes a significant contribution to the development of the university which is seen as an important driver in the success of the One Plan.

Engineering Skills Working Group

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the Engineering Skills Working Group.

(AQO 2523/11-15)

Dr Farry: I chaired the first meeting of 'Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group' which took place on 19th September. The Working Group consists of a number of employers from the sector, employer representative bodies and representatives from the colleges, universities and other Government Departments.

The Group is a short term intervention and has been tasked with producing an action plan to address the current and future skill needs of the sector by addressing the themes of skills provision, sector attractiveness and coordination and communication.

In order to inform the Group, I asked the Northern Ireland Adviser to undertake a series of meetings with employers in the sector. His findings, together with an analysis of the sector, have been published and are available on my Department's website.

At the meeting the Group had an open discussion regarding the areas they felt needed addressed within the sector. Some of the issues discussed included the need to improve the image of the engineering sector, improve the employability skills of those coming through to be employed in the sector and the need to increase the numbers of individuals studying STEM subjects. My officials are in the process of producing a draft Action Plan based on these discussions.

Representatives from FG Wilson also provided an update on the recent announcement of job losses and actions that are being taken to minimise the number of compulsory redundancies and to help those affected to find alternative employment. I took the opportunity to talk to members about what we could collectively do to potentially redeploy these skills within the sector in order to address current and future skill needs.

It is important to note that their announcement coincided with the beginning of the 90 day consultation to determine what areas of the business will be affected.

North West Regional College: Industrial Relations

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to provide an update on industrial relations in the North West Regional College.

(AQO 2524/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Governing Body of North West Regional College asked my Department to undertake an independent review of industrial relations at the college following two reports into a redundancy and redeployment programme at the college. The terms of reference for this review were drawn up by the Department, following consultation with all interested parties. An independent consultant from the Labour Relations Agency's panel of arbitrators was then appointed to conduct the assignment.

The review will be completed by the end of October. My Department will liaise with all those who have an operational interest in the review's findings and will ensure that, where appropriate, its recommendations are fully implemented.

Southern Regional College: Higher Education

Mr Brady asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether his Department has any plans to increase the higher education provision delivered through the Southern Regional College.

(AQO 2525/11-15)

Dr Farry: I am fully committed to further education colleges delivering higher education courses and believe they are best placed to meet the higher level skills needs of employers through the provision of intermediate level higher education courses. This commitment was demonstrated when my Department increased the overall higher education in further education allocation to the Regional Colleges by almost £1.6m in academic year 2012/13.

In December 2011, I also announced an additional 70 full-time places, the first tranche of which are allocated in 2012/13.

The Department has increased the number of full-time higher education places that it funds at Southern Regional College from 395 places in 2007/08 to 539 places in 2012/13, an increase of 36% over the 5 year period.

The Department has a target of increasing full-time and part-time foundation degree enrolments to 2500 by March 2015 from a baseline of 1132 enrolments in 2010. The Further Education sector has a key role to play in achieving this target.

The expansion of part-time provision offers colleges another route to increase higher education provision. Southern Regional College received an increase of £258,400 for funding of part-time places in 2012/13 compared to the previous year, bringing the college's total funding targeted at part-time places in 2012/13 to £1,761,200.

Youth Unemployment

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what new approaches his Department is taking to address youth unemployment following the most recent figure of 23.5 percent youth unemployment.

(AQO 2526/11-15)

Dr Farry: Addressing youth unemployment is an Executive priority. In March we agreed a package of new measures to help young people gain experience, acquire new skills and find employment. The package which I announced to the Assembly on 2 July will invest £40 million in these measures over the next 3 years, including £10 million to support those young people not in education, employment or training.

Opportunities include short two to eight week work experience placements, six to nine month training opportunities, and subsidised job opportunities as well as training in sector specific skills. My Department is actively working with employers to secure as many opportunities as possible as quickly as possible. I have been encouraged by the positive response of employers so far and I expect many more to offer opportunities for young people in the coming months.

A major promotional event will take place tomorrow at Titanic Belfast, members are welcome to come along. Breakfast is at 8 am and we will finished by 11 am.

In addition, my Department provides a guarantee of a training place through its Training for Success programme to all unemployed young people aged 16 and 17, with extended eligibility for those with a disability or from an in-care background.

This programme is designed to enable participants to progress to higher level training, further education, or employment by providing training to address personal and social development needs, develop occupational skills and employability skills and, where necessary, Essential Skills training.

I am particularly aware that jobs for school leavers continue to be limited and programme-led apprenticeships have been developed for those who have been unable to find employment to train as an apprentice.

Jobs and Benefits Offices: Staffing

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline changes to staffing numbers in Jobs and Benefits Offices as a result of benefit migration since the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance.

(AQO 2527/11-15)

Dr Farry: To cope with the increased workload brought about by the reassessment of Incapacity Benefit claimants as a result of the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance, an additional 58 staff have been approved for the Jobs & Benefits offices, 19 in 2011/12 and 39 in 2012/13. Twenty-seven additional staff are currently in post, and three will commence shortly. The Department's Human Resources Team is actively working to fill the remaining 28 vacancies.

Higher Education: Widening Participation

Mr Hussey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how the strategy for widening participation in higher education will be communicated to parents to help improve outcomes.

(AQO 2528/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department's strategy for widening participation "Access to Success" recognises the need for an awareness raising campaign to better communicate the benefits of higher education to under-represented sections of the community, this includes the parents of potential students.

A single, centralised and co-ordinated awareness and aspiration raising programme will be developed and implemented in close collaboration with relevant partners including, higher education providers and other Government Departments to avoid duplication and to promote the benefits of higher education.

The programme will be integrated and regional. It will utilise multiple media channels in a phased and themed campaign which will target schools, communities and the workplace.

New Widening Access and Strategic Assessment Plans will also be published to enable parents, students and careers advisers to better understand the individual institution's widening participation strategy and assistance available for students.

Further Education: Student Finance

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether his Department holds information on the financial background of students in Further Education Colleges.

(AQO 2529/11-15)

Dr Farry: The only financial information about students in further education held by my Department is that which identifies whether a student, or his or her parents, are in receipt of specific social security benefits. This information helps inform the level of grant that is made available through support funds for those students who may require financial assistance.

More detailed information on the financial background of students in further education colleges, such as earnings from employment, benefits and pensions received, is held by education and library boards, individual colleges and the Student Loans Company.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Enterprise Zones

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the recommendations which have been made to the Executive on the introduction of Enterprise Zones on specific sites for specific sectors.

(AQW 13789/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): Enterprise Zones are being considered in the context of the ongoing Treasury work on rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy, the outcome of which will not be known until later this year. As such, any decision on establishing an Enterprise Zone for Northern Ireland cannot be taken until these discussions have concluded.

Northern Ireland's difficulties are further exacerbated, given the UK Government's intention to remove Northern Ireland's automatic assisted area status post 2013, on the basis that the economic analysis no longer supports that position. This will impact on our ability to progress with implementing the Government's Enterprise Zone policy in Northern Ireland, and in particular the capital allowance element which is based on zones being within an assisted area for the five years from April 2012.

It should be noted, however, that the approach being adopted in other GB regions in terms of Enterprise Zones relates to issues such as rating, simplified planning and broadband, all of which are already devolved and being applied across Northern Ireland as a whole. The enhanced capital allowances element may be of interest and is being explored.

My officials continue to closely monitor developments in relation to UK Government's Enterprise Zone policy as implemented in other GB regions, to ensure that any potential benefits for Northern Ireland are exploited.

Bed and Breakfasts

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many referrals Bed and Breakfasts have received from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in each of the last five years, broken down by council area.

(AQW 13939/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board offers all B&Bs in Northern Ireland the option to promote their properties for free on www.discovernorthernireland.com. Website views of B&B properties on NITB's consumer website, including details of how to book, over the past five years, are detailed below:

- **1st August 2007 - 31st July 2008** - 413,000 page views
- **1st August 2008 - 31st July 2009** - 254,845 page views
- **1st August 2009 - 31st July 2010** - 189,305 page views
- **1st August 2010 - 31st July 2011** - 143,547 page views
- **1st August 2011 - 31st July 2012** - 146,307 page views

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board offers all B&Bs in Northern Ireland the option to be listed on their online booking system. Visitors can make bookings for B&Bs which choose to use NITB's online booking system. The number of bookings made via this system for B&Bs, in each of the last five years, broken down by council area is detailed in Table 1.

Renewable Heat Incentive

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail what measures her Department is taking to launch and advertise the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) to key stakeholders, including industry, schools, community groups and churches to ensure the greatest uptake of the RHI, as part of its efforts to meet the target of producing 10 percent of heat from renewable sources by 2020, as outlined in the Strategic Energy Framework.

(AQW 13959/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department intends to launch the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) once all administrative processes are in place and necessary legislation is passed in the Assembly. Work is currently underway to develop appropriate communication and marketing material that will highlight the opportunities presented by the RHI and the associated Renewable Heat Premium Payment (RHPP) scheme. It is expected that this marketing activity will launch once the RHI is in place and will advise consumers of the support available and assist in the success of both the RHI and RHPP schemes.

In addition, my Department is working with cross-departmental stakeholders through the Renewable Heat Strategy Group to ensure that opportunities within the public sector are also considered.

Executive Papers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many papers, which have been approved by the Minister, have yet to be placed on the agenda for an Executive meeting, including (i) the date on which the papers were circulated to ministerial colleagues; (ii) the subject matter of each paper; and (iii) the consequences of a delay in securing Executive approval.

(AQW 13969/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I refer the Member to the answer I gave to AQW 13792/11-15.

Inclusion of a Creationism Film at the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 13635/11-15, to list the individuals and groups who wrote to her expressing an interest in the interpretative content of the Giants Causeway Visitor Experience.

(AQW 13993/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Various individuals and groups wrote to me expressing an interest in the interpretative content of the Giant's Causeway Visitor Experience.

Bioscience and Technology Institute/Habourgate Affair

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discipline was imposed on the two InvestNI staff arising out of the Bioscience and Technology Institute/Habourgate affair; and at what level the staff operated within InvestNI.

(AQW 14016/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998, and to reveal details of disciplinary action against an individual would breach this legislation and Invest NI's duty of confidentiality to its employees.

Reports into the Bioscience and Technology Institute/Habourgate Affair

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what steps have been taken to address the findings against her Department and InvestNI by the Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee reports into the Bioscience and Technology Institute/Habourgate affair.

(AQW 14017/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Memorandum of Reply to the Public Accounts Committee's report on the Bioscience and Technology Institute was laid before the Assembly on 23 July 2012 and sets out the Department's responses to the Committee's recommendations.

This full document can be accessed at the following website:

http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/index/finance/afmd/afmd-public-audit-and-pac/afmd-memoranda_of_reply/mor_6th_8th_reports_1115.pdf

The Department has taken and is taking a number of actions to address the issues raised in the report. Progress will be reviewed on a regular basis.

InvestNI's Operation in North and South America

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in relation to InvestNI's operation in North and South America, to detail (i) how many staff are employed; (ii) what is the nationality of staff; (iii) what is the community background of staff (with regards to the Fair Employment designations applicable in Northern Ireland); and (iv) what is the annual cost of the American operation.

(AQW 14018/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI has offices in New York, Boston and San Jose that focus on attracting high quality inward investment and developing trade opportunities for Northern Ireland companies. In addition, Invest NI has representation, without physical office space, in Chicago, Toronto and Sao Paulo.

- (i) There are currently 22 members of staff engaged in the United States. In addition there are 2 contractors engaged outside the US – one in Toronto and one in Sao Paulo.
- (ii) This information is not recorded. All staff and contractors are engaged under local terms and conditions of employment and as such this information is not required.
- (iii) This information is not recorded. All staff and contractors are engaged under local terms and conditions of employment and as such this information is not required.
- (iv) The cost of the North and South America operation for 2011-12 was £2,358,000.

Tourism Strategy

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the final Tourism Strategy, including when it will be published.

(AQW 14025/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department is currently working to finalise a 'Priorities for Action' Plan for tourism to ensure that tourism commitments in the PfG are delivered. The draft Plan is currently out with other Departments for review and we intend to take it to the Executive for endorsement in autumn 2012.

Grants for Small Businesses

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what grants are currently available from her Department to help small businesses.

(AQW 14097/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI provides a range of financial assistance to support the establishment and growth of new and existing export focussed businesses. This support is targeted particularly at businesses that sell in markets outside Northern Ireland, are actively pursuing growth plans, and can contribute to increased Northern Ireland productivity. Financial support is based on the needs of the project and is normally targeted at areas such as Research and Development, Marketing and Employment.

New social enterprise start ups will be supported by Invest NI's planned Social Entrepreneurship Programme, with capability support to the business plan and initial start up. Grants may be available to social enterprise starts should they have a level of export potential.

The Jobs Fund has been developed to provide a range of grant based employment support. These include grants of between £1,000 - £1,500 for business starts in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and for individuals not being in employment, education or training (known as NEETS).

Further Information can be found on Invest NI's Website www.investni.com

InvestNI Funding Allocated to the East Antrim Area

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how much funding InvestNI has allocated to the East Antrim area in each of the last three years.

(AQW 14109/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Whilst the question asks for the amount allocated to East Antrim, it should be noted that Invest NI does not determine the level of funding to particular areas. Assistance patterns are based on the location of those clients which are seeking to grow and develop their business. Table 1 shows the amount of assistance, or funding, that Invest NI has offered to businesses in the East Antrim Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA) in each of the last three financial years.

TABLE 1: INVEST NI ASSISTANCE OFFERED IN EAST ANTRIM PCA (2009-10 TO 2011-12)

Financial Year	Total Assistance £million
2009-10	4.54
2010-11	2.42
2011-12	1.59
Total	8.55

Jobs Fund

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many businesses in the East Antrim area obtained funding under the Jobs Fund during 2012, broken down by each of the maximum grants. **(AQW 14110/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: To date during 2012 a total of 8 businesses in East Antrim have received offers of support through the Jobs Fund for employment based investment projects which collectively have the potential to create a total of 29 new jobs.

Under the Jobs Fund scheme the grant offered is determined by the salaries of the jobs being created and ranges from £3,000 per job to £7,000 per job. The 8 projects supported in East Antrim range from a one person employment project with a grant offer of £7,000 to a 15 person project with a total grant offer of £45,000.

In addition to these company investment projects, the Jobs Fund also provided support to three young people in East Antrim (aged 16-24 Not in Education, Employment or Training) to set up a new business through the NEET Business Start Grant.

The Jobs Fund work is ongoing and Invest NI is continuing to build a pipeline of projects that may lead to further new job creation in East Antrim in the near future.

Jobs Fund

Mr Dickson asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many businesses in the South Antrim area obtained funding under the Jobs Fund during 2012, broken down by each of the maximum grants. **(AQW 14111/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: To date during 2012 a total of 14 businesses in South Antrim have received offers of support through the Jobs Fund for employment based investment projects which collectively have the potential to create a total of 68 new jobs.

Under the Jobs Fund scheme the grant offered is determined by the salaries of the jobs being created and ranges from £3,000 per job to £7,000 per job. The 14 projects supported in South Antrim range from a two person employment project with a total grant offer of £10,000 to an eight person employment project with a total grant offer of £50,000.

The Jobs Fund work is ongoing and Invest NI is continuing to build a pipeline of projects that may lead to further new job creation in South Antrim in the near future.

Giant's Causeway Visitors Centre

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the Northern Ireland Tourist Board expressed a view to the National Trust on the inclusion of creationism material at the Giant's Causeway Visitors Centre.

(AQW 14141/11-15)

Mrs Foster: During the initial stages of the project, the National Trust undertook a series of consultations with a wide group of stakeholders which included The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) in order to help inform the interpretative solution.

NITB was keen that interpretation was determined by research and visitor need. However The National Trust, as project promoter, had the final decision in terms of the final interpretative content.

Social Economy Strategy

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of people employed in the social economy sector; (ii) the income generated by the sector in each of the last three years; and (iii) for an update on the new Social Economy Strategy, including a timescale for its introduction.

(AQW 14147/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In 2007, it was estimated that there were nearly 400 SEEs with a total of 6,700 paid employees, 5,000 volunteers and turnover of just over £355 million. DETI and DSD are currently undertaking a scoping exercise on the size and scale of the Third Sector and to assess the potential of community and voluntary organisations to make the transition to the social enterprise model. A final report is expected by December 2012.

DETI has led, on behalf of the Executive, on the development of social economy policy for Northern Ireland and this work is being taken forward by a cross departmental Social Economy Policy Group (SEPG). As part of this work, the SEPG has identified departmental actions, within the context of the Executive's emerging Enterprise Strategy, to further develop and support the social economy sector given its importance both in rebuilding and rebalancing the NI economy.

A key DETI action within the SEPG action plan is to appoint a service provider to design, manage and deliver a three year Social Economy Work Programme (SEWP) with the objective of identifying and implementing a programme of initiatives to enable the continued growth of a sustainable social economy sector. It is anticipated that a contract will be awarded by early October 2012.

Additional Power Station

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the need for an additional power station.

(AQW 14169/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) Adequacy Statement for 2011 indicates that there is sufficient generation capacity in Northern Ireland to meet current demand.

Technical Assistance Budget

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she intends to introduce a Technical Assistance Budget to assist small and medium sized enterprises and others to access new rounds of EU funding.

(AQW 14190/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department already provides advice, guidance and financial support to assist small and medium sized enterprises and others to access EU funding. In addition my department has also recently appointed a Horizon 2020 Manager who will work closely with universities and industry to ensure they have the necessary support to increase the Northern Ireland success rate in EU R&D

programmes. We are also currently considering how this assistance might be further enhanced for the 2014-2020 period.

All-Island Approach to Waste-to-Energy

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what potential exists under the single electricity market for an all-island approach to waste-to-energy.

(AQW 14193/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Single Electricity Market (SEM) is an all island market and the arrangements for generators and their access to the market are harmonised. These harmonised arrangements include provision for renewables generators to have priority dispatch in accordance with Article 16(2) of the Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC allowing the system operator to run them ahead of other generation so long as the system can take them.

In its government response to the consultation on priority dispatch, DETI stated its plans to allocate priority dispatch status to Energy from Waste plant in Northern Ireland under the Renewable Energy Directive. In addition, waste to energy technologies in Northern Ireland are incentivised under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation.

Boosting Business Programme

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what percentage of businesses which have received money from the Boosting Business programme have been from the North West area.

(AQW 14213/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Boosting Business campaign began in November 2011. Provisional results show that between then and 31st August 2012, Invest NI has offered financial assistance of over £7million to over 350 businesses located in its North West regional area (Coleraine, Londonderry, Limavady and Magherafelt District Council Areas). This represents 15% of all businesses offered support during the same period and 10% of all financial assistance offered.

The Boosting Business campaign was designed to increase awareness of the wide range of support and advice available to businesses, to signpost them to the most appropriate source of support, and to broaden the support available from Invest NI. It is not a programme designed purely to provide financial support to businesses. Since the launch of the campaign, over 11,000 enquiries have been received and as a result 104 businesses in the North West area have been referred to Invest NI teams involved in the provision of development support to date. This represents 9% of the total number of referrals made since the campaign began.

Prior to 1st July 2012 it was not possible to track the geographic location of some of the enquiries made to Boosting Business, however, software enhancements have now enabled this. Since this date a total of 114 calls, texts and emails have been received from the North West area. Also, from 1 July 2012 there were an additional 973 enquiries recorded from unknown addresses across Northern Ireland, 109 of which are estimated to be from the North West.

In addition, during the period 14th November 2011 to 31st August 2012, Invest NI engaged with more than 330 individuals located in its North West regional area who were interested in starting their own business, 203 of which completed business plans. These businesses are expected to create 65 new jobs.

Hydraulic Fracturing Licence

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given that the licence document PL2/10 states "Section 2 of the above-mentioned Act Hereby Grants to the Licensee full and free and exclusive liberty and licence for a period of five years from the date hereof and thereafter during the continuance of this Licence to search and bore for and get petroleum within those party of the County

of Fermanagh”; whether a hydraulic fracturing licence is an explicitly supplementary tangible licence to allow a company to perform hydraulic fracturing, separate from the actions of getting petroleum.

(AQW 14246/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I would refer the Member to the answer I gave to AQW 14180/11-15. My Department does not issue fracking licences. The processes and stages of Petroleum Licences have been set out previously. Exploration drilling and hydraulic fracturing will be subject to Planning Approval and other consents pertaining to various aspects of the engineering, environmental and safety issues by DETI, NIEA and HSENI respectively.

Advertising Spend by InvestNI

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the advertising spend by InvestNI in each constituency in each of the last five years.

(AQW 14251/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) does not book advertising on the basis of Parliamentary constituencies in Northern Ireland and therefore does not hold this information.

Broadband Provision in the West Tyrone Constituency

Mr Hussey asked Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of Broadband provision in the West Tyrone constituency, particularly the Sixmilecross postal area; and what specific actions her Department has taken to improve the service.

(AQW 14255/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Broadband services in Northern Ireland are delivered via a mix of technologies including fixed-line, satellite, radio (wireless) and mobile. This is similar to many regions globally where there are geographic and topographic challenges to network development.

My Department has taken forward a number of initiatives aimed at improving broadband access for consumers across Northern Ireland, particularly those located in rural areas. This includes the £51million Next Generation Broadband Project which has facilitated the roll-out of the highest level of fibre-to-the-cabinet technology in the UK. Indeed, the recent OFCOM Communications Market Report indicates that Northern Ireland has the highest estimated proportion of homes able to receive superfast services among the UK nations, at 94%.

Under this project all five of the cabinets in the Beragh telephone exchange area have been upgraded. These are located at the junction of Omagh & Sixmilecross roads, junction of Redergan Road, Fintona Road, Omagh Road and Sixmilecross road, with the potential to deliver fixed-line broadband services of up to 40 megabits per second (Mbps).

However, as fibre-to-the-cabinet technology is distance related, not all premises will be able to access this service.

Customers in the Sixmilecross area will be able to access the satellite broadband services available under the Department’s contract with Onwave Ltd.

Onwave offers services with download speeds of 8, 12 and 18 Megabits per second, details of which can be found on their website at www.onwave.co.uk/ni or by contacting the company directly on 0845 43 43 500.

In addition, my Department has also contributed funding to the £1.9 million Northern Ireland Broadband Fund through which there has been significant deployment of fixed-wireless broadband networks across many parts of Northern Ireland.

One of the companies who have received support under the Fund, North West Electronics, is currently delivering fixed-wireless broadband services, with download speeds up to 100 Mbps. More information

can be found on North West Electronic's website at www.nwewn.com or by contacting them directly on 028 7135 1999.

Looking forward, my Department has secured £4.4 million under the UK Coalition Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) initiative which, together with its Budget allocations for 2011-2015, will be used to extend the delivery of higher speed services into those areas of Northern Ireland where, despite previous investments, a minimum download speed of 2Mbps via fixed-line technology cannot currently be attained. DETI officials are also in discussion with BDUK to source additional funds to deliver an innovative project aimed at improving mobile broadband coverage across Northern Ireland. Work on scoping both projects is underway.

Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) whether it is her Department's responsibility to issue Statutory Instruments giving justification to applications, under the Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004; and (ii) to provide a timescale in which applications are processed.

(AQW 14268/11-15)

Mrs Foster: It is for the relevant Northern Ireland Department to issue Statutory Instruments giving justification to applications, under the Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004. The relevant Northern Ireland Department will depend very much on the nature of the application.

There is no specified timescale in which applications must be processed. However, the regulations require the applicant to be informed (within a month of the application) of the period within which the application will be determined. The relevant Northern Ireland Department must then determine the application within that period or within such further period as notified to the applicant.

Communication with FG Wilson/Caterpillar

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail all communication she had with FG Wilson/Caterpillar between 4 July 2012 and 13 September 2012.

(AQW 14345/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Between 4th July 2012 and 13th September 2012 I wrote to and received a correspondence from the CEO of Caterpillar Inc., in which he confirmed the company's plan to continue to manufacture large gensets in Northern Ireland. I also had telephone calls with the Head of Caterpillar's global Electric Power Division. My team in Invest NI specifically had telephone calls with senior officials in the US as well as three face-to-face meetings with senior management in Northern Ireland and from the wider Caterpillar organization. In addition there have been numerous e-mail exchanges and telephone calls on a range of matters relating to this decision.

I hope to meet senior management of the company next week.

Department of the Environment

Development of Private Roads

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of the Environment what action he has taken to ensure that the Planning Service does not grant applications for the development of private roads before suitable safeguards are in place that ensure these roads would be completed and finished should the developer go into administration.

(AQW 2392/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): Where full planning permission is granted for a housing development this will be subject to a private streets condition stating that the width, position and arrangement of the internal streets shall be as indicated on the private streets determination

drawing A Private Streets Determination is carried out in conjunction with DRD Roads Service prior to granting full planning permission. However, the planning condition does not ensure that a road bond is in place. The process of seeking the bond is carried out by DRD Roads Service and follows the grant of planning permission. I will consider if this needs changed, to mitigate the risk identified in the AQ.

While there is a time limit for commencement of development, 5 years in the case of full planning permission, there is no time limit stipulated in planning law whereby a developer must complete the development including the internal streets of a development. Where roads are not completed in compliance with the Private Streets Determination in terms of layout, technically there would be a breach of condition. Again, there may be an issue here that needs to be considered.

The key legislation that governs the eventual adoption of new roads in housing developments are the Private Streets (NI) Order 1980 and the Private Streets (Amendment) (NI) order 1992. This legislation requires developers to make provision for the cost of street works and to secure that by means of a bond.

In cases in which the construction of a private street is not progressing satisfactorily, Roads Service can issue a notice under Article 11 of the Private Streets (NI) Order 1980 "requiring the execution of all works which are reasonably necessary to bring the street into conformity with regulations". I shall write to the DRD Minister to highlight the issue and to refer to the potential remedy.

It is considered that the current private streets legislation and procedures is the most appropriate means of ensuring that new roads in housing developments are built to appropriate standards and hence adopted into the public road network when they are completed.

Tamboran Resources

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment whether Tamboran Resources (i) will be required to (a) apply for planning permission; and (b) carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment for each site they propose to drill and conduct hydraulic fracturing; and (ii) will be required to produce a cumulative Environmental Impact Assessment.

(AQW 11111/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am advised by my officials that a planning application for hydraulic fracturing has not been submitted to date.

Any proposal for hydraulic fracturing would require planning permission separate to any licences granted by DETI.

Any planning application for hydraulic fracturing would be subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999. EIA is the process for identifying the environmental effects of proposed developments before planning permission is granted. Its purpose is to prevent, reduce or offset the significant adverse environmental effects of a development proposal and to enhance positive ones.

Applications for hydraulic fracturing which are considered to be linked or form part of a larger project (potential cumulative effect) would be assessed in line with the EIA Regulations.

A developer is required to notify the Department prior to undertaking any exploratory works- including drilling. This affords the Department an opportunity to determine whether or not the exploratory works require planning permission. It also enables the Department to determine whether proposals for such works need to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement. I will be highly vigilant in relation to this matter.

I propose to make a statement to the Assembly on the matter of hydraulic fracturing shortly after the summer recess.

Retired Staff Member Re-Employed in the Same Post

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 11851/11-15, to detail (i) whether the employment term was fixed as part of the staff member's contract after retiring; (ii) whether this is in compliance with the Local Government Staff Commission Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection; (iii) on what date the agreement of temporary employment was reached and approved; (iv) the nature of the project which required the staff member to remain until its completion; and (v) at what stage is the project.

(AQW 13945/11-15)

Mr Attwood:

- (i) The employment term of 51 part time weeks was agreed prior to the officer's date of retirement.
- (ii) Yes, Part B6 of the code states "In normal circumstances, all posts should be publicly advertised. However there may be times when councils may need to use alternative recruitment methods, for example, secondments or acting up to cover for maternity leave, development opportunities or temporary project work".
- (iii) June 2009.
- (iv) The staff member was involved in corporate efficiency. (v) The project is complete.

I am not able to provide full details as to do so could breach the principles of the Data Protection Act.

Proposed Waste Management Schemes

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

(AQW 14068/11-15)

Mr Attwood: All three Waste Management Groups continue to manage the public procurement process in which they invited bidders to apply for the contract to provide the facilities and services required.

As the members will understand, much of the detailed information pertaining to the procurements is subject to restrictions imposed by public procurement law and commercial confidentiality requirements. However, I can provide the following summary of each procurement to be as follows:

SWaMP2008 is considering the next steps in its project in light of the introduction of new members to the bid consortium.

arc21 continues in dialogue with its remaining bidder with particular focus on the development of the technical solution and the draft environmental statement.

North West Region Waste Management Group has finalised its Appointment Business Case and has submitted it to DOE/DFP for approval. Once approved, this will allow the NWRWMG to consider appointing a Preferred Bidder.

Flooding in the North Lisburn A0rea

Mr Givan asked the Minister of the Environment what action his Department is taking in response to the recent flooding in the north Lisburn area; and what implications these flooding events might have on current and future planning applications in the area.

(AQW 14085/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department is responsible for the creation, where, appropriate, of an Emergency Financial Assistance Scheme to help Councils' emergency response in the immediate post-flooding situation including payments to qualifying households that have suffered severe inconvenience because of flooding. This was activated in time and on a number of other occasions. Indeed, I am developing proposals to extend the financial threshold and reach of the scheme.

Planning Policy Statement PPS 15 Planning and Flood Risk sets out the Department's planning policies to minimise flood risk to people, property and the environment. The susceptibility of all land to flooding is a material consideration in determining planning applications. The particular issue of flooding events in recent years and planning and other consequences are under further consideration.

DOE Planning will continue to determine planning applications taking into account the Strategic Flood Maps produced by DARD Rivers Agency and any other local information available. If any new local information is available as a result of the recent flooding episode this will be taken into account.

Responsibility for updating the Strategic Flood Map in response to any new information is the responsibility of DARD Rivers Agency.

Controls on the Use of Snares

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment what progress is being made by his Department to introduce controls on the use of snares.

(AQW 14122/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department intends to begin a consultation process on proposed regulations to control the use of snares by the end of October.

Planning Process for Local Businesses

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has any plans to reform the planning process for local businesses.

(AQW 14153/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am working on a number of fronts to reform and remodel the planning system so that it supports the future economic and social development needs of all users in Northern Ireland, including local business, and pays due regard to the wonder of our built and natural heritage and environment.

The reforms to the planning system contained within the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 will result in a modernised system transferring to councils with quicker local development plans, faster decisions on planning applications, faster and fairer appeals and tougher and simpler enforcement. The transfer of planning functions to councils will ultimately see applications considered against the backdrop of a locally established development plan in tune with the council's approach to local economic development.

In order to maintain the momentum of planning reform I am currently seeking the Executive's agreement to introduce a Planning Bill to this Assembly session to accelerate the implementation of a number of the reforms contained in the Act, to be administered by the Department.

In addition, I have instructed officials to undertake a comprehensive and fundamental review of planning policy in advance of the transfer of planning powers to councils. This work will support local businesses by ensuring that regional planning policy is shorter, clearer and more focused. It will involve collating policies in one document so that regional policy is more accessible, and intelligible, and with an appropriate Executive Statement of intent setting out the expectations of the planning system.

I am also bringing forward a number of administrative reforms which will speed up the processing of applications (including major applications) such as an extension to the streamlined planning application scheme with local councils, measures to ensure quicker responses from consultees and on a voluntary

basis pre-application community consultation on key developments. A new complaints procedure has been introduced designed to make the process of complaining easier and more user-friendly for members of the public.

In order to speed up the current planning process I have set ambitious targets for 2012-2013. For Strategic Planning Division the target is to process 60% of large scale investment planning applications received on or after 1 April 2012 within 6 months; for Local Planning Division the targets are to determine all major, intermediate and minor planning applications within an average of 23 weeks, 20

weeks and 14 weeks respectively. These targets should ensure that planning applications for small business are processed in a timely manner.

However, the Department's experience to date is that improved performance can only be achieved through working inclusively with all key stakeholders in the overall planning system. This includes the submission of acceptable schemes at the outset. I would encourage applicants to engage with the local community and to enter into pre-application discussions with my Department prior to the submission of major planning applications.

In addition, I have commenced a series of other interventions including involving representatives of the renewable industry (including anaerobic digestion) to identify how the planning service can be improved; initiating an operational review of PPS21; establishing a group to look at planning, business and the economy.

Additionally, legislation, which came into operation on 19th September 2012, provides new permitted development rights for extensions, alterations and other small scale development for shops, financial and professional services establishments, office premises and schools, colleges, universities and hospitals. The legislation also provides revised permitted development rights for industrial buildings and warehouses. This means that owners of these types of premises do not need to apply for planning permission to undertake these types of development.

I will continue to work with key stakeholders to ensure that planning delivers benefits to the economy in an efficient and timely manner and continue to monitor the performance within Planning.

Prosecutions for Littering

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment how many prosecutions have been secured for littering in each of the last two years, broken down by council area.

(AQW 14224/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The figures obtained by the Department from councils in respect of successful prosecutions in the courts for littering offences are as follows:-

Council	2010/11 Year	2011/12 Year
Ballymena	2	1
Belfast	91	15
Castlereagh	1	4
Coleraine	1	2
Cookstown	2	-
Craigavon	25	11
Larne	3	-
Magherafelt	-	1
Newtownabbey	7	7
Omagh	1	2
All Other Councils	0	0
Total	133	43

Over the same 2 year period Councils across Northern Ireland issued 7198 fixed penalty notices (£50 fines) for litter offences. Fixed penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution in the courts.

Road Cycle Training

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what provision is made to ensure that every child has access to road cycle training.

(AQW 14269/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) is offered to all of the 849 primary schools in Northern Ireland. It is aimed primarily at children in Primary 7, although some schools offer CPS to Primary 6 and occasionally Primary 5 children. However, children must be over nine years of age before they are allowed to sit the final test.

Approximately 580 primary schools with an average of 8,800 children are trained in the CPS each year.

Every school who takes up CPS is offered the opportunity to include an on-road element. There is currently 5 -10% take-up on the on-road option as schools and teachers have been reluctant to include the on-road cycling experience for safety and public liability reasons.

My Department has no power to insist that a school takes up the option to deliver the Cycling Proficiency Scheme; this decision lies solely with the individual schools, as does the decision on the use of the on-road option. Officials are currently reviewing the CPS to ensure that it remains effective in promoting the importance of road safety. I intend to confirm how CPS will be developed in the near future.

Marine Conservation Zone

Mr Frew asked the Minister of the Environment, in light of the comments made by a departmental official at the Committee for the Environment meeting on 31 May 2012 that a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ) is not purely an environmental designation, will be primarily for seabed features and is not intended to displace any other activity or industry, to outline the intended purpose of an MCZ; and whether these comments are indicative of the Department's official position on MCZs.

(AQW 14355/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I will first point out that the Marine Bill has now concluded the committee stage and will return to the Assembly in the autumn. There will be amendments forthcoming – including from me – which, if endorsed, will reconfigure the Bill.

That said, the context of the official's statement that MCZs are not purely an environmental designation is accurate and confirms that throughout the designation process any economic or social activities are properly considered, as well as the environmental benefits.

In this respect the MCZ process differs significantly from the current obligation to designate sites for European wide species and habitats under the Habitats and Birds Directives. Under these directives the emphasis is focused primarily on the ecological benefits of each site.

The MCZ process under the Marine Bill is intended to extend the Department's remit to enhance protection of nationally important marine wildlife and habitats. The designation process will primarily be for seabed habitats and features, as many mobile marine species are already protected under the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.

Retired Staff Member Re-Employed in the Same Post

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 13724/11-15, whether this person is still in post; and if so, why this is the case, given that the project has now been completed.

(AQW 14377/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have been advised by the relevant council that the person is no longer in post.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Transfer of Funds from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners to the Executive

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he plans to compel a transfer of funds from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners to the Executive; and whether it is accepted that such is not legally possible.

(AQW 13867/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The Executive decided, as part of its Budget 2011-15 in March 2011 that it will take forward measures to ensure that the Harbour Commissioners can make a direct financial contribution of £20 million per annum in 2013-14 and 2014-15. The Minister for Regional Development is currently working on proposals as to how this will be taken forward, and my officials have been working closely with his officials to that end.

Until such time as the Regional Development Minister brings proposals to the Executive it would not be appropriate for me to comment on what they will contain.

PEACE III

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what delays are being experienced in the allocation of PEACE III and INTERREG IV funding; and what are the causes of the delays.

(AQW 13988/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Both the PEACE III and INTERREG IVA Programmes are in the final stages of budget allocation.

Under PEACE III, there are 164 projects in receipt of Letters of Offer, with a value of approximately £255.7 million. INTERREG IVA has issued seventy-three Letters of Offer worth approximately £183.1 million.

All projects seeking financial assistance under the PEACE III or INTERREG IVA Programmes must undergo a rigorous assessment process to ascertain their fit with programme objectives, viability and value for money. This includes obtaining the approval of an independent Steering Committee and, where necessary, economic appraisal and approval of the relevant Accountable Government Departments.

Five PEACE III project applications which have received Steering Committee approval are currently awaiting approval from relevant Accountable Departments prior to issue of a Letter of Offer. Additionally, under PEACE III Theme 1.2, Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past, which is delivered by a Consortium comprising the Community Relations Council and Pobal, Letters of Offer for twenty-two projects are currently being processed as a priority.

Under INTERREG IVA, three project applications received under a 2011 call were presented to Steering Committee in June 2012. The Steering Committee requested that these projects undergo additional assessment work. This work is currently being carried out by SEUPB, and the projects will be brought back to the Steering Committee in October 2012. Thirteen project applications from the last funding call, which closed in February 2012, are undergoing assessment. These will be brought to Steering Committee for final decision by November 2012.

Finally, three INTERREG IVA applications approved by Steering Committee are currently awaiting approval from the relevant Accountable Departments.

SEUPB

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the organisations based in the (a) Ballymoney; (b) Moyle; and (c) Ballymena council areas that applied to SEUPB for PEACE III funding in each of the last five years; and (ii) the organisations that were successful and the level of funding awarded in each case.

(AQW 13989/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Under Theme 1.1, Building Positive Relations at the Local Level, of the EU PEACE III Programme, the North East PEACE III Partnership—which includes Ballymoney Borough Council, Moyle District Council and Ballymena Borough Council, alongside Coleraine Borough Council, Larne Borough Council and Limavady Borough Council—was awarded approximately £7.8 million across two phases (2007-2010 and 2010-2013) to deliver local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans across the partnership area. The Partnership is led by Coleraine Borough Council.

The table below details applications for this and other PEACE III assistance from the Ballymoney, Moyle and Ballymena council areas in the last five years.

Year	Lead Partner	Project Title	Outcome	Amount £
2009/10	Youth Education Social Inclusion Partnership	NEELB	Successful	208,558 ¹
	Coleraine Borough Council	Inter Church / Inter Faith Confidence Building Programme	Successful	146,875 ²
	Coleraine Borough Council	Programme 4a: Community and Ethnic Minority Capacity Building and Sharing Development Programme	Successful	92,400 ²
	Coleraine Borough Council	Programme 7a: Cultural diversity, respect and enriching programme	Successful	127,000 ²
	Magherafelt Borough Council	Audit & Profiling of Victims Groups	Successful	7,760 ³
	Coleraine Borough Council	Programme 9b: Indigenous & Ethnic Minority Culture & Arts	Successful	122,000 ²
	Coleraine Borough Council	Outreach Work with Detached Young People	Successful	82,148 ²
2010/11	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Play Fair Programme - Sports Element	Successful	98,960 ⁴
2011/12	Coleraine Borough Council	Ballymoney Area Project	Successful	123,000 ²
	Coleraine Borough Council	Ballymena Area Project	Successful	123,000 ²
	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Play Fair Programme	Successful	91,090 ⁴
	Coleraine Borough Council	Moyle Area Project	Successful	123,000 ²
2008/09	Imeall Tra	Peace of Mind:-Going Back Looking Forward	Unsuccessful	0
	BCW Training Limited	Get Smarter	Unsuccessful	0
	Atlantic Corridor (NI) Limited	The Diamond Project	Unsuccessful	0

Year	Lead Partner	Project Title	Outcome	Amount £
2009/10	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Faith Communities Programme	Unsuccessful	0
	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Engagement, Integration and Diversity Programme	Unsuccessful	0
2010/11	Ballymena East Rural Community Cluster	Young Futures	Unsuccessful	0
	Magherafelt Borough Council	Chanterhill Community Connections Programme CCCP	Unsuccessful	0
2011/12	Newtownabbey Borough Council	Leading Lights Community Drama Programme	Unsuccessful	0
	Newtownabbey Borough Council	We CAN Make a Difference	Withdrawn	0

Notes –

- 1 – This project was supported under the Regional element of Theme 1.1, Building Positive Relations at the Local Level, and as such it has a regional geographical remit. The other successful projects included in the table were awarded funding under the Local element of Theme 1.1. Under the Local element, partnerships of local authorities secured PEACE III funding to deliver local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans in their respective areas. Organisations may then apply to the partnerships for funding to deliver projects within the relevant local Action Plan.
- 2 – These are sub-projects of the North East PEACE III Partnership Local Peace and Reconciliation Action Plans. While the North East Partnership is led by Coleraine Borough Council, it also comprises Ballymena Borough Council, Ballymoney Borough Council, Moyle Borough Council, Limavady Borough Council and Larne Borough Council, and the Action Plans benefit all named council areas.
- 3 – This is a sub-project of the South West Cluster Action Plan. The South West Cluster comprises the four council areas of Cookstown, Dungannon and South Tyrone, Fermanagh and Magherafelt.
- 4 – These are sub-projects of the CAN (Carrickfergus, Antrim and Newtownabbey) Action Plan.

Project address information was used to allocate a project to a particular postcode and subsequently an area, where possible. However, if the project address was insufficient to allocate a postcode, organisation address details were used. Due to the strategic nature of PEACE III projects, the project or lead partner organisation address is often regional headquarters but it is unlikely that all elements of the project will be based in these headquarters. This is particularly relevant when organisation address is used in lieu of project address in geographical analysis.

The following caveats apply to the geographical allocation of projects:

When using project address it is important to note that the scope or impacts of the project may extend beyond the geographical location of the project itself. For example, while a project address may fall in one council area, the impact may extend to surrounding areas.

In addition, where organisation address is used, it is important to note that a project may or may not be situated within the same geographical area as the applicant organisation. For example, one council area may be the location of the lead applicant, yet the expenditure could be distributed throughout a number of other areas.

Where required, an exchange rate of £1 = €1.15 has been used.

Company Headquarters

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of companies that are operational; and (ii) of these, the number of companies which have their headquarters (a) outside Britain or the island of Ireland; (b) in Britain; (c) in the Republic of Ireland; and (d) here; and (iii) the number of these companies that are (a) banks; and (b) small and medium-sized enterprises that do not pay corporation tax.

(AQW 14039/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The number of VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses can be obtained from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR). Businesses are classified by their legal status and Companies (including Building Societies) are grouped together with Limited Liability Partnerships and Joint Ventures on the IDBR.

- i At August 2012, there were 67,640 VAT and/or PAYE registered businesses operational in Northern Ireland. 19,965 of these businesses had a legal status of Company (including Building Societies), Limited Liability Partnership or Joint Ventures.
- ii. Of these 19,965 businesses, based on their registered address within the UK or country of ultimate ownership:-
 - a 560 have their headquarters outside Great Britain or the island of Ireland.
 - b 555 have their headquarters in Great Britain.
 - c 270 have their headquarters in the Republic of Ireland.
 - d 18,575 have their headquarters in Northern Ireland.
- iii. Of these 19,965 businesses:
 - a 10 are banks.
 - b 19,765 are small and medium sized businesses.

As the IDBR does not hold information on corporation tax, it is not possible to determine how many of these small and medium sized businesses do not pay corporation tax.

Figures are rounded to the nearest 5 and thus may not add to totals.

Hard Landscaping Material

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) what consideration has been given to the implementation of new procedures and guidelines to ensure sustainable and ethical supply chains in the provision of hard landscaping materials; and (ii) whether the British Standard European Norm standard will be applied in the future provision of hard landscaping material.

(AQW 14084/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Central Procurement Directorate, in conjunction with Centres of Procurement Expertise (CoPEs), has developed a 'Construction Sustainability Action Plan 2012 – 2015' (SAP). This incorporates responsible sourcing into contract conditions by 2013. The SAP requires ethical trading requirements to be included in contract specifications. Further responsible sourcing guidance based on the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games & Paralympic Games Sustainable Sourcing Code is being developed. Among other things this will require suppliers to ensure that locations used in the manufacture and supply of products and services meet the provisions of the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code.

It is current procurement practice to specify products and materials using relevant BS EN standards (or equivalent). The NI CoPEs encourage the use of relevant BS EN standards (or equivalent) in technical specifications for the provision of hard landscaping materials.

Employee Pension Contributions

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he is satisfied that, in circumstances where employee pension contributions have been increasing in the public sector, that within the senior grades of Northern Ireland Water the employer's contribution is 26.9 percent and the employee contribution is in the range 1.5 to 3.5 percent; and what steps are being taken to address this imbalance.

(AQW 14207/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The NI Water Pension Scheme is outside of the remit of the current reforms and therefore any changes to it would be a matter for the Board of Trustees to determine. I advised the Minister for Regional Development of this on 31 October 2011. Since then, I understand that his officials have been liaising with the NI Water Board on the matter and that there is a clear expectation that the company will provide a plan to take forward the necessary work and relevant consultation with the Scheme Trustees, NI Water employees and Trade Unions to revise the NI Water Scheme to make it broadly comparable with the changes in the wider public sector. The policy intention is that smaller schemes, not specifically part of the Independent Public Service Pensions Review, will be required to act on the recommendations for wider pension reform but to a longer timescale.

2011 Census

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the publication dates of further data arising from the 2011 census

(AQW 14260/11-15)

Mr Wilson: NISRA published the second report from the 2011 Census (Census 2011 Population and Household Estimates by Local Government District for Northern Ireland) on Wednesday 19 September 2012. This followed on from the publication of the first results (population figures, by age and sex, for Northern Ireland) on 16 July 2012.

The next release, which will consist of Key and Quick Statistics, is scheduled for release between November 2012 and February 2013. The actual date of release will be advised at least one month in advance.

Full details of the release plans for the 2011 Census Statistics are set out in the 2011 Census Outputs Prospectus which is available on the NISRA website at <http://www.nisra.gov.uk/Census/2011/CensusProposedOutputs.html>.

Rebate on the Regional Rate Payment

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the rebate on the Regional Rate payment available to customers who pay for water and sewage through the NI Water billing system; and how the rebate is calculated.

(AQW 14295/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There is no rate rebate for anyone paying for water and sewerage through the NI Water billing system; however, commercial customers who also pay business rates receive an allowance off their water bill, depending on whether the supply is metered or unmeasured. The charging scheme is not something that my Department has any direct involvement in and it is a matter for DRD and NI Water.

Effectiveness of Local Short-Term Interventions by the Executive

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether cost benefit analyses can be conducted to measure the effectiveness of local short-term interventions by the Executive.

(AQW 14306/11-15)

Mr Wilson: In principle, it should be possible to assess the costs and benefits of any of the Executive's interventions, although the precise method for doing so would depend on the nature of the intervention in view. For example, it is often difficult to measure benefits in monetary terms so in many cases they have to be assessed by other means such as using performance indicators or impact statements.

Conducting cost benefit analysis uses up resources and can be time consuming. Thus, before deciding to undertake any particular analysis, there would need to be consideration of the resources required to do it, and whether it would be the best use of them in view of other priorities.

Youth Unemployment

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the current rate of youth unemployment in each constituency.

(AQW 14394/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The official measure of unemployment is sourced to the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, the LFS is a sample survey and the current rates of youth unemployment in each parliamentary constituency area are not sourced to the LFS because of the relatively large confidence intervals around the estimates. This is due to sample size constraints in the LFS.

The table overleaf is sourced to the claimant count measure of unemployment. This shows the number of persons aged 18-24 claiming unemployment related benefits at August 2012 and this figure as a percentage of the resident working age population of that age group.

TABLE 1 - YOUTH CLAIMANT COUNT AUGUST 2012

Parliamentary Constituency Area	18 – 24 year olds	
	Number	Rate
Belfast East	870	10.7%
Belfast North	1,535	14.2%
Belfast South	1,015	6.6%
Belfast West	1,730	14.3%
East Antrim	800	9.5%
East Londonderry	1,030	11.6%
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	895	9.2%
Foyle	1,835	17.1%
Lagan Valley	720	8.6%
Mid Ulster	850	8.6%
Newry & Armagh	1,250	10.9%
North Antrim	920	9.7%
North Down	660	9.0%
South Antrim	710	7.8%
South Down	1,055	9.4%
Strangford	785	10.5%
Upper Bann	1,325	11.4%
West Tyrone	1,035	11.9%
Northern Ireland	19,025	10.6%

Rates are calculated using rounded data

Guidance on the Appointment of Special Advisers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, since he introduced his guidance on the appointment of special advisers in September 2011, how many Special Advisers have been appointed by Sinn Féin Ministers in full compliance with the guidance and are now being paid as civil servants directly from public funds.

(AQW 14474/11-15)

Mr Wilson: None.

Young People aged 16-25 who are Currently Unemployed

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people aged 16-25 who are currently unemployed, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 14566/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The official measure of unemployment is sourced to the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, the LFS is a sample survey and the current rates of youth unemployment in each parliamentary constituency area are not sourced to the LFS because of the relatively large confidence intervals around the estimates. This is due to sample size constraints in the LFS.

The table overleaf is sourced to the claimant count measure of unemployment. This shows the number of persons aged 16-25 claiming unemployment related benefits at August 2012.

TABLE 1 - CLAIMANT COUNT FOR 16-25 YEAR OLDS AT AUGUST 2012

Parliamentary Constituency Area	16-25 Year old Claimants
Belfast East	875
Belfast North	1,385
Belfast South	1,085
Belfast West	1,810
East Antrim	1,090
East Londonderry	1,080
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	1,020
Foyle	2,145
Lagan Valley	975
Mid Ulster	945
Newry & Armagh	1,395
North Antrim	1,070
North Down	745
South Antrim	895
South Down	1,255
Strangford	965
Upper Bann	1,495
West Tyrone	1,200
Northern Ireland	21,430

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

GP Surgeries

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many GP surgeries require replacement or significant upgrade.

(AQW 13981/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): There are currently 353 GP Practices providing primary medical care services across Northern Ireland. Of the 353 GP Practices 124 are based in Trust owned premises. The remaining 229 GP Practices are based either in privately owned or privately rented accommodation and GPs are therefore responsible for the upkeep of their premises.

My Department recently undertook a survey of Trust owned premises accommodating GP Practices with the aim of highlighting areas where priority work was required to maintain the building. A total of 64 Trust owned properties were surveyed of which 48 were identified as requiring investment. Over the last 2 years a total of some £8.1m of capital funding has been allocated (£3.9m in 11/12 and £4.2m in 12/13) to address urgent areas of work across a number of these properties. Further investment is planned in 2013/14.

I am currently considering other funding streams including revenue funded options for replacement of a number of health and care centres which include GP Practices. Any such investment will be subject to business case approval, demonstration of value for money and affordability.

GP Out of Hours Consultation

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to the GP Out of Hours consultation, whether there is the potential for cutbacks on completion of the consultation; and for his assessment of the likelihood of job losses as a result of his proposals.

(AQW 14020/11-15)

Mr Poots: The changes outlined in the Strategic Framework for GP Out of Hours is primarily concerned with simplifying access, integrating services and ensuring a safe and effective GP Out of Hours service is available to everyone in Northern Ireland.

It is not anticipated that the changes outlined in the Strategic Framework for GP OOHs would result in money being taken out of the existing OOHs budget, nor is it anticipated that staff currently working in this area will lose their jobs if the service is regionalised. It is possible that some staff may experience a change in their work pattern as a result of the proposed implementation.

Doctors: Industrial Action on 21 June

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 13206/11-15, whether he received information from Health and Social Care organisations on whether the appropriate amounts were paid to doctors for the period of industrial action on 21 June 2012.

(AQW 14022/11-15)

Mr Poots: Health and Social Care organisations have confirmed to the Department that they are now in the process of adjusting accordingly the salaries of those doctors who undertook industrial action. Appropriate deductions in pay are being made commensurate with individual action.

LED Screens to Transfer Information to People who are Blind or Visually Impaired

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assessment Health and Social Care Trusts have made of the use of LED screens to transfer information to people who are blind or visually impaired.

(AQW 14038/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am not aware that Health and Social Care Trusts have made any assessment of the use of such technology and LED screens are not universally used by Trusts.

In general, at appointments, patients are called and a patient with a visual impairment is then escorted to the consulting room. Where LED screens are used, they are used in conjunction with other calling systems.

Exceptional Funding Applications for Avastin

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many exceptional funding applications for Avastin have been approved since it was licensed in December 2011.

(AQW 14060/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Health and Social Care Board that since December 2011, the HSCB has approved one request for exceptional funding for Avastin.

Health Service Dentists

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 11042/11-15, to detail the timeframe for public consultation on changes to the provision of Health Service dental care.

(AQW 14061/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is finalising the Regulatory Impact Assessment on these proposals. Once this is completed the consultation with the British Dental Association, Patient and Client Council, wider dental profession, public and other key stakeholders will begin. It is important that consultees have access to all the information to enable them to make an informed response to the proposed changes to the provision of dental services. I will inform the Committee on Health, Social Services and Public Safety in advance of the launch of the consultation.

Lpilimumab Through the Cancer Drugs Fund

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have (i) requested; and (ii) received Ipilimumab through the cancer drugs fund.

(AQW 14076/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) The cancer drugs fund operates in England and Wales only; there is no equivalent in Northern Ireland. However within Northern Ireland patients can access non-commissioned drugs and treatments through individual funding requests (IFRs) to the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board. These requests are required to show exceptionality and be supported by nominated senior clinicians within the relevant Trust. It should be noted that in considering exceptionality the HSC Board can only take account of the clinical circumstances that apply to the individual case. It is not in a position to take account of any personal or social circumstances such as age, dependants, occupation etc.
- (ii) The Health and Social Care Board has not received an IFR in respect of ipilimumab.

Pupils with Type 1 Diabetes

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what engagement his Department has had with the Department of Education to ensure that schools can get quick access to the necessary training to enable them to support incoming pupils who have type one diabetes.

(AQW 14096/11-15)

Mr Poots: Education and Library Boards are responsible for taking forward the issue of training needs in this specific field within schools in cooperation with the relevant health authorities.

Officials from my Department have held recent discussions with officials from DE with regard to training for school staff volunteering to support pupils with medication needs.

My Department will continue to provide advice and guidance, as necessary, with regard to the health issues, to the Department of Education and the Education and Library Boards who are leading on managing this issue.

Pupils with Type 1 Diabetes

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the minimum level of training that a teacher should have to enable them to support a child with type one diabetes; and how quickly can this training be accessed.

(AQW 14098/11-15)

Mr Poots: Training for teachers and school staff regarding specific health conditions is provided by the relevant Health and Social Care Trust and will be in line with the pupil's individual healthcare plan.

The training is delivered on a one to one basis involving a Diabetes Specialist Nurse (DSN), the parents, the pupil and the volunteer teaching staff. Training can only be delivered in an established term as the teaching staff need to be there together with the nurse, the parents and the pupil. The training requires five sessions to ensure the necessary competencies are acquired by the staff being trained. This is important from a patient safety and clinical governance point of view. Insulin is a potentially dangerous medication which requires sufficient training before it can be administered safely, particularly to young children. There is no legal duty that requires school staff to administer medication; this is a voluntary role.

Any parent who feels that their child is not receiving the appropriate level of support for the administration of medication should raise the issues with the school in the first instance and if they are still not content with the level of support, then they should contact their relevant Education and Library Board Special Education Officer

Blood Donation

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has apologised to the African and Caribbean community for his comments on 17 June 2012 in relation to blood donation.

(AQW 14115/11-15)

Mr Poots: My priority as Health Minister is the safety of blood, continuity in the supply of safe blood, and public confidence in the safety of blood. The current policy throughout the UK is that a person may not give blood within 12 months of having had sex with anyone who has been sexually active in parts of the world where AIDS/HIV is very common. On 19th June 2012 on Good Morning Ulster I provided further clarification on the comment that I had made on the Sunday Politics Show regarding blood donation, that in referring to the risk associated with African countries I certainly did not intend any slur or generalisation about African people or people of African descent.

Ban on Cigarette Vending Machines

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has any evidence of breaches of the regulations which ban the use of cigarette vending machines.

(AQW 14121/11-15)

Mr Poots: Regulations banning the sale of tobacco from vending machines commenced on 1 March 2012 and, to date, unofficial reports from district councils enforcement officers have indicated very high levels of compliance with the legislation.

While a very small number of premises have been observed in breach of the regulations, these cases have been promptly resolved to the satisfaction of enforcement officers.

Deep Vein Thrombosis Clinics

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why Belfast City Hospital is the only hospital to provide a deep vein thrombosis clinic; and whether there are any plans to create more provision in this field.

(AQW 14137/11-15)

Mr Poots: Most hospitals in Northern Ireland provide assessment services for patients with deep vein thrombosis (DVT). These services are provided either in an ambulatory (clinic) setting or through emergency departments. In addition, pathways are being developed which extends the GP role in DVT management which reduces the need for patients having to go to hospital.

Dangers of Blood Clots to Children and Young People

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to raise awareness of the dangers of blood clots to children and young people.

(AQW 14138/11-15)

Mr Poots: Venous thromboembolism is a rare occurrence in children. The current awareness programmes are focused on adults and hospitalised patients.

Venous Thromboembolism

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on collaborative improvement projects which involve Health and Social Care Trusts and the expert advisory group on the issue of venous thromboembolism.

(AQW 14140/11-15)

Mr Poots: In July 2011 the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Nursing Officer wrote on the development and introduction of a new regional venous thromboembolism (VTE) risk assessment tool.

This work has been led by the HSC Safety Forum which is now part of the Public Health Agency. The risk assessment tool was developed through a VTE Collaborative (with HSC Trusts) which was established in 2009, and an associated advisory group which was chaired by a consultant haematologist.

This means that a single assessment tool was agreed for use in all HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland. Its purpose is to promote that every adult patient has a documented VTE risk assessment on admission to hospital and that the risk assessment is conducted in accordance with the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Guideline (CG92) which was endorsed by the DHSSPS in 2011. Where appropriate, the patient would be commenced on treatment to reduce the risk of VTE occurring.

Through its Collaborative learning sets, the Safety Forum has promoted the use of this risk assessment tool and has highlighted the importance of prevention of VTE. Uptake and compliance with the risk assessment tool has significantly increased since 2009 as has the provision of information for patients. The last meeting of the Collaborative was held in September 2012. The Advisory Group will continue to monitor developments regarding prevention of VTE locally and take account of any changing research evidence.

Cancer Patients Sent Outside Northern Ireland for Radiotherapy or Radiosurgery Treatment

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of cancer patients who were sent outside Northern Ireland for radiotherapy or radiosurgery treatment in each of the last five years; (ii) the cancers for which these treatments were used; (iii) the hospitals to which the patients were sent; and (iv) the total cost of sending the patients for treatment during this period.

(AQW 14163/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) Information on the number of cancer patients that have been referred for radiotherapy or radiosurgery treatment outside of Northern Ireland, for each calendar year since 2008 until the present, is detailed in the table below:

Calendar Year	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total no. of referrals	96*	128*	73*	56	31

Source: Health and Social Care Board

- * Information for 2008, 2009 and 2010 refers to all patients who were referred for treatment for cancer, as records for this period were not kept in a manner that would allow the definitive identification of referrals for radiotherapy or radiosurgery only.
- (ii) The Health and Social Care Board have advised me that information on the types of cancer that were treated with radiotherapy or radiosurgery is not collected centrally, and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.
- During the last five years cancer patients were referred for radiotherapy or radiosurgery to the following hospitals:
- (iii) Aintree Hospital Liverpool; Alder Hey Children's Hospital; Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital; Beaumont Hospital, Dublin; Birmingham Children's Hospital; Christie Hospital; Clatterbridge Centre of Oncology; Cookridge Hospital, Leeds; Great Ormond Street Hospital; Harley Street Clinic; Heatherwood and Wrexham Hospital; Imperial College; Kings College Hospital; Leeds Gamma Knife; Leeds Teaching Hospital; Lister Hospital; Manchester Children's University Hospital; National centre for Stereotactic Surgery; National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery; NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde; North West Hospital; Queens Square London; Royal Hallamshire, Sheffield; Sheffield Teaching Hospital; Sligo General; St Bartholomew's Hospital; St James, Leeds; St Marks Hospital; St Paul's University Hospital; The London Gamma Knife Centre; The Royal Marsden; The Walton Centre; United Bristol Royal Hospital; University College London; and University Hospital, Regensburg, Germany.
- (iv) The Health and Social Care Board have advised that information on the total costs of sending patients outside of Northern Ireland for treatment is not collected centrally, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Book and Uniform Allowance for Student Nurses

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) why the book and uniform allowance for student nurses has been removed; (ii) the estimated savings this will generate; and (iii) what consultation was carried out before the decision was taken.

(AQW 14177/11-15)

Mr Poots: In light of the short period of notice between announcement of the new bursary provision and commencement of the training courses this year, I have reinstated the book and uniform allowance this academic year only and will apply to new students entering study in the September 2012 and February 2013 intakes. The savings from the reduction in the basic non means tested bursary are estimated to deliver around £2.0m by 2014/15. A decision was taken to move ahead with the reductions to the nursing and midwifery support following a 12 week public consultation on the Review of Healthcare Bursaries which was closed on 2 August. Forty four responses were received.

Higher Education Institute Fees

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much his Department has spent on Higher Education Institute fees in each of the last five years.

(AQW 14178/11-15)

Mr Poots: The estimated amount spent on fees by my Department to higher education institutions during each of the last five years is set out in the table below:

Year	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	2007/08
Amount	£26.9m	£26.6m	£26.5m	£26.2m	£26.3m

Higher Education Institute Fees

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why Higher Education Institute fees for student nurses cannot be paid through a student loan which can be repaid at a later date.

(AQW 14179/11-15)

Mr Poots: Under the Student Fees (Qualifying Courses and Persons) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001 Regulation 5 (a) a nurse is not eligible for a tuition fee loan if a healthcare bursary is in payment. Nursing students receive a bursary paid by the Department of £5165 per year, making them ineligible for a fee loan.

A nursing student who is successful in gaining a place commissioned by the Department at either the University of Ulster or Queens University will have the cost of their fees met in full.

Health Service Dentists

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 11995/11-15, to detail the timeframe for the delivery of new dental contracts.

(AQW 14181/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is working with the Health and Social Care Board to finalise the legislative framework which will allow the new dental contract arrangements to be piloted. Officials from my Department and the Health and Social Care Board continue to engage with local representatives of the British Dental Association on the development of the new contracts for General Dental Services, Oral Surgery and Orthodontics.

Once completed, the pilots of the new contract arrangements will be reviewed. Following this, my Department will bring forward the regulations necessary to implement new dental contracts.

Alcohol and Drugs Outreach Centre in Belfast

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what his Department is doing to establish an alcohol and drugs outreach centre in Belfast.

(AQW 14185/11-15)

Mr Poots: Neither my Department, the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust, nor the Public Health Agency are aware of any plans to establish an alcohol and drugs outreach centre in Belfast, nor indeed of any discussions around the need for such a facility.

The Belfast Trust's Community Addiction Service currently operates a Drug Outreach Team based in Belfast, which offers harm reduction advice, support and/or counselling to drug users, as well as signposting and referring on to more specialised addiction services. This team works with hard-to-reach individuals who are experiencing ongoing opiate addiction problems.

In addition, the PHA currently funds a full range of alcohol and drug services that is available to the residents of Belfast; these services could be offered on an outreach basis as required/requested. This means that any client experiencing difficulties through alcohol and/or drug misuse has the option to request that the service be provided at a preferred location suitable to them rather than the client having to present at the service provider's office.

Health Inequalities

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that the constituencies of West Belfast, North Belfast and Foyle rank in the top three for health inequalities, what action he is taking to address these issues.

(AQW 14198/11-15)

Mr Poots: Tackling health inequalities involves addressing the socio-economic circumstances that prevail across society. Health and social care can address some aspects, but collaboration with other organisations across all sectors, including with local communities is crucial.

In addition to the range of regional programmes in place, the PHA is working in partnership with statutory, community and other sectors in these constituencies to invest in and support local initiatives. These are aimed at addressing both the social determinants contributing to health inequalities, and issues such as alcohol and drug misuse, smoking, and mental health and suicide.

The new cross-Departmental public health strategic framework, which is currently out for consultation, will also seek to re-invigorate cross-departmental and cross-sectoral collaborative action to tackle health inequalities and improve the health and well being of the most disadvantaged in our society.

Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence and any proposed strategies for the next three years.

(AQW 14231/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence seeks to co-ordinate the effort across government to ensure that domestic and sexual violence issues are integrated into the policy initiatives of all relevant Government Departments.

The Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence most recently met on 24 May 2012 and members were updated on the work being taken forward in respect of implementing the “Tackling Violence at Home” and “Tackling Sexual Violence and Abuse” Strategies.

The “Tackling Violence at Home” and “Tackling Sexual Violence and Abuse”

Strategies are due to end during 2013. A new joint Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy will be published in September 2013.

Tackling Violence at Home Strategy

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the implementation of the ‘Tackling Violence at Home Strategy’.

(AQW 14233/11-15)

Mr Poots: The “Tackling Violence at Home” Strategy is being taken forward through strong partnership working between statutory and voluntary sector stakeholders. As the issues to be addressed straddle areas of responsibility for a number of government departments, the Strategy delivers outcomes through cross-departmental working.

To continue to deliver on the objectives of the “Tackling Violence at Home” Strategy,

a joint Domestic and Sexual Violence Action Plan covering the period April 2012 to September 2013 has been published.

Steady progress has been made and work continues to further the interests of victims/survivors and their families.

Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many times since 2010 the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence has met; (ii) how many times the Minister of Justice has attended these meetings; and (iii) how often the minutes of the meetings are published.

(AQW 14234/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence has met on two occasions since 2010: 29 June 2010 and 24 May 2012; the Minister of Justice attended both. The next meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group is scheduled for 14 November 2012.

The minutes of the Inter-Ministerial Group are not routinely published. However, ratified minutes have been released following Freedom of Information requests.

Welfare Reform

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what discussions he has held with the Minister for Social Development concerning the implementation of welfare reform, as it impacts on people with neurological conditions and their carers.

(AQW 14261/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have met the Minister for Social Development on a number of occasions to discuss issues of mutual interest, including the reform of adult social care on which public consultation has now commenced; this particular issue, however, has not been discussed.

Transfers from an Accident and Emergency Department

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of transfers from an Accident and Emergency (A&E) department in a hospital to (i) an A&E department in another hospital; and (ii) a specialist ward or unit in another hospital over the last twelve months, broken down by each hospital.

(AQW 14272/11-15)

Mr Poots: This information is not currently available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Contractors and Sub-Contractors Working on the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will intervene to ensure that all the contractors and sub-contractors, working on the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen, are paid without delay for work which they have carried out.

(AQW 14291/11-15)

Mr Poots: As you are aware, the South West Acute Hospital was procured under a PFI initiative. The contract for the hospital is between the Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT) and Northern Ireland Health Group (NIHG) who in turn appointed FCC Elliott as Main Contractor for the project.

As neither the Department nor the WHSCT has any involvement in the contracts between FCC Elliott and its sub-contractors, there is no mechanism in place whereby recourse may be sought from my Department should the Contractor default on payments. There is a responsibility placed upon FCC Elliott to ensure that all monies due to sub-contractors are paid in accordance with the contract conditions between the parties. The recourse for resolution of any contractual disputes between the main and sub-contractors, including any alleged non-payment of monies due should be provided for within the terms of the contract between the two parties.

Windermere Supporting Living Services in Lisburn

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the review into services at Windermere Supporting Living Services in Lisburn, and the inclusion of former employees in the process.

(AQW 14299/11-15)

Mr Poots: As part of a review into services at Windermere, the South Eastern Trust, in partnership with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), are interviewing all current members of Windermere staff. These interviews are being carried out by staff who have had no previous contact with the service at Windermere. This work is now approaching completion.

In addition, the Trust has deployed a nurse from the Behaviour Support Team to work across a range of shifts, and all the houses in Windermere, to further engage with staff and observe practice. That nurse is currently drafting a report of findings.

I am advised that no major issues have emerged from the review; indeed, a large amount of good practice has been identified and residents' families have all expressed satisfaction with the service at Windermere.

The Trust and the RQIA expect to conclude findings shortly and thereafter plan to meet with staff and relatives to inform them of their findings.

Adult Safeguarding Referrals

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for a breakdown of Adult Safeguarding referrals and protection plans introduced in each Health and Social Care Trust area over the last three years.

(AQW 14300/11-15)

Mr Poots: Table 1 and Table 2, detail the numbers of Adult Safeguarding Referrals and Adult Protection Plans respectively, in each Health and Social Care Trust for each of the last three years.

TABLE1: ADULT SAFEGUARDING REFERRALS BY HSC TRUST 2009/10 – 2011/12

HSC Trust	Year		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	509	643	1,189
Northern	390	396	641
South Eastern	292	441	658
Southern	235	226	854
Western	148	205	244
All Trusts	1,574	1,911	3,586

Source: Health and Social Care Board Delegated Statutory Functions Monitoring Returns year ending 31 March

Note: These figures have not been validated by DHSSPS

Table 2: Adult Protection Plans in each HSC Trust 2009/10 – 2011/1

HSC Trust	Year		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Belfast	388	426	953

HSC Trust	Year		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Northern	309	333	453
South Eastern	220	205	447
Southern	36	42	140
Western	106	121	136
All Trusts	1,059	1,127	2,129

Source: Health and Social Care Board Delegated Statutory Functions Monitoring Returns year ending 31 March

Note: These figures have not been validated by DHSSPS

Glass Bottle or Glass Related Injuries

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the statistics for the last three years relating to glass bottle or glass related injuries, and the cost to the Health Service in treating these injuries.

(AQW 14353/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is available on the number of hospital inpatient and day case admissions where a diagnosis of a glass related injury has been recorded. Figures relating to the latest three years for which information is currently available are shown in the table below:-

Financial Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Admissions	173	185	145

Source:- Hospital Inpatient System

The relevant year's HRG¹ Reference Costs, derived from annual trust costing returns, have been applied to the activity information to produce the following estimate of the total cost associated with admissions due to glass related injuries:-

Financial Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Total Cost (£)	391,153	371,434	288,280

Source:- HRG Reference Cost returns

Please note the following:

- HRG reference costs are fully absorbed unit costs including capital charges.
- Reference costs do not include costs belonging to days associated with disproportionately long lengths of stay - excess bed-days.
- Costs relating to critical care, renal dialysis and rehabilitation are not included in the above estimated total cost as they are collected separately.
- Costs do not include the cost of any high cost drugs that may have been administered. The high cost drug information is not collected at the level of detail required to enable us to estimate what has been spent on people with specific diagnoses.
- All costs provided above relate only to inpatient and daycase admitted care. Substantial A&E, outpatient, primary care, community and personal social services may also be provided to

1 Healthcare Resource Groups (HRGs) are standard groupings of clinically similar treatments which use common levels of healthcare resource.

patients. Costs for these services are not collected at the level of detail required to enable us to estimate what has been spent on people with specific diagnoses.

Sale of Alcohol in Glass Bottles

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the potential savings to the Health Service and the reduction in glass related injuries through the restriction of the sale of alcohol in glass bottles, and the promotion of alternative packaging.

(AQW 14354/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department has not undertaken any work to assess the potential savings to the Health Service and the reduction of glass related injuries through the restriction of the sale of alcohol in glass bottles, and the promotion of alternative packaging. However, research has shown that in total alcohol misuse costs Northern Ireland up to £900 million every year, and almost £250 million of these costs are borne directly by the Health and Social Care Sector. Research has also shown that approximately one in six people who attend hospital Accident and Emergency Departments have alcohol-related injuries or problems. At weekends, which are the peak times, the proportion rises to eight out of ten.

My Department leads on the cross-departmental strategy to reduce the harm related to alcohol and drug misuse in Northern Ireland, and I launched the revised New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs (NSD) Phase 2 on 26 January 2012. One of the issues we have been looking at is the growth in the evening and night-time economy which has led to increased concerns about the levels of alcohol-related crime and disorder (including alcohol-related violence involving glass) in towns and cities and also the associated long-term health impacts of alcohol misuse. My Department has therefore been working with the Department of Justice, the Department for Social Development, the Department of the Environment, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the PSNI, Pubs of Ulster, the Drinks Industry, and local councils to look at this issue and support the "Purple Flag" scheme

Several initiatives already implemented in Wales, Scotland and parts of England have been successful in reducing the impact of violent alcohol-related incidents. I understand that, based on the model and the achievements in Cardiff and Hull, a multi-agency cross-sector partnership has been established in Belfast (hosted by the Belfast HSC Trust), with representation from PSNI, Belfast City Council, Public Health Agency, and a number of interested community groups including "Bottle Out" campaign. This group has been exploring the local context, reviewing experiences elsewhere and is currently in the very early stages of data collection in order to facilitate the development of objectives and implementation plan.

As part of this work a survey was undertaken, and in a sample of 116 violent alcohol-related attendances at a Belfast Emergency Department over a seven-week period, the type of injury recorded in 13 cases was glass-related.

Blood Donations

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will publish the new reports he has received on accepting blood donations from men who have had sex with other men.

(AQW 14363/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have not received any new reports. In recent interviews I have referred to correspondence that I have received. I have received a letter from Dr James Reilly, the Irish Minister for Health, advising me that he does not have any plans to change the permanent deferral which applies to men who have had sex with men. I also referred to work that is currently being undertaken by the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Blood Transfusion (CD-P-TS). The link below is to the technical memorandum outlining the results of the CD-P-TS study.

http://www.edqm.eu/medias/fichiers/paphts_11_28_r_european_committee_partial_agreemen.pdf

Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Regional Service

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what his Department is doing to address the absence of a child and adolescent psychotherapy regional service in 13 of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service teams.

(AQW 14372/11-15)

Mr Poots: Psychotherapy services for children and young people are provided in all Trust areas by a range of specialists, including psychiatrists, psychologists and family therapists. The HSC Board has confirmed that a review of extra contractual referrals which it has funded over the last five years has not found any instances of children having to travel outside Northern Ireland specifically for psychotherapy assessment or treatment.

In response to Bamford my Department published "A Strategy for the Development of Psychological Therapy Services" (June 2010). This sets out the Department's policy for the provision of a range of psychological therapy services and includes recommendations for the provision of these services for children and adolescents.

A regional Psychological Therapies Group, chaired by the HSC Board, is taking forward the implementation of the strategy. The development of child psychotherapy services will be considered as part of the work of that group.

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps he will take to address the absence of a departmental policy on child psychotherapy as a core profession within Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

(AQW 14373/11-15)

Mr Poots: Psychotherapy services for children and young people are provided in all Trust areas by a range of specialists, including psychiatrists, psychologists and family therapists. The HSC Board has confirmed that a review of extra contractual referrals which it has funded over the last five years has not found any instances of children having to travel outside Northern Ireland specifically for psychotherapy assessment or treatment.

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A regional Psychological Therapies Group, chaired by the HSC Board, is taking forward the implementation of the strategy. The development of child psychotherapy services will be considered as part of the work of that group.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps have been taken to implement the recommendation of the Bamford Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (NI) to develop child psychotherapy as a core profession within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

(AQW 14374/11-15)

Mr Poots: Psychotherapy services for children and young people are provided in all Trust areas by a range of specialists, including psychiatrists, psychologists and family therapists. The HSC Board has confirmed that a review of extra contractual referrals which it has funded over the last five years has not found any instances of children having to travel outside Northern Ireland specifically for psychotherapy assessment or treatment.

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A regional Psychological Therapies Group, chaired by the HSC Board, is taking forward the implementation of the strategy. The development of child psychotherapy services will be considered as part of the work of that group.

Local Intensive Psychotherapy Treatment

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how he will address the cost arising out of the absence of local intensive psychotherapy treatment, which means children have to travel to other regions for assessment and treatment.

(AQW 14375/11-15)

Mr Poots: Psychotherapy services for children and young people are provided in all Trust areas by a range of specialists, including psychiatrists, psychologists and family therapists. The HSC Board has confirmed that a review of extra contractual referrals which it has funded over the last five years has not found any instances of children having to travel outside Northern Ireland specifically for psychotherapy assessment or treatment.

In response to Bamford my Department published "A Strategy for the Development of Psychological Therapy Services" (June 2010). This sets out the Department's policy for the provision of a range of psychological therapy services and includes recommendations for the provision of these services for children and adolescents.

A regional Psychological Therapies Group, chaired by the HSC Board, is taking forward the implementation of the strategy. The development of child psychotherapy services will be considered as part of the work of that group.

Fire-Fighter Recruitment Process

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the retained fire-fighter recruitment process will begin again to allow stations to attain their full complement.

(AQW 14385/11-15)

Mr Poots: The NIFRS anticipates launching a campaign to recruit Retained Firefighters in December 2012.

Blood Donations

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will publish the new reports that he has received on accepting blood donations from sex workers and, or, people who have had sex in Africa.

(AQW 14386/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have not received any new reports on these donor deferral criteria.

In 2011 the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) considered the UK policy in respect of commercial sex workers. Details of this review are in SaBTO's Blood Selection Criteria Review which is available at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_129909.pdf .

Regarding people who have had sex in Africa, the policy throughout the UK is that a person may not give blood within 12 months of having had sex with anyone who has been sexually active in parts of the world where AIDS/HIV is very common. Blood donors are asked, before they donate blood, whether they have had sex in the past 12 months with anyone who may ever have had sex in parts of the world

where AIDS/HIV is very common. They are advised that this includes most countries in Africa. This policy has been in place for many years.

My priority is to ensure the safety of blood; continuity in the supply of safe blood, and public confidence in the safety of blood.

Blood Donations

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who wrote the reports that he has recently received on accepting blood donations from men who have had sex with other men, sex workers and or people who have had sex in Africa.

(AQW 14387/11-15)

Mr Poots: I refer to the answer I gave to AQW 14363/11-15.

Blood Donations

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of commissioning the reports that he has received on accepting blood donations from men who have had sex with other men, sex workers and, or, people who have had sex in Africa.

(AQW 14389/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have not commissioned any reports on these issues.

Executive Papers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 13968/11-15, and excluding the content of the Executive papers, to detail the (i) quantity; (ii) dates; and (iii) general topic of the papers awaiting approval.

(AQW 14402/11-15)

Mr Poots: As outlined in my response to AQW 13968/11-15, all aspects of Executive business are confidential.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease Specialist Nurses

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many hospitals have an Inflammatory Bowel Disease specialist nurse; and how many are full-time.

(AQW 14412/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is provided in the table below.

TABLE 1: INFLAMMATORY BOWEL DISEASE SPECIALIST NURSES AT SEPTEMBER 2012 BY HOSPITAL

Hospital	Headcount	WTE
Causeway	1	0.16
Antrim Area	1	0.50
Altnagelvin	1	0.50
Royal Victoria	1	1.00
Total	4	2.16

Source: Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

Notes:

- 1 The Southern Health & Social Care Trust has advised that they intend to hold interviews for a 0.5 WTE position in October 2012.

Short-Stay Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the short-stay unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital will be included in the new Critical Care building.

(AQW 14438/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has advised that the new emergency department in the critical care unit will contain a Clinical Decision Making Unit, not a short stay unit. The short stay unit will be located in the main hospital.

Carers of People Diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease

Mrs McKeivitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what support is available in the South Down area for carers of people diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

(AQW 14443/11-15)

Mr Poots: In addition to respite and short break services, the South Eastern HSC Trust also operates a Carer's Cash Grant Support Scheme, which facilitates carers' participation in a range of activities. The Trust's Carer Coordinator maintains a carers' database that enables carers to be invited to carer-focussed events.

Furthermore, there is a Parkinson's Support Group, which meets in Newtownards. There is another Newry-based support group for South Down, covering Newcastle, Castlewellan and Kilkeel, which also provides advice and support to people with Parkinson's Disease and their carers.

Invoices Paid within 10 Days

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 July 2012, (i) the number of invoices paid; and (ii) the number paid within 10 working days of receipt, by each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 14448/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of invoices paid by HSC Trusts for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 July 2012 and the number paid within 10 working days of receipt are contained in the following table:

Prompt Payment Performance 1 April 2012 to 31 July 2012		
Trust	Number of invoices paid	Number paid within 10 working days
Northern	46,465	27,581
Belfast	125,578	62,252
Western	36,144	20,226
South Eastern	51,060	21,893
Southern	41,488	17,548
NIAS	4,770	1,060

Hoax Calls for Ambulances

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people have been prosecuted in each of the last three years for making hoax calls for ambulances.

(AQW 14469/11-15)

Mr Poots: Neither my Department nor the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service records data on prosecutions relating to hoax calls for ambulances. The prosecution of those who abuse 999 calls is a matter for the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Special Schools: Music

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will reintroduce music to special needs schools.

(AQO 2503/11-15)

Mr Poots: Music Therapy is still provided in a number of special schools, using funding allocated by the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) and through self-funding by some schools. The HSCB will continue the funding they provide until the end of March 2013.

I am advised that the HSCB is working with the NI Music Therapy Trust to help develop a service model which reflects the early intervention focus of the service and which aligns with the Families Matter Strategy. This is supported by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership which seeks to promote partnership working and collaborative commissioning arrangements between all services engaged with children, across a range of settings.

I am also advised that the HSCB has identified funding for the procurement of a contracted music therapy service from April 2013. This will focus on supporting children with disabilities and their families within the early intervention framework outlined in Transforming Your Care. This contract will be tendered in line with relevant procurement requirements.

X-Ray Facility at Bangor Hospital

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety if there any plans to upgrade the x-ray facility at Bangor Hospital.

(AQW 14575/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has advised me that there are no plans to upgrade the Bangor Community Hospital X-ray facility.

Recruitment of a Neuromuscular Care Adviser

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the recruitment of a neuromuscular care adviser by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 14618/11-15)

Mr Poots: The new neurological nurse specialist post was advertised on 26 June 2012. Regrettably, there were no applicants. The post was re-advertised by Belfast HSC Trust on 18 September 2012 with a closing date for applications of 4 October 2012.

Ban on Cigarette Vending Machines

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on compliance with the regulations prohibiting the use of cigarette vending machines.

(AQW 14661/11-15)

Mr Poots: I refer Mr Wells to the answer to AQW 14121/11-15 which I issued on 21 September 2012.

Department of Justice

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Governors

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of governors within Northern Ireland Prison Service facilities, including Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre, broken down by (i) facility; and (ii) grade.

(AQW 13948/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): Table A below details the number of Governors within the Northern Ireland Prison Service at 31 August 2012. The table shows both substantive and temporary staff currently in Governor posts.

TABLE A
CURRENT GOVERNORS IN POST (BOTH SUBSTANTIVE AND TEMPORARY)

Governor Grades	Maghaberry	Magilligan	Hydebank Wood	Headquarters	*PSC	*PECCS	Total
Gov 1	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Gov 2	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
Gov 3	1 (1)	1 (1)	1	2	1 (1)	1 (1)	7
Gov 4	6 (1)	2 (1)	2	3 (2)	0	0	13
Gov 5	8 (3)	3 (1)	4 (1)	3	1 (1)	0	19
Total (both substantive and temporary)	17	7	8	9	2	1	44

Figures in brackets relate to the number of temporary promotions

* Prison Service College

* Prisoner Escort and Court Custody Service

Offenders who Receive a Jail Term and a Victims Levy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to offenders who receive a jail term and a victims levy, whether the levy becomes an immediate warrant or is it deducted at source from prison allowances.

(AQW 13949/11-15)

Mr Ford: Once committed to prison, an offender will be given the opportunity to pay the levy amount in full. However, in the event that he is unwilling or unable to do so, the levy will be deducted from his prisoner earnings whilst in custody.

Provision has been made in the Act to prevent the court, at the time of sentencing, from issuing a forthwith warrant in respect of non-payment of the levy. Operationally, this means that the offender will be unable to serve a period of custody in lieu of payment of the levy amount.

Security Improvements at Dungannon Court House

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to provide a breakdown of the estimated total cost of security improvements at Dungannon Court House, including contractor costs.

(AQW 13952/11-15)

Mr Ford: The cost of security improvements at Dungannon Courthouse is estimated at £133,400 including contractor costs. Due to the nature of this work, it would be inappropriate to provide a breakdown of the estimated costs.

Deaths in Custody of Female Prisoners

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in light of the deaths in custody of female prisoners on 7 September 2002 and 3 March 2004, to detail (i) the recommendations made to the Northern Ireland Prison Service; and (ii) how many recommendations were successfully implemented.

(AQW 13954/11-15)

Mr Ford: These deaths occurred prior to the establishment of the Prisoner Ombudsman's remit to investigate deaths in custody, in September 2005. However, in May 2004, NIPS commissioned Professor Roy McClelland to complete an independent review of non-natural deaths in Northern Ireland prisons. This review took into account six suspected self inflicted deaths from June 2002 until March 2004 including the two female prisoners referred to above. The review was published in November 2005 with 30 recommendations relating to risk management, information sharing, prison healthcare, raising standards, training of staff and health service responsibilities. All of the recommendations relating to improved systems and processes within NIPS for the multi-disciplinary care of vulnerable prisoners have been implemented.

Since these deaths, a number of independent reviews and various external inspection reports have also been published which acknowledge that NIPS has made significant changes and improvements in the provision of safer custody and the management and care of vulnerable prisoners.

Improved systems and procedures for the identification and care of prisoners at risk have been implemented, including:

- Introduction of the Supporting Prisoners At Risk (SPAR) procedures which were reviewed and enhanced in August 2010, providing a multi-disciplinary approach to the management of those who self harm or show signs of potential suicide. This process replaced the dated PAR1 process which was previously criticised;
- A revised policy on Suicide and Self Harm Prevention and Standard Operating Procedures were issued on 10 February 2011 following a lengthy review of the processes that support the new SPAR procedures. These policies are subject to continuous review to address the issues and areas of concern identified in external and internal investigations/reports;
- Delivery of training to prison staff of Supporting Prisoners at Risk procedures and the Applied Suicide Intervention & Skills Training (ASIST) and Mental Health First Aid;
- The opening of the Donard Day Centre at Maghaberry in November 2011, to provide a therapeutic day centre facility for vulnerable offenders which is jointly managed by Healthcare professionals and specifically trained prison staff;
- Strong links are maintained with the Samaritans in the provision of a peer support Listeners Scheme, where prisoners are trained by the Samaritans to offer confidential emotional support to fellow prisoners who wish to share their problems with someone other than a member of prison staff. Prisoners also have access to Samaritans' volunteers through the Samaritans helpline or one to one counselling;
- The responsibility for the delivery of healthcare throughout Northern Ireland prisons transferred to the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust on 1 April 2008. The transfer of Healthcare staff in prisons was effected on 1 April 2012. NIPS and the South Eastern Trust continue to work in

partnership to regularly review the service-wide health needs of prisoners and to improve clinical governance and management of services.

Making custody safer remains a high priority for my Department and I continue to chair the Ministerial Forum on Safer Custody, which works with senior representatives from the criminal justice, healthcare and voluntary sectors to promote and support the development of best practice in safer custody across all the custodial agencies.

Offences Directly Relating to Tiger Kidnappings

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of people that have been (a) arrested; (b) charged; and; (c) convicted of offences directly relating to tiger kidnappings; and (ii) for what offences those people were convicted, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 13976/11-15)

Mr Ford: PSNI has provided the following information in respect of arrests, charges and convictions in relation to tiger kidnappings:

Year	Tiger Kidnaps	Arrests	Charges	Convictions
2008	10	23	12	6
2009	16	19	5	3
2010	7	10	8	0
2011	7	5	3	2
2012	3 (to 6 Sept)	4	0	0
Total	43	61	28	10

Details of the offences for which there have been convictions are as follows:

2008

Robbery	Assisting Offenders	Aggravated Burglary with intent to steal
2	2	2

2009

Conspiracy to Rob	Conspiring to Falsely Imprison	Possessing a firearm without a certificate	Carrying a firearm with intent to commit an indictable offence
3	3	2	2

2011

Carrying a firearm with intent to commit an indictable offence
2

An offender may have been convicted of more than one offence.

Loyalist Separated Prisoners in Bush House, Maghaberry Prison

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many loyalist separated prisoners are in Bush House, Maghaberry Prison; and how many have signed the required compact.

(AQW 13997/11-15)

Mr Ford: There are currently 20 prisoners on the Loyalist Separated landings.

Of those 20, 19 have signed the compact for separated prisoners.

All prisoners who apply for entry into separated accommodation are provided with a copy of the compact for separated prisoners at the point of application and the terms of the compact are explained to them by a Governor. Each applicant is required to sign an application form prior to being placed in separated conditions.

Where a prisoner has not signed the compact for separated prisoners NIPS is satisfied that the prisoner has been made fully aware of the terms of the Compact.

Facilities to Hold Industrial and Benefit Appeal Tribunals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether there are proposals to use the hearing centres/court houses that are proposed for closure as facilities to hold industrial and benefit appeal tribunals.

(AQW 13998/11-15)

Mr Ford: Two of the hearing centres are used for Industrial Tribunal and Fair Employment Tribunal hearings. The suitability of other Hearing Centres for tribunal hearings is being considered, but the accessibility and layout of some courtrooms may mean that they are not adaptable for tribunal business.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice what training the Northern Ireland Prison Service has provided to its members, since 1995, on the Code of Conduct and Discipline.

(AQW 13999/11-15)

Mr Ford: The induction programme for all new recruits entering the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) includes initial training in the Code of Conduct and Discipline (COCD) process. COCD training is also included in training programmes delivered to existing staff and managers.

Prisoner Assessment Unit Report

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice when he intends to release an unredacted or less redacted copy of the Prisoner Assessment Unit report.

(AQW 14000/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have no plans to release any less redacted copies of the Prisoner Assessment Unit report. The issues which led to the redactions, including data protection and security considerations, remain and are likely to do so for the foreseeable future.

Members of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice what reimbursement is made to members of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.

(AQW 14034/11-15)

Mr Ford: Members of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) are eligible to claim:

- a £60 meeting expense payment, funded by the Department of Justice and the Northern Ireland Policing Board, for up to 20 meetings per year; and
- travel and subsistence, paid in line with NJC/Local Government rates.

Members of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice to list the MLAs who are members of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.

(AQW 14035/11-15)

Mr Ford: The following MLAs are currently members of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships:

- Trevor Clarke
- Paul Frew
- Paul Girvan
- David Hilditch
- William Irwin
- Declan McAleer
- Bronwyn McGahan
- Jimmy Spratt

Northern Ireland Prison Service Officers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many Northern Ireland Prison Service officers have been granted retirement due to ill-health after the commencement of disciplinary investigations, broken down by (i) grade; and (ii) gender, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 14069/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not record details of applications made in relation to Ill Health Retirement granted after the commencement of disciplinary investigations.

Boston Tapes

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether Legal Aid has been granted to Anthony McIntyre, or others, for the challenge against the PSNI receiving the Boston tapes; (ii) to provide a breakdown of the Legal Aid paid to date; and (iii) the estimated final cost of the Legal Aid.

(AQW 14070/11-15)

Mr Ford: Legal Aid has been granted to Anthony McIntyre.

To date an amount of £129.76 has been paid on an application for legal advice and assistance. The payment comprises £108.13 in solicitor profit costs and £21.63 VAT.

An initial application for civil legal aid was refused but after appeal on 22 June 2012 emergency legal aid was granted allowing the applicant to apply to the Court of Judicature in Northern Ireland for judicial review of a decision of the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The certificate was limited to an application for leave.

On 31 August 2012 following an assessment of the applicant's financial eligibility a letter of offer issued to replace the emergency certificate. The applicant has 28 days to accept the offer. At 14 September 2012 no claim for payment had been received.

Edward Connors

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the date when the convicted rapist Edward Connors was released from custody; (ii) whether he applied for, and was granted, parole; (iii) the date he first breached his probation/release terms; and (iv) the date and nature of any subsequent breaches.

(AQW 14071/11-15)

Mr Ford: Edward Connors was released from prison on 18 April in accordance with the release date of the custodial part of his sentence. He first breached the requirements of his Custody Probation Order (CPO) on 11 June 2012. He was arrested, returned to custody and appeared in Court on 12 June 2012.

The date and nature of Edward Connors subsequent breaches are detailed in the table below.

Date	Nature of Breach	Action Taken
15 June 2012	Breach of hostel rules	Warning issued.
28 June 2012	Breach of hostel rules	Further warning issued.
4 July 2012	Non attendance at appointment	Final formal warning issued.
5 July 2012	Non attendance at appointment	Breach proceedings initiated. Arrested then released on bail.
14 July 2012	Breach of hostel rules	PSNI sought arrest for breach of bail requirements.
16 July 2012	Failed to appear for adjourned CPO breach proceedings.	Bench warrant issued for arrest.

Reporting Restrictions on Court Cases

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the legislation relating to reporting restrictions on court cases; and (ii) how this legislation covers or permits the withholding of information on adults charged with drug offences, particularly in the absence of a PSNI threat notification.

(AQW 14072/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is a range of legislation that provides powers in relation to reporting restrictions in criminal cases.

- Section 19 of the Criminal Justice Act (NI) 1945
- Sections 4 and 11 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981
- Article 10 of the Criminal Justice (Serious Fraud) (Northern Ireland) Order 1988
- Section 1 of the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992
- Article 22 of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Chapter IV of Part 2 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999
- Article 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour (NI) Order 2004
- Article 30 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2004

The decision to impose reporting restrictions is a judicial matter based on the statutory provisions and the facts of individual cases.

Republican Separated Prisoners

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether republican separated prisoners who refuse to sign the required compact, which allows them to enter into separated conditions, can still apply and qualify for one-third remission.

(AQW 14073/11-15)

Mr Ford: Whether a prisoner signs the separated compact or not will have no bearing on any aspect of his sentence.

Consultants to Private Security Firms

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice (i) how many non-executive directors of the Northern Ireland Prison Service act as consultants to private security firms; (ii) to list each individual; and (iii) which firms are involved.

(AQW 14078/11-15)

Mr Ford: This information is published in NIPS financial accounts for 2011-2012.

Two non-executive directors of the Northern Ireland Prison Service act as consultants to private security firm G4S; Phil Wheatley and Paul Leighton.

Great care is taken to ensure that any work that Phil Wheatley or Paul Leighton carry out in their respective roles as consultants to G4S does not relate to NIPS.

New Prison at Maghaberry to Replace HMP Magilligan

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the land acquisition needs of building a new prison at Maghaberry to replace HMP Magilligan; and (ii) the estimated cost of such an acquisition.

(AQW 14079/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service Outline Estate Strategy is currently subject to a full public consultation exercise.

Development of a new prison, if that were the proposed direction following consultation, would require considerable effort in determining its size, shape and configuration. Until that work would be undertaken, it would not be possible to identify the land required on which to develop such a facility or to estimate the cost of any potential land acquisition.

Illicit Drugs Within Prisons

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the effectiveness of prison regimes which aim to prevent illicit drugs entering and circulating within prisons.

(AQW 14107/11-15)

Mr Ford: I recognise the high level of substance addiction within the prison population which has often been developed within the community over many years. I also acknowledge the impact that the misuse of prescription and other drugs can have within the prison estate.

Prisoners are provided with prescription drugs just like any other member of the community and are expected to behave responsibly. The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SET) is responsible for the delivery of healthcare within our prisons and has developed a policy of 'in possession' medication in line with the practice in England and Wales. This policy is based on the equivalence principle, the notion that prisoners should have access to the same quality and range of healthcare services as the general public receives from the NHS.

However, experience has shown that prescription and illegally introduced drugs can be open to abuse in a prison setting and NIPS therefore has a strategy in place to address this problem including the measures below:

- working with other criminal justice agencies, particularly PSNI, to target any individual introducing illegal substances and disrupt drug trafficking routes into prisons;
- maintaining and developing the use of technology that will assist in preventing the trafficking of drugs;
- completion of routine searches, including the use of active search dogs;
- engaging in intelligence led searches of cells, prisons, property and visitors;
- raising intelligence awareness amongst staff in NIPS and SET service providers where relevant;
- maximising and targeting the use of passive drugs search dogs for prevention and detection;

- mandatory drug testing to identify prevalence of drug misuse and identify individuals abusing substances and ensure they are notified to addiction services;
- random testing for the purpose of risk assessment suspicion;
- home leave testing to ensure that prisoners prior to and returning from such leave are tested in an appropriate and timely manner, including life sentence prisoners on release;
- revised anti-bullying policy to be introduced;
- provision of individual safes for storing prescription medicine, and
- disciplinary action and removal from association with other prisoners where necessary.

An operational governor is also conducting a review of the effectiveness of the measures in place to minimise the availability of illicit drugs in prisons and is expected to shortly submit a report outlining his initial findings.

Juveniles Convicted of Sexual Assault Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of juveniles convicted of sexual assault offences that were served with a Youth Conference Order, broken down by court division, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 14135/11-15)

Mr Ford: The answer covers sexual offences with an assault element. These offences may be prosecuted under Common Law and under Article 3(1) of the Criminal Attempts and Conspiracy (Northern Ireland) Order 1983, Section 2 of the Attempted Rape Act (Northern Ireland) 1960, Article 18 (1) Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, Article 19(1) Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, Section 62 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 and a number of Articles in the Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008.

The table below gives the number of juveniles (aged 10 to 17) convicted for sexual assault offences and disposed of by Youth Conference Order for the calendar years 2005 to 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available). In each case, the offence was indecent assault.

Number of juveniles convicted for sexual assault offences and disposed of via Youth Conference Order by court division 2005-2009

Year	Antrim	Belfast	Craigavon	Ards	Total convictions
2005	0	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0	0
2007	2	0	0	1	3
2008	0	0	0	0	0
2009	0	1	1	0	2

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Data for 2005-2006 should not be directly compared with data from 2007 to 2009 as the data sets are sourced from different systems.

Prisoner Suicides and Attempted Suicides

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoner (i) suicides; and (ii) attempted suicides have occurred at each (a) prison facility; and (b) youth justice facility, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 14136/11-15)

Mr Ford: Table A below shows the number of self inflicted deaths recorded in Northern Ireland prisons in each of the last ten years.

TABLE A

Year	Maghaberry	Magilligan	Hydebank Wood
2002	1	0	0
2003	1	0	0
2004	2	0	0
2005	0	0	0
2006	0	1	0
2007	1	0	0
2008	1*	0	0
2009	3*	0	0
2010	1*	0	1*
2011	3*	0	2*

* Suspected self inflicted death but still awaiting Coroner's verdict.

There have been no suicides in the Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre within the last ten years.

Table B below shows the recorded attempted suicides, in each prison establishment for the period January 2006 – December 2011.

TABLE B

Year	Maghaberry	Magilligan	Hydebank Wood (Female)	Hydebank Wood (Male)
2006	9	1	-	-
2007	4	2	1	-
2008	5	-	-	2
2009	7	1	-	7
2010*	44	4	11	10
2011*	56	3	8	10

Figures prior to 2006 are not readily available.

* The increase in attempted suicides recorded is indicative of improved recording and reporting systems introduced in January 2010.

The Juvenile Justice Centre maintains a detailed database of all incidents of self harm from serious incidents to those of a relatively minor nature. Attempted suicide is not specified as such in the database. The statistics recorded in the table below may not be directly comparable to Northern Ireland

Prison Service figures, which have been drawn from a separate reporting system. Table C below shows the number of self harm incidents which took place for the period August 2007 to December 2011.

TABLE C

Year	Serious(1)	Other(1)	Total
2007(2)	5	53	58
2008	3	28	31
2009	1	29	30
2010	3	75	78
2011	2	82	84
Total	14	267	281

- (1) The 14 serious incidents relate to three incidents of attempted hanging, one of overdose and 10 of deep cutting. Examples of the other 267 self harm incidents, not deemed to be in the serious category, include superficial cutting, wall/door punching.
- (2) Covers the period 16th August 2007 – 31st December 2007. Figures prior to 16th August 2007 are not readily available.

People Charged with Belonging to a Proscribed Organisation

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many people who are currently before the courts have been charged with belonging to a proscribed organisation, broken down by court division.

(AQW 14139/11-15)

Mr Ford: There are 14 people currently before the courts facing charges relating to belonging to, or membership of, a proscribed organisation.

Two are before the Court of Appeal, three are in the Armagh and South Down Division, eight are in the Belfast Division and one is in the Fermanagh and South Tyrone Division.

Cases of Fraud by Abuse of Position

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many cases of fraud by abuse of position are currently in the court system in each court division, broken down by (i) magistrates court; and (ii) crown court.

(AQW 14200/11-15)

Mr Ford: The tables below set out the number of cases of fraud by abuse of position currently before the Crown Court and Magistrates' Court broken down by County Court Division.

Division	Crown Court
Antrim	0
Ards	3
Armagh & South Down	1
Belfast	5
Craigavon	2
Fermanagh & Tyrone	1
Londonderry	0
Total	12

Division	Court Location	Magistrates' Court
Antrim	Ballymena	1
	Coleraine	2
Ards	Downpatrick	1
	Newtownards	1
Armagh & South Down	Armagh	2
	Newry	1
Belfast	Laganside	9
Craigavon	Craigavon	0
Fermanagh & Tyrone	Omagh	0
Londonderry	Londonderry	3
Total		20

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW13418/11-15, on how many other occasions a Private Secretary to a Secretary of State has communicated approval on matters such as this within the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

(AQW 14201/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not hold records that specify the number of occasions on which a Private Secretary has communicated the approval of the Secretary of State.

Youth Conference Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in each of the last five years, in cases where young people were given Youth Conference Orders, how many have reoffended, broken down by court division; and, of these subsequent offences (i) how many were of a similar nature and (ii) how many were of a different nature.

(AQW 14202/11-15)

Mr Ford: The information requested is currently available for the 2005 to 2008 calendar years only.

The table below provides a summary of the number of Youth Conference Orders given and of these, the number of young people who re-offended within a one year follow up period with details of whether the re-offence was of the same, or a different nature as the baseline offence.

Re-offence Cohort Year	Total Youth Conference Orders	Number re-offending within one year		
		Total	Same nature as baseline offence	Different nature to baseline offence
2005	97(1)	43	10	33
2006	215	102	11	91
2007	413	158	32	126
2008	335	141	31	110

- (1) The comparatively low number of Youth Conference Orders made in 2005 is due to the fact that the roll-out of youth conferencing across Northern Ireland was only completed in autumn of that year.

The information provided is based on young people given a Youth Conference Order who re-offend at least once during a one year follow up period, where the offence results in a conviction at court. The need to build in this follow up period as well as time for a re-offence to be convicted accounts for the lack of more up-to-date statistics beyond 2008 at this time. Statistics for 2009 are currently being collated and will be ready for publication later this year.

Information relating to the court division is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Mandatory Polygraph Tests for Sex Offenders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will introduce mandatory polygraph tests for sex offenders who are being managed in the community, as is the case in England and Wales.

(AQW 14204/11-15)

Mr Ford: Mandatory polygraph tests have only happened as pilot projects in two regions of England.

My Department keeps arrangements to manage the risk posed by sex offenders in the community under review, and I will want to consider the research commissioned by the Ministry of Justice, following the pilots.

Test Purchasing of Alcohol from Off-Sales

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the current legal position on test purchasing of alcohol from off-sales in order to prevent sales to people who are under-age.

(AQW 14214/11-15)

Mr Ford: Test purchasing powers came in to operation on 8 December 2008 under Article 67 of the Criminal Justice (NI) Order 2008 which created Article 60A within the Licensing (NI) Order 1996 by amendment.

Alcohol Test Purchasing

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail his Department's processes and strategies in relation to alcohol test purchasing.

(AQW 14278/11-15)

Mr Ford: The development and implementation of alcohol test purchasing is a matter for the Chief Constable.

The Department of Justice, through the Community Safety Strategy and delivering against its commitments in the New Strategic Direction on Alcohol and Drugs which was launched by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, seeks to reduce the irresponsible sale of alcohol, particularly to those underage.

Alcohol Test Purchasing

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice whether the PSNI must be granted authorisation before carrying out alcohol test purchasing in a district command area; and in which districts authorisation is currently in place.

(AQW 14279/11-15)

Mr Ford: The development and implementation of alcohol test purchasing is a matter for the Chief Constable.

The Department of Justice, through the Community Safety Strategy and delivering against its commitments in the New Strategic Direction on Alcohol and Drugs which was launched by the Department of Health,

Social Services and Public Safety, seeks to reduce the irresponsible sale of alcohol, particularly to those underage.

Desertcreat Joint Public Services College

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the planned Desertcreat Joint Public Services College. (AQW 14429/11-15)

Mr Ford: The tender package for the main contract is being issued this week. The key milestones are expected to be achieved on time. The Programme Board plans to appoint the preferred bidder in February 2013; to award the contract in May 2013; and to complete development of the college in Autumn 2015.

Private Clamping of Cars

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the current legal position on the private clamping of cars. (AQW 14500/11-15)

Mr Ford: Wheel clamping on private land, with a view to charging a release fee, can only be carried out under certain conditions.

The Private Security Industry Act 2001 requires the licensing of anyone involved in clamping (or otherwise immobilising) vehicles on private land. The Security Industry Authority (SIA) currently awards the licences, which must be renewed annually. A “non frontline” licence is also required for those who manage, supervise and/or employ individuals who engage in the practice.

It is a criminal offence for wheel-clampers without a licence to clamp a vehicle and to try to charge a release fee. It is also a criminal offence for someone to employ an unlicensed wheel-clamper, or for a landowner to allow a wheel-clamper who they know is unlicensed to operate on their property.

Individuals who hold an SIA licence for vehicle immobilisation must observe the following licensing conditions:

- A vehicle must not be clamped/blocked/towed if a valid disabled badge is displayed on the vehicle or if it is a marked emergency vehicle which is in use as such.
- A receipt must be provided, which must include:
 - The place where the vehicle was clamped
 - Their name and signature
 - Their SIA licence number
 - The date
- Their SIA licence must be displayed where it can be seen at all times when they are working.

There is currently no regulation of the size of the release fee, the time taken to release a vehicle or the adequacy of signage around the site warning that vehicles may be clamped.

From 1 October 2012, it will be a criminal offence to immobilise a vehicle on private land in England and Wales without lawful authority. The practice has been banned in Scotland since 1992. I recently included the issue as part of a wider consultation on the future regulation of the private security industry in Northern Ireland and will consider the outcomes of the consultation, together with other evidence and research, before deciding whether to bring forward proposals to ban the practice in Northern Ireland.

Illicit Drugs Detected in Prisons

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 14106/11-15, to detail the type and quantity of illicit drugs seized in each of the last three years.

(AQW 14712/11-15)

Mr Ford: The type and quantity of illicit drugs found by NIPS in the last three years are listed below.

	SEPT 09 to NOV 09	DEC 09 to NOV 10	DEC 10 to NOV 11	DEC 11 to AUG 12
Cannabis	185g	508.54g	490.9g/4 wraps/10 tablets	327.1g+4 tablets
Steroids	80	172+1 bottle	1 bottle	30
Heroin Tablets	0	56.5	0	2
Heroin Powder	7.7g	19.3g	0.5g	1.8g
Cocaine	7.5g	12.5g	26.1g+58 tablets	0.6g
Unidentified Powder	0	49.2g	66.6g/13 capsules/¼ tsp	37.8g+2 wraps
Prescription	91	558+0.3g powder	501	679 tablets +1 bag
Subutex	0	1	1.5 tablets	0
Unidentified Tablets	714	1409.5	1538.5	1652.5
Barbituate	0	4 tablets	45 tablets+0.6g powder	29 tablets
Amphetamine	0	117.2g	70 tablets+12g powder	4g +59 tablets
Diazepam	6	334.5+2.8g powder	121.5 tablets+21g powder	93 tablets
Ecstasy	0	0	25.5 tablets	0

Department for Regional Development

Road Access to Kilcooley Primary School, Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to improve road access to Kilcooley Primary School, Bangor.

(AQW 13963/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): My Department's Roads Service has advised that there are currently no plans to alter the existing access arrangements at Kilcooley Primary School.

If the Member has any specific proposals that he feels would be useful in relation to this matter, I would request that he writes to me and I will give them due consideration.

Proposed Roundabout System at Craigantlet

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what alternatives his Department considered before deciding on the proposed roundabout system at Craigantlet.

(AQW 14008/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it considered a wide range of alternative layouts, before selecting the preferred option.

These options included:

- the provision of a new through route from the Ballysallagh Rd/Craigantlet Rd, through agricultural land to the back of the Craiganlet cottages, onto the Ballymiscaw Rd;
- the provision of a roundabout at each of these two junctions, with two lanes running between the junctions;
- the provision of a roundabout at each of these two junctions, with three lanes running between the junctions;
- the provision of a roundabout at each of these two junctions, with four lanes running between the junctions; and
- the provision of traffic signals (full time or part time).

Having assessed these options, Roads Service considers that the most effective option is the one which has been submitted under the current planning application. This option was designed to minimise land take, whilst taking into consideration the collisions and traffic congestion regularly experienced in this vicinity.

Nevertheless, I have asked officials to give serious consideration to alternative layouts suggested by local residents that would have less impact on the Craiganlet cottages, and I will consider the outcome of this work before making any decision on the way forward.

Unadopted Roads in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the unadopted roads in the Strangford constituency that are in receipt of a preliminary certificate of adoption that was issued more than 12 months ago; and (ii) why a final certificate has not been issued in each case.

(AQW 14040/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the unadopted roads in the Strangford constituency that are in receipt of a preliminary certificate of adoption that was issued more than 12 months ago, including the reason why a final certificate has not been issued in each case, are listed in the table below:

Site	Reason
Crossgar Road, Shrigley	Awaiting Technical Approval (Retaining Wall)
Edengrove, Ballynahinch	Remedial works outstanding
Park Lane, Saintfield	Awaiting Technical Approval Culvert
Ardview Road, Killinchy	Remedial works outstanding
Teal Rocks, Portaferry Road, Newtownards	Awaiting Northern Ireland Water (NIW) clearance Article 11 issued
Saltwater Close, Ballywalter	Awaiting NIW clearance
Briar Park, Ballywalter	Awaiting NIW clearance Article 11 issued

Site	Reason
The Moatlands, Ballyhalbert	Awaiting NIW clearance
Spinners Court, Comber	Awaiting NIW clearance
Cornmill, Moss Road, Millisle	Remedial works outstanding
Old Dundonald Mews, Dundonald	Remedial works outstanding

Road and Water Surety Bonds in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development what enforcement action has been taken in relation to road and water surety bonds in the Strangford constituency, in each of the last five years; and the outcome of any action taken.

(AQW 14041/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I should advise the Member that my Department's Roads Service is the administrator of the Departmental Bond. However, where enforcement action is taken in relation to road and sewer surety bonds in the Strangford constituency, Northern Ireland Water works closely with Roads Service and provides input to the enforcement procedures. The associated Enforcement Notices are issued by Roads Service.

Details of the enforcement actions taken by my Department's Roads Service in relation to road and water surety bonds in the Strangford constituency, in each of the last five years, including the outcome of any action taken, are listed in the table below:

Site	Action	Comments
Drummond Brae, Ballynahinch	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Labyrinth Cottages, Ballynahinch	Article 11 issued	Work Progressing by Developer
Inishmore, Killyleagh	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Drummond Brae, Ballynahinch	Article 11 issued	Administrator Appointed
Fox Hollows, Ballygowan	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Lansdowne Road, Newtownards	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
White Church Meadows, Ballywalter	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Ballyrolly, Ballywalter Road, Millisle	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
The Brambles, Ballywalter	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Seaview Court, Portavogie	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Portview Heights, Portavogie	Article 11 issued	Developer to complete
Shore Road, Ballyhalbert	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required
Ballyhelmin, Ballyhalbert	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required
Castle Meadows, Cloughey	Article 11 issued	Administrator Appointed
Tides Development, Portavogie	Article 11 issued	Bank/Developer to complete
Rubane Road/McKenna Road, Kircubbin	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required

Site	Action	Comments
The Meadows, Donaghadee	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Brackenridge, Donaghadee	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
New Court, Portavogie	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required
Carmoon, Donaghadee	Article 11 issued	Developer to complete
Old Shore Road, Donaghadee	Article 11 issued	Developer to complete
Briar Park, Ballywalter	Article 11 issued	Contractor Appointed
Princetoon, Portavogie	Article 11 issued	Bank/Developer to complete
South of Judes Crescent, Newtownards	Article 11 issued	Land issue
Teal Rocks, Portaferry	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required
Seahill, Donaghadee	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required
East Street Court, Newtownards	Article 11 issued	Developer to complete
East Street Court, Donaghadee	Article 11 issued	Recently issued
Ardmore Manor, Ballygowan	Article 11 issued	Recently issued
Thorndale Way, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance required
Montgomery Chase, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Street Lighting Certificate required
Cedar View, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Technical approval required for retaining wall
Church Close, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	NIW Clearance and Street Lighting Certificate required
Brooke Hall, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Street Lighting Certificate required
Grace Hill, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Adopted 28/07/11
Adara Mews, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Adopted 12/02/10
Old Dundonald Mews, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Street Lighting Certificate required
Johnston Park, Castlereagh	Article 11 issued	Adopted 18/02/10

Roads in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the roads in the Strangford constituency for which a preliminary certificate of adoption has been issued in each of the last 12 months.

(AQW 14042/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the roads in the Strangford constituency, for which a preliminary certificate of adoption has been issued in each of the last twelve months, are as follows:

- The Moorings, Killyleagh
- Bartleys Wood, Ballywalter

- Riverside Road, Ballynahinch
- Millreagh, Carrowreagh Road, Dundonald
- Millreagh Court, Carrowreagh Road Dundonald

Unadopted Roads in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the unadopted roads in the Strangford constituency for which a preliminary certificate of adoption was issued more than 12 months ago, what steps have been, and will be, taken to resolve any outstanding issues.

(AQW 14043/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that in cases where a preliminary certificate was issued more than 12 months ago, the sites are inspected every twelve weeks to ascertain the up-to-date position.

Officials have further advised that, in some circumstances, an Article 11 notice can be served on a developer under the Private Streets (NI) Order 1980, requesting that a road be completed to the standard necessary for adoption.

In the event that a developer has ceased to trade or failed to comply with an Article 11 notice, the developer will be served notice under the legislative procedure. Roads Service will then employ a contractor to complete the necessary works, adopt the new roads, and recoup the costs from the developer or bond surety.

Adopted Roads in the Strangford Constituency

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the roads and sewers that have been adopted in the Strangford constituency in each of the last 12 months.

(AQW 14044/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that details of the roads in the Strangford constituency, for which an adoption certificate has been issued in each of the last twelve months, are listed below:

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|--|--|
| ■ Westlands, Portavogie | ■ Turnstone, Newtownards |
| ■ Belfast Road, Comber | ■ Ashgrove Ave/Kilmia Ave, Newtownards |
| ■ 31-39 Main Street, Carrowdore | ■ The Old Mill, Killyleagh |
| ■ Rockhill, Donaghadee | ■ Lord Moira Park, Ballynahinch |
| ■ Shore Road, Ballyhalbert | ■ The Moorings, Killyleagh |
| ■ Mark Street/Thomas Street, Newtownards | ■ Riverside Road, Ballynahinch |
| ■ Mount Pleasant, Newtownards | ■ Belvoir Drive, Castlereagh |
| ■ 39/40 Bristol Park, Newtownards | ■ Castlehume Gardens, Castlereagh |
| ■ Crescent Mews, Comber | ■ Kingsway Drive, Castlereagh |
| ■ The Gables, Portaferry | ■ Drumadoon Drive, Castlereagh |
| ■ Millisle Road, Donaghadee | ■ Bailey Manor, Castlereagh |
| ■ Helensview Park, Newtownards | |

I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that it records developments by Council area and not by Constituency area. However, in the past twelve months, NIW has adopted 15 sewerage systems considered to be within the Strangford Constituency, the details of which are as listed below:

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|--|-------------------------------------|
| ■ Upper Crescent, Comber | ■ The Moorings Phase 2, Killyleagh |
| ■ 1 – 17 Seaview Court, Portavogie | ■ Green Gables, Green Road, Conlig |
| ■ Cornmill Phase 1, Moss Road Millisle | ■ Stonebridge Avenue, Conlig |
| ■ Albion Court Castle Meadows, Ballywalter | ■ Moatlands, Phase 2, Ballyhalbert |
| ■ Whitechurch Meadows, Ballywalter | ■ Millmount Lane, Dundonald |
| ■ Rock Hill Warren Road Donaghadee | ■ Old Dundonald Mews, Dundonald |
| ■ Hawthorn Meadows, Ballywalter | ■ Park Head Cuan Avenue, Portaferry |
| ■ Orchard Avenue, Newtownards | |

Two Year Pay Freeze for Staff at NI Railways

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the two year pay freeze for staff at NI Railways, when the £250 annual sum for coalition grades will be paid to all staff.

(AQW 14067/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink advises me that it is at an advanced stage of negotiations with the unions that represent NI Railways staff within the Conciliation grades including discussion in relation to the £250. It would not be appropriate to discuss the detail of these negotiations between Translink management and unions as it would compromise the sensitive nature of the discussions.

Ecar Home and Workplace Charge Point Grant

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development how many applications for the Ecar Home and Workplace Charge Point Grant have been received; (ii) how many have been successful and; (iii) the total amount of grant funding awarded to date.

(AQW 14112/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has to date received 6 applications for a total of 9 charge points. All of these have been successful with a total of £9122.33 having been paid to date with a further grant of £1990.00 still proceeding through the payment process.

Illegal Posters Removed by Roads Service

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how many illegal posters have been removed by Roads Service in the North Down Borough Council area, in each of the last five years; and to list the organisations that have been fined for putting up the posters or charged for the removal of the posters.

(AQW 14142/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has removed 698 unauthorised signs within the North Down area over the last five years.

Roads Service also works in collaboration with North Down Borough Council which removes illegal signs and advertising boards in Bangor and Holywood town centres. Roads Service makes a charge for the cost of carrying out this statutory duty, and has recovered approximately £35,000 over the last five years.

As information in Roads Service's cost-recovery database is for the whole of Eastern Division, and is not classified by Council or Section area. I have provided information on the organisations which have been charged by Eastern Division which includes those within the North Down Council area.

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ■ 1ST CHOICE TAXIS | ■ BELFAST AND DISTRICT MOTOR CLUB |
| ■ 4 X 4 STORE | ■ BELFAST CYCLE SHOP |
| ■ A BARTON CO | ■ BELFAST PROPERTY AGENCY |
| ■ AA MUSIC | ■ BELFAST TELEGRAPH |
| ■ ABBEY DRAINS | ■ BELFAST TILE COMPANY |
| ■ ABBEY REAL ESTATES | ■ BELLS OF CROSSGAR |
| ■ ABSOLUTE | ■ BELVOIR LETTINGS |
| ■ ADL GROUP LTD | ■ BIH HOUSING ASSOCIATION |
| ■ ADRIAN MCQUAID | ■ BILL MCKELVEY |
| ■ ALAN NEWELL | ■ BLACK PROPERTY MANAGEMENT |
| ■ ALFRESCO CAFE | ■ BLUE SKY SOLAR HEATING SYSTEM |
| ■ ALISON GRAY RECRUITMENT | ■ BODY WORX |
| ■ ALL CABS | ■ BOLAND REILLY HOMES LTD |
| ■ ALLIED CARPETS | ■ BOOKENDS |
| ■ ALLSTAR GYM & FITNESS | ■ BP SEW N KNIT |
| ■ ALTERNATIVE ULSTER | ■ BRED A CABS |
| ■ AMB PLASTICS | ■ BRIAN BLAKELY CONTRACTS |
| ■ ANDERSONSTOWN NEWS | ■ BRIAN MORTON & CO |
| ■ ANTRIM ROAD CAB CO. | ■ BRICE & CO ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ AR GRAPHICS | ■ BROOKE TAXIS |
| ■ ARDS TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE | ■ BRUNCHES |
| ■ ARIA PROPERTY SOLUTIONS | ■ BTW CAIRNS |
| ■ ARROW | ■ BTW SHIELLS |
| ■ ATJ'S PROFESSIONAL CLEANING | ■ BUDGET CARS |
| ■ ATTENTION 2 DETAIL | ■ CAFE CEOL/ CLUB TAO |
| ■ AU NATURALE | ■ CAIRNS OFFICE DESIGN |
| ■ AUTOCABS | ■ CAMPBELL CAIRNS |
| ■ AUTOWINDSCREENS & MOTORSPARES | ■ CAMPBELL GILLIAN |
| ■ B & Q | ■ CAMPHILL COMMUNITY GLENCRAIG |
| ■ B PURE BEAUTY SALON | ■ CANINE DESIGN |
| ■ BADA BING PIZZA | ■ CARPETRIGHT PLC |
| ■ BAILIE STEPHEN | ■ CARRICKFERGUS BOROUGH COUNCIL |
| ■ BALLYNURE BARBERS | ■ CARRICKFERGUS FM |
| ■ BALMORAL ESTATES | ■ CASTLEREAGH CAB COMPANY |
| ■ BALMORAL TILES LTD | ■ CCR CABS |
| ■ BANGOR LEISURE CENTRE | ■ CENTRA |
| ■ BASC | ■ CHARLY'S |
| ■ BEATTIES CHIP SHOP | ■ CHERRYVALE AUCTION ROOMS |

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| ■ CHOICE FLOORING | ■ DONNELLY CARS |
| ■ CHRISTIAN BROTHERS PAST PUPILS UNION | ■ DOOR STORE |
| ■ CITI GOLF BELFAST | ■ DOORSEPS GOURMET SANDWICHES |
| ■ CITY PROPERTY SERVICES | ■ DORCHESTER LIMOUSINE CO |
| ■ CLANDEBOYE LODGE HOTEL | ■ DOWNEY CARS |
| ■ CLARION HOTEL | ■ DREAMS PLC |
| ■ CLASSIC CARPETS | ■ DUNDONALD PRIMARY SCHOOL |
| ■ CLIFFORD BROWN | ■ DUNELM SOFT FURNISHINGS LTD |
| ■ CLIFTON CABS | ■ DUNLOP HOMES LTD |
| ■ CLIFTON FUELS | ■ DUNNES STORES LTD |
| ■ COMMERCIAL VEHICLE AUCTIONS | ■ DV8 |
| ■ CORDINERS KITCHENS AND BEDROOMS | ■ EAST ANTRIM EMBROIDERY |
| ■ CORRIGANS VEHICLE RENTALS | ■ EAST ANTRIM OVEN CLEANING |
| ■ COUNTRY ESTATES | ■ EDDIE WRAY |
| ■ COWLEY GROVES | ■ ELM PENTECOSTAL CHURCH |
| ■ CRAWFORD CAR & COMMERCIAL | ■ EMOVES |
| ■ CREATIVE TILES | ■ ENKALON MOTORCYCLE CLUB |
| ■ CRUMBS | ■ ENTERPRISE RENT A CAR |
| ■ CURLEYS SUPERMARKET | ■ ESPORTA HEALTH & FITNESS |
| ■ CURRYS | ■ EUROFLOWERS |
| ■ CURVES | ■ EUROSPAR |
| ■ CUSTOM GRAPHIX | ■ EUROTILE |
| ■ DANIEL MCGEOWN & CO | ■ EXPRESS IMAGE |
| ■ DAVIDS CHIP SHOP | ■ FAST CABS |
| ■ DEBENHAMS | ■ FERNAGH CABS |
| ■ DEBORAH YEA PARTNERSHIP | ■ FINEART IRELAND |
| ■ DECORA BLINDS | ■ FISHING TACKLE SHOP |
| ■ DELTA PACKAGING | ■ FITNESS FIRST |
| ■ DEVENISH COMPLEX | ■ FLAME MINISTRIES |
| ■ DIAL A DIGGER | ■ FLOORING INSPIRATIONS |
| ■ DIAMOND COACHES | ■ FLOORS & MORE LTD |
| ■ DIRTYCARSWANTED | ■ FLOORS-2-GO |
| ■ DISCOUNT SALON SUPPLIES | ■ FORTWILLIAM CAR VALETING |
| ■ DIXONS CONTRACTORS | ■ FRED DALZELL |
| ■ DND MOTORCYCLES | ■ FURNITURE SALE |
| ■ DOGWOOD PET RESORT | ■ FURNITURE WAREHOUSE OUTLET |
| ■ DONARD HOMES LTD | ■ G R HOMES |
| ■ DONNELLY BROS | ■ GARDEN SHOW IRELAND |
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| ■ GARRY DAVISON | ■ HUSTON KERR |
| ■ GASTA.COM | ■ INTERIOR SOLUTIONS |
| ■ GC CARPETS | ■ INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY SALES |
| ■ GENERAL GEORGE | ■ IRISH LINEN COMPANY THE |
| ■ GLASGIVEN CONTRACTS | ■ ISYS |
| ■ GLITZ NITECLUB | ■ JACK REID CARS |
| ■ GMC PROPERTIES | ■ JEFF RAINE & CO |
| ■ GOLDSMITH ESTATES | ■ JENNIFER KELLY |
| ■ GONE FISHING | ■ JET-TEC |
| ■ GRAHAM HENRY ESTATE AGENT | ■ JJB FITNESS CLUB |
| ■ GRANT JOHN | ■ JOE DELEANAY |
| ■ GREEN CHILLI RESTAURANT | ■ JOHNNYS CAR WASH & VALETING SERVICE |
| ■ GREENAWAY AUTO ELECTRICS | ■ JORDANSTOWN REAL ESTATES |
| ■ GREGGS DOG GROOMING | ■ JOYCE ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ H RITCHIE & SONS | ■ JUST TILES |
| ■ HAGAN FLOORING LTD | ■ KARACHA MUSIC SUPPLIES |
| ■ HALIFAX ESTATE AGENTS | ■ KIDZ CLUB |
| ■ HAMPTON ESTATES | ■ KILLEAD LODGE |
| ■ HARBOUR POINT BAR | ■ KINGS HEAD |
| ■ HARRY DOUGLAS FURNITURE | ■ KNOCKAGH LODGE |
| ■ HARVEY NORMAN | ■ KRYSTAL KLEEN KARS |
| ■ HARVEYS | ■ KYLE SUCKLING |
| ■ HELEN KENNEDY PROPERTIES | ■ L G CONTRACTS & CEILINGS LTD |
| ■ HELP COMPUTER CENTRE | ■ LA FITNESS |
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| ■ HILDEN BREWERY | ■ LAGAN VALLEY LEISUREPLEX |
| ■ HILLSBOROUGH ELIM PENTECOSTAL CHURCH | ■ LAURA WOOD (CARNWOOD B&B) |
| ■ HOLSTEIN UK | ■ LAVELLE & MCALINDEN |
| ■ HOME & AWAY PROPERTIES | ■ LAVERYS NIGHT CLUB |
| ■ HOME BUYERS | ■ LIAM GREENHAM |
| ■ HOME LIVING | ■ LIDL NORTHERN IRELAND GmbH |
| ■ HOMEBASE LTD | ■ LIGHTING INSPIRATIONS |
| ■ HOMELINK | ■ LINDSAY FORD & MAZDA |
| ■ HOWARD HENDERSON MOTOR WORKS | ■ LISBURN CARAVAN CENTRE |
| ■ HR DOUGLAS & SONS | ■ LISBURN CATHEDRAL |
| ■ HSS HIRE | ■ LISBURN FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH |
| ■ HUNTER CAMPBELL | ■ LOGWOOD PLANT CENTRE LTD |
| ■ HURST CHARLES | ■ LONGSTONE PROPERTY SALES |
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| ■ LOUGH & QUAY | ■ MOORE SIGNS |
| ■ LOVE FOR LIFE ORGANISATION | ■ MORRIS ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ LYNCHS FLOORING | ■ MORROW NORMAN |
| ■ MAD 4 DOORS | ■ MOVE PROPERTY |
| ■ MAGENNIS'S BAR | ■ MOVING ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ MANAGEMINT | ■ MPLEX |
| ■ MANOR INTERIORS | ■ MR A & MRS C LESTER |
| ■ MARTIN & CO | ■ MR CARDWELL |
| ■ MARTIN PHILLIPS | ■ MR JOHNATHAN SMITH |
| ■ MATTHEWS MR | ■ MURRAY SHEDS & FENCING |
| ■ MCAFEE LAND & NEW HOMES | ■ MY TILES |
| ■ MCALPINE ESTATE AGENTS | ■ MYNT BAR |
| ■ MCAULEYS KITCHENS | ■ NAISCOIL |
| ■ MCCANN BILL ESTATE AGENCY | ■ NAKED SUN |
| ■ MCCLEARY ESTATE AGENTS | ■ NATION |
| ■ MCCLELLAND AND SALTER | ■ NEILL ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ MCCOMBE PIERCE | ■ NEW LIFESTYLE FIREPLACES |
| ■ MCCULLAGH IAN | ■ NEXT HOME |
| ■ MCDONALDS RESTAURANTS LTD | ■ NORTH DOWN MODEL RAILWAYS |
| ■ MCGIMPSEY & KANE | ■ NORTH DOWN MOTORS |
| ■ MCGRADY LTD | ■ OCEAN BLUE |
| ■ MCGRANAGHAN ESTATE AGENTS.COM | ■ O'CONNOR GERRY |
| ■ MCMILLAN ESTATE AGENTS | ■ O'CONNOR KENNEDY TURTLE |
| ■ MCQUOIDS COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY | ■ OIL DIRECT |
| ■ MCW RESIDENTIAL | ■ OMEYA DAY SPA |
| ■ MERCURY SECURITY MANAGEMENT | ■ ONE STOP PROPERTY |
| ■ METRO BARBERS | ■ ONE STOP SALON |
| ■ MFI | ■ OPTIMUM REAL ESTATES |
| ■ MGK BUILDERS | ■ OREGANO RESTAURANT |
| ■ MIDAS TOUCH | ■ ORIGINAL TILE |
| ■ MILEBUSH LANDSCAPE CENTRE | ■ OSBORNE KING |
| ■ MILLENNIUM STABLES | ■ P & R KITCHENS |
| ■ MIND YOUR PAWS | ■ P2 KENNELS |
| ■ MINNIS JOHN ESTATE AGENTS | ■ PAPA'S ICE-CREAM PARLOUR |
| ■ MITCHELL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT | ■ PARADISE LIMOS |
| ■ MOIRA DRIVE THRU INTERNET CAFE | ■ PARKVIEW LODGE B&B |
| ■ MOLLOY FUELS | ■ PATIO RESTAURANT |
| ■ MONAGHAN POST | ■ PAVILION BAR |
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| ■ PETER COYLE | ■ SCALES & EQUIPMENT CENTRE |
| ■ PHILIP JOHNSTON AND COMPANY | ■ SEYMOUR DUGAN INTERIORS |
| ■ PINKERTON MURRAY | ■ SHANES CASTLE |
| ■ PINPOINT PROPERTY | ■ SHANKS & CO ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ PLAYGIRL LIMOUSINES | ■ SHOOTER PROPERTY SERVICES |
| ■ POOLER ESTATE AGENTS | ■ SIMPLY 4 LET |
| ■ POOLER WATSON | ■ SIMPSON PROPERTY |
| ■ PREMIER 1 DRIVING SCHOOL | ■ SLEEPMASTERS |
| ■ PREMIER MEATS | ■ SLEEPY HOLLOW RESTAURANT |
| ■ PRESTIGE PROPERTY | ■ SLIMMING WORLD |
| ■ PRO PEST CONTROL | ■ SMART WASH-IN |
| ■ PROJECT PLANNING INTERNATIONAL | ■ SOAKS BATHROOMS |
| ■ PROPERTY DIRECTIONS | ■ SOIL-UTIONS |
| ■ PROPERTY LETS NI | ■ SOLID BOND SCOOTER CLUB |
| ■ PROPERTY LINK (ARMAGH) | ■ SPACE REAL ESTATES |
| ■ PROPERTY ONE | ■ SPAR |
| ■ PROPERTY PEOPLE | ■ SQUARE YARD TILES |
| ■ PYPER PROPERTY MANAGEMENT | ■ STORMONT EXHAUST CENTRE |
| ■ RE/MAX EXCEL | ■ STREAMVALE OPEN FARM |
| ■ RE/MAX PROPERTY SPECIALISTS | ■ SUBWAY SANDWICH BAR |
| ■ RE/MAX SELECT PROPERTIES | ■ SUPERVALU |
| ■ REA ESTATES | ■ SWIFT CABS |
| ■ READS | ■ T&G PLASTICS |
| ■ REMAX PROPERTY SALES | ■ T&G PLASTICS |
| ■ REMAX SOLUTIONS | ■ T&G PLASTICS |
| ■ RENTAL COMPANY THE | ■ TEMPLETON ROBINSON |
| ■ RIDE SAFE | ■ THAMES TILE & BATHROOMS LTD |
| ■ ROBERT A NOBLE & CO | ■ THE AULD HOUSE |
| ■ ROBERT WILSON ESTATE AGENTS | ■ THE BED SHED |
| ■ ROCKLANE DAY NURSERY | ■ THE DUFFERIN CAFE |
| ■ ROCKPORT SCHOOL | ■ THE FRYING SQUAD |
| ■ ROGER BEAUMONT ESTATE AGENTS | ■ THE GELLIE |
| ■ ROGERS PETER | ■ THE GREEN LIVING EXPERIENCE |
| ■ ROLF TANYA | ■ THE HOPKINS PARTNERSHIP |
| ■ RON CHANDLER | ■ THE PLAY CAFE |
| ■ ROSS GLENN MR | ■ THE RED DOOR CAFE |
| ■ RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL | ■ THE SALVAGE YARD |
| ■ SALON SERVICES | ■ THE SOAP BOX |
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| ■ THE SPACE PLACE | ■ ADRENALIN KARTING |
| ■ THE VAN SHOP | ■ ADRIAN MCQUAID |
| ■ THE WINDSOR | ■ AGAR MURDOCH & DEANE LTD |
| ■ THOMPSONS | ■ ALAN NEWELL |
| ■ TIM MARTIN & CO | ■ ALLOY WHEEL REPAIR |
| ■ TMC ESTATE AGENTS | ■ APACHE |
| ■ T-MET LTD | ■ ARIA PROPERTY SOLUTIONS |
| ■ TMS HOMES | ■ B & Q |
| ■ TOM MALLOY | ■ BACKSTREET BISTRO |
| ■ TOPTAN | ■ BENNETT & LISK |
| ■ TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH LISBURN | ■ BODRUM PIZZAR |
| ■ TRINITY PARTNERSHIP | ■ BREDA CABS |
| ■ TURNING POINT ESTATE AGENTS | ■ BROADWAY TAXIS |
| ■ TWEEDIE PHILIP | ■ BTW CAIRNS |
| ■ ULSTER PROPERTY SALES | ■ BURN RESTAURANT |
| ■ ULSTER TRANSPORT CLUB | ■ CANNON MOTORS LIMITED |
| ■ ULTIMATE CLADDING SOLUTIONS | ■ CARPETRIGHT PLC |
| ■ ULTRAPLUMB.COM | ■ CARRICK CAB |
| ■ UNIQUE LOFT CONVERSIONS | ■ CARRICKFERGUS MOTORCYCLES |
| ■ VISION PROPERTY AGENTS | ■ CBS ALLOTMENTS |
| ■ VIVANTE | ■ CENTURY 21 BELFAST |
| ■ WATSON PROPERTY SALES | ■ CFC INTERIORS |
| ■ WELL GEMS HOME INTERIORS LTD | ■ CHARLES HURST ACCIDENT REPAIR CENTRE |
| ■ WETHERSPOONS (THE CENTRAL BAR | ■ CHOICE FLOORING |
| ■ WHOLESALE ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES | ■ CLANDEBOYE LODGE HOTEL |
| ■ WHOLESALE FIREWORKS | ■ CLASIC CAR WASH |
| ■ WILSONS AUCTIONS | ■ CLASSIC CARPETS & BEDDING CO |
| ■ WINDROSE BAR & BISTRO | ■ CLASSIC FIREWORKS |
| ■ WOODEN FLOOR COMPANY | ■ CLUB 411 |
| ■ WOODSTOC | ■ CORDINERS KITCHENS & BEDROOMS LTD |
| ■ WORKOUT EXPRESS | ■ COUNTRY CAKES |
| ■ Illegal Signs 2009 to 2012 | ■ COUNTRY CAKES HOME BAKERY |
| ■ A R GRAPHICS | ■ COUNTRY ESTATES |
| ■ A1 BOARDING KENNELS & CATTERY | ■ CURVES |
| ■ ABBE ' CO | ■ D & G BODY REPAIR AND VALET |
| ■ ABBEY KITCHENS & BATHROOMS | ■ D B TILES & BATHROOMS |
| ■ ABBEY REAL ESTATE | ■ DANIEL MCGEOWN & COMPANY |
| ■ ADELBODEN CAFÉ | ■ DEBORAH YEA PARTNERSHIP |
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| ■ DECORA BLIND SYSTEMS LTD | ■ JACK REID CARS |
| ■ DICKSONS GARDEN CENTRE | ■ JENKINS BUTCHER |
| ■ DIRECT FURNITURE | ■ JOHN MINNIS ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ DOCSOL | ■ JONES THE BUTCHERS |
| ■ DOUGLAS HUSTON | ■ JONES THE BUTCHERS |
| ■ DR ELECTRICS | ■ JORDANSTOWN REAL ESTATES |
| ■ DREAMS | ■ KITCHENS DIRECT |
| ■ DUNNES STORES LTD | ■ KPL DEVELOPMENTS |
| ■ DV8 BELFAST | ■ LAURA ENGLISH |
| ■ DW SPORTS | ■ LAUTORIA BOUTIQUE |
| ■ DW SPORTS FITNESS | ■ LIDL |
| ■ ECO FRIENDLY NI | ■ LOUGH & QUAY |
| ■ EDDIE ERVINE SPORTS | ■ LPC CARAVAN & CAMPING |
| ■ EDUCOGYM | ■ MAGGIE FASHIONS |
| ■ FANTASIC FURNITURE | ■ MCCLEARYS ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ FAWCETT & CO | ■ MCGIMPSEY & KANE |
| ■ FERRIS BRIAN MR | ■ MCGRANAGHAN ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ FITNESS FIRST | ■ MCMILLAN ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ FLOORS & MORE LTD | ■ McQuaid Adrian |
| ■ FORESTSIDE TILE & BATH | ■ MEDIA ON THE MOVE |
| ■ FRAZER KIDD | ■ MICHAEL CHANDLER PROPERTY SERVICES |
| ■ GLENPARK | ■ MITCHELL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT |
| ■ GORDYS VALETING SERVICE | ■ MONO BAR & RESTAURANT |
| ■ GREENAWAY AUTO ELECTRICS | ■ MORTON PINPOINT |
| ■ GREENISLAND CHIPPY | ■ MOSSLEY PAVILLION |
| ■ GROW COFFEE SHOP | ■ MOVE PROPERTY |
| ■ HAPPY CATZ & LITTLE PAWZ | ■ MY TILES |
| ■ HARBOUR POINT BAR & GRILL | ■ MYNT BAR |
| ■ HARRY DOUGLAS FURNITURE | ■ NEILL ESTATE AGENTS |
| ■ HARVEY NORMAN | ■ NETWORK 24 TAXIS |
| ■ HIBERNIAN ANTIQUES FAIRS | ■ NI SKIPS |
| ■ HILTON TEMPLEPATRICK HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB | ■ O'CONNOR KENNEDY TURTLE |
| ■ HOMEBASE LTD | ■ O'KANE DEVINE LTD |
| ■ HUNTER CAMPBELL | ■ PET SHOP |
| ■ IMAGE XPRESS | ■ PETER ROGERS |
| ■ INDEPENDENT PROPERTY ESTATES | ■ PHILIP JOHNSTON & CO |
| ■ IRENE JOHNSTON | ■ PHILIP TWEEDIE |
| ■ IVAN KERR TYRES | ■ PLM PROMOTIONS |
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| ■ POUNDWORLD | ■ SUPERIOR CAR VALETING |
| ■ PRESTIGE PROPERTY | ■ TANGLEZ HAIR & BEAUTY |
| ■ PRIMEWOOD SECTIONAL BUILDINGS | ■ TEMPLETON ROBINSON |
| ■ PROPERTYHOP | ■ THE APACHE TRIBE |
| ■ PROTEIN PLUS | ■ THE BREAD FILLER |
| ■ QUAYS PROPERTY SERVICES | ■ THE CENTRAL PARK |
| ■ R STANLEY LAIRD & SON | ■ THE CHIPPY |
| ■ RAIN NIGHT CLUB | ■ THE GRIFFIN |
| ■ RDO AUTO ELECTRICS | ■ THE GYM |
| ■ REGAL FURNITURE | ■ THE LOFT COFFEE SHOP |
| ■ ROMAC PRESS LTD | ■ THE MILL AT BALLYDUGAN |
| ■ RON CHANDLER | ■ THE SIGN CO (NI) LTD |
| ■ ROSKYLE LTD | ■ THE SPINNING WHEEL |
| ■ ROYAL ULSTER AGRICULTURE SOCIETY | ■ THE VILLAGE STORE |
| ■ RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL | ■ THOMPSONS |
| ■ RUSSELL'S CELLARS | ■ TILE FACTORY OUTLET |
| ■ S & R ELECTRIC LIMITED | ■ TIM MARTIN & CO |
| ■ SAINTFIELD NURSERY CENTRE | ■ TRANSFORM KITCHENS |
| ■ SCALLYWAGS | ■ ULSTER PROPERTY SALES |
| ■ SELF BUILD IRELAND | ■ ULTRAVIBES |
| ■ SIGN SEEKER.COM | ■ VICTORIA HOT SPOT |
| ■ SIMPLY BEAUTY | ■ VICTORIA PRIMARY SCHOOL |
| ■ SKI AND SPORTS LTD | ■ VISION PROPERTY AGENTS |
| ■ SLEEPMASTER | ■ VIVO |
| ■ SLEEPMASTERS | ■ W & R CONSTRUCTION LIMITED |
| ■ SMART WASH-IN | ■ WALK A PAWS |
| ■ SPAR | ■ WEE MONKEYS DAY NURSERY |
| ■ STARPLAN | ■ WINE WORLD |
| ■ STEVE HEWLETT ASSOCIATES | ■ WOMANNS TOUCH |

Belfast Bike Hire Scheme

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what investment is planned for the Belfast Bike Hire Scheme; and what consideration has been given to expanding the scheme to other areas.

(AQW 14143/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Belfast City Council were one of four councils who were recently successful in securing funding of £4.3m for Active Travel Demonstration projects, the others being in Londonderry, Strabane and Craigavon. These projects, all of which include walking and cycling, are being put in place as part of the Department's Active Travel Strategy to demonstrate that walking and cycling are safe, healthy, inexpensive and social means of travel.

The Belfast Bike Hire scheme will receive £698,700 Capital Funding over a three year development and implementation period up to 2014/15 to provide the infrastructure for 300 bikes at 30 docking stations across the city.

Tenders will be sought by Belfast City Council to procure a modern, attractive and technologically sound scheme most suited to the City of Belfast. Ongoing operation and maintenance costs will be funded by Belfast City Council.

All of the projects will be subject to an ongoing evaluation process and, depending on the success of the schemes and the availability of resources, further consideration will be given to the provision of capital funding for other projects of this nature.

60 Plus SmartPasses

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 13296/11-15, whether there are different charges recouped by Translink for the use of the 60 plus Belfast Central depot to (i) Ballymena; and (ii) Portrush.

(AQW 14188/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The following are the relevant fares and charges recouped for the above two journeys:

Bus Journey	Full adult paying Single Fare	60+ concession value claimed by Translink
Belfast – Portrush	£11.00	£7.70
Belfast – Ballymena	£6.30	£4.41

Bicycle Park Stands Situated in Towns

Mr Givan asked the Minister for Regional Development whether Roads Service has finalised a design for bicycle park stands situated in towns.

(AQW 14206/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has not adopted a single design for cycle stands. Rather, proprietary systems are selected depending on what is best suited to the specific site characteristics and identified needs.

Privately Owned Stretch of Road

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development what action his Department should take when a privately owned stretch of road provides the only access to a stretch of road which is owned by his Department; and what legislation or policy currently exists on this matter.

(AQW 14212/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Road Service understands that your query relates to a lane in Belleek which provides access to Rathmore Clinic and other landowners. Officials have confirmed that Roads Service does not own any part of the lane but that the Department of the Environment (DOE) is the registered owner of a portion of the lane, including a water storage reservoir presumed to be under the control of Northern Ireland Water (NIW). NIW has a right of way to use the lower portion for access.

I am assured that although DOE has title to this portion of land, this situation has no impact on any consideration by Roads Service in relation to its adoption as a public road. I understand that the principles applicable to the adoption process were explained to you in a letter dated 3 September 2012, from Mr Pat Doherty, Divisional Roads Manager, Western Division.

NIW has advised that there is no requirement under legislation for it to own the access to its sites and that in such instances, it relies on registered Rights of Way or Prescriptive Rights of Way, most of which date back to before 1973, when the asset was in Council ownership. NIW officials have further advised

that should it be preferable for it to actually own the access to its sites it would seek to do so either by purchase by agreement with the owner(s) or compulsory purchase.

Proposed New Roundabout System for Craigantlet

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the estimated cost of the proposed new roundabout system for Craigantlet.

(AQW 14220/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the proposed roundabout system at Craigantlet is estimated to cost approximately £2.25 million. This comprises £1.89 million for construction, £290,000 for alterations to utility apparatus and £70,000 for land acquisition.

Proposed New Roundabout System for Craigantlet

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department carried out any studies on alternatives to the proposed new roundabout system for Craigantlet.

(AQW 14221/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that a wide range of alternative layouts were considered for the proposed new roundabout system for Craigantlet, prior to the identification of the preferred scheme.

Road Service officials have further advised that details of these alternative layouts have been submitted to DOE Planning, as part of the planning application for the roundabout system, along with information in support of the preferred option.

I should also advise the Member that, following concerns raised by local residents, I have asked officials to examine, in detail, an alternative proposal which has been put forward.

Application for Derogation of EU Directive 91/440

Mr Lunn asked the Minister for Regional Development whether an application for derogation of EU Directive 91/440, concerning separate operation of infrastructure and maintenance of rail services, has been made for the 2013/14 period.

(AQW 14263/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: No application has been made for a renewal of the derogations against specified elements of the First Railway Package. Derogations have always been held jointly with the authorities in the Republic Of Ireland, which have decided not to apply for renewal.

The discontinuance of the derogations does not require separate operation of infrastructure and train operations. I understand that Northern Ireland Railways are considering internal reorganisation to improve the efficiency of their operations and their linkages with Iarnród Éireann, with whom they share the Enterprise service.

Sustrans Bike It Campaign

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development which schools are taking part in the Sustrans Bike It campaign.

(AQW 14267/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The identities and numbers of schools seeking to take part in the Sustans Bike It campaign are set out in the table below. There are differing levels of engagement with the schools and this is distinguished in the table:-

Bike IT Sept 2012 to June 2012		
Belfast Education and Library Board Area (20 Schools)	South Eastern Education and Library Board Area (12 Schools)	North Western Education and Library Board Area (9 Schools)
St Matthew's Primary	All Children's Integrated	Bunscoil Cholmcille (Steelstown/Shantallow)
St Joseph's College	St Luke's Primary	Drumahoe PS
Whiteabbey Primary	Andrews Memorial Primary	Ebrington PS
Grosvenor Grammar	Glencraig Integrated	Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir (Bogside/Brandywell)
Strandtown Primary	Ballymacash Primary	Newbuildings Primary School
Gilnahirk Primary	Oakwood Integrated	Oakgrove Integrated Primary School
De La Salle College	Hollywood Primary	St Anne's PS
St John the Baptist Primary	Comber Primary	Greenhaw PS
St Oliver Plunkett Primary	Tonagh Primary	Drumachose PS, Limavady
Bunscoil Phobal Feirste	Maghaberry Primary	
Harding Memorial Primary	Killowen Primary	
Holy Child Primary	St Mary's Primary (N'castle)	
Lisnasharragh Primary		
St Therese of Lisieux Primary		
Brooklands Primary		
St Vincent de Paul Primary		
Cavehill Primary		
St Joseph's Primary School		
Our Lady's Girls' Primary		
Currie Primary		
Total	Intensive (26)	
	Supported (9)	
	At Distance (6)	

Rural Transport Grant Aid

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the amount of Rural Transport Grant Aid which has been awarded to each partnership in each of the last three years, broken down by District Council area.

(AQW 14281/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The information is not available in the format requested. My department provides funding to a number of Rural Community Transport Partnerships who have operational areas across a number of district council boundaries. Statistics regarding the funding used are recorded against each Partnership rather than by council areas.

The table gives the information in regard to each Partnership based on planned structures after mergers or agreed partnership working applies. I have included the details of the council areas each Partnership would cover.

RTF - Operational Areas	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
	Funding	Funding	Funding
CDM	£454,144.00	£615,061.09	£599,983.17
DDAT	£514,003.36	£682,898.45	£490,618.86
Easilink	£392,853.00	£539,058.82	£549,454.68
Fermanagh CT	£478,369.77	£555,519.62	£531,901.35
Loughside	£197,678.00	£299,500.75	£325,511.56
North Coast	£480,134.04	£553,484.96	£598,608.88
Southern Area	£334,752.50	£392,811.71	£423,429.78
Overall Total	£2,851,934.67	£3,638,335.40	£3,519,508.28

RTF - Operational Areas	Council Areas Covered
CDM	Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt
DDAT	Ards, Down, North Down
Easilink	Rural Derry, Omagh, Strabane
FCT	Fermanagh
Loughside	Antrim, Carrickfergus, Rural Castlereagh, Larne, Lisburn, Newtownabbey
North Coast	Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady, Moyle
Southern Area	Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry & Mourne

NOTES

- 1 In 2011-12 the Fermanagh & North Coast areas the Partnerships involved moved software packages mid-year and therefore it is not possible to provide separate statistical information only a combined total

Dial-a-Lift Trips Carried out by Community Transport Partnerships

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of dial-a-lift trips carried out by Community Transport Partnerships in each of the last three years, broken down by District Council area.

(AQW 14282/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The information is not available in the format requested. My department provides funding to a number of Rural Community Transport Partnerships who have operational areas across a number of district council boundaries. Statistics regarding the number of trips are recorded against each Partnership rather than by council areas.

The table gives the information in regard to each Partnership based on planned structures after mergers or agreed partnership working applies. I have included the details of the council areas each Partnership would cover. Please note that the information in respect of number of trips takes no account of the average length of the journeys involved.

RTF - Operational Areas	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
	DAL Trips	DAL Trips	DAL Trips
CDM	30,660	31,598	45,103
DDAT	14,160	18,008	13,731
Easilink	18,934	29,992	41,891
Fermanagh CT	24,581	33,634	37,997
Loughside	5,225	12,375	18,991
North Coast	15,412	24,337	36,230
Southern Area	17,980	21,048	33,533
Overall Total	126,952	170,992	227,476

RTF - Operational Areas	Council Areas Covered
CDM	Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt
DDAT	Ards, Down, North Down
Easilink	Rural Derry, Omagh, Strabane
FCT	Fermanagh
Loughside	Antrim, Carrickfergus, Rural Castlereagh, Larne, Lisburn, Newtownabbey
North Coast	Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady, Moyle
Southern Area	Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry & Mourne

NOTES

- 1 In 2011-12 the Fermanagh & North Coast areas the Partnerships involved moved software packages mid-year and therefore it is not possible to provide separate statistical information only a combined total
- 2 The roll out of Dial-a-Lift services commenced in November 2009 therefore the full cost impact was not realised until 2010-11, which accounts for the increase in the level of support required.

Group Trips Carried out by Community Transport Partnerships

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of group trips carried out by Community Transport Partnerships in each of the last three years, broken down by District Council area.

(AQW 14283/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The information is not available in the format requested. My department provides funding to a number of Rural Community Transport Partnerships who have operational areas across a number of district council boundaries. Statistics regarding the number of trips are recorded against each Partnership rather than by council areas.

The table gives the information in regard to each Partnership based on planned structures after mergers or agreed partnership working applies. I have included the details of the council areas each Partnership would cover. Please note that the information in respect of number of trips takes no account of the average length of the journeys involved.

RTF - Operational Areas	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
	Group Trips	Group Trips	Group Trips
CDM	61,332	54,307	52,658
DDAT	98,574	121,313	81,948
Easilink	53,399	42,292	37,205
Fermanagh CT	57,221	48,149	45,436
Loughside	53,292	64,705	60,265
North Coast	126,831	112,942	113,080
Southern Area	55,560	59,595	66,152
Overall Total	506,209	503,303	456,744

RTF - Operational Areas	Council Areas Covered
CDM	Cookstown, Dungannon, Magherafelt
DDAT	Ards, Down, North Down
Easilink	Rural Derry, Omagh, Strabane
FCT	Fermanagh
Loughside	Antrim, Carrickfergus, Rural Castlereagh, Larne, Lisburn, Newtownabbey
North Coast	Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady, Moyle
Southern Area	Armagh, Banbridge, Craigavon, Newry & Mourne

NOTES

- 1 In 2011-12 the Fermanagh & North Coast areas the Partnerships involved moved software packages mid-year and therefore it is not possible to provide separate statistical information only a combined total

Community Transport Partnerships: Unspent Grants

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the procedures that his Department has in place to recover grants to Community Transport Partnerships which are unspent.

(AQW 14284/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department will recover grants to Community Transport Partnerships which are unspent by adjusting the following year's funding award. This is set out in the Letter of Offer which is issued before any funding and which is agreed to by the Board of Directors of that organisation.

The Board of Directors must agree in writing, via a grant acceptance form, that they agree to maintain accurate financial records throughout the period. This is to ensure that all grant is used solely for the purposes intended and in accordance with the terms and conditions of grant and will either, pay back any unused grant to the Department at the end of the period, or use it as directed by the Department.

Community Transport Partnerships: Unspent Grants

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the amount of unspent grants his Department has recovered from Community Transport Partnerships in each of the last two years, broken down by District Council area.

(AQW 14285/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The information is not available in the format requested. My department provides funding to a number of Rural Partnerships who have operational areas across a number of district council boundaries. There were no recorded underspends in each of the last two years.

Tribunal Hearing in the Case of Lennon-v-DRD

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the outcome of his Department's discussions with the Equality Commission and the Commissioner for Public Appointments on the issues arising out of the tribunal hearing in the case of Lennon-v-DRD.

(AQW 14289/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Discussions will be arranged with the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland and the Equality Commission on the findings of the Fair Employment Tribunal once the Tribunal has concluded its findings in relation to remedy.

Blue Badges

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development what action he is taking to address the National Audit Office finding that 7300 Blue Badges are being used despite the registered holder being dead.

(AQW 14325/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) findings were in relation to a data-matching exercise carried out under the National Fraud Initiative (NFI). This matched the Department's blue badge data with data from the Death Registers and data from the Department of Work and Pensions. The exercise identified 7,300 badges, where the holders were now deceased.

However, this does not mean that any of these badges were being used fraudulently. In fact, two traffic surveys carried out in the past year, in Belfast on-street parking bays, produced no evidence of misuse of any deceased person's blue badge.

In common with all the other authorities in the UK, which participated in NFI blue badge data-matching exercises, the Department has cancelled all such badges identified.

In addition to its participation in the NFI exercise, my Department uses a team of traffic attendants dedicated to enforcing the proper use of the Blue Badges scheme.

Translink Concessionary Travel Passes

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development for his Department's assessment of the number of Translink concessionary travel passes, which were not cancelled on the death of the holder; and of any resulting losses for Translink in each of the last three years.

(AQW 14326/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My response to AQW 13399/11-15 sets out my Department's assessment on this matter. A further NFI exercise for 2012/13 will be undertaken during October 2012 and again Translink will be participating in regard to the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fares scheme.

Energy Saving Light Bulbs for Street Lighting

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department is taking to increase the use of energy saving light bulbs for street lighting.

(AQW 14350/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As I advised the Member previously, my Department's Roads Service seeks to use the most suitable street lighting equipment for energy efficiency and performance.

Energy efficient lamps, such as Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs), are likely to become viable for street lighting in the near future. Roads Service is trialling a number of LED lanterns to assess their efficiency and performance, with a view to more widespread use in the future.

Original Granite Kerbstones

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail what happens to original granite kerbstones which are removed and replaced by concrete as a result of road resurfacing works.

(AQW 14358/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that when granite kerbstones are removed and replaced with concrete ones, as a result of resurfacing works, any reusable granite kerbstones are added to a stockpile for appropriate use in future resurfacing works within the Section Office area.

Road Resurfacing Works in Areas of Townscape Character

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) what planning permissions should be obtained by Roads Service before undertaking road resurfacing works in Areas of Townscape Character; and (ii) whether he is aware of any instances where the appropriate permissions have not been sought.

(AQW 14359/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has a statutory responsibility to maintain the road network in the interests of public safety. Whilst there is no specific requirement to obtain planning permission for the maintenance of roads through resurfacing works, where it is feasible from an economic and engineering point of view, Roads Service will seek to retain features such as granite kerbs in locations that have recognition as Areas of Townscape Character.

DOE Planning is the authority responsible for matters of planning approval and I am not aware that they have raised concerns in relation to previous resurfacing works undertaken by Roads Service.

Road Improvement Schemes Planned for the North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the road improvement schemes planned for the North Down constituency in each of the next three years.

(AQW 14427/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would remind the Member that 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

I can advise that the detailed budget for subsequent years has not yet been finalised and it is therefore not possible to provide details of future works programmes at this time.

Notification of a Replacement Bus Service at Portrush Railway Station

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) why, on 17 September 2012, a notification of a replacement bus service was posted at Portrush Railway Station without a timetable,

which resulted in passengers missing the replacement bus as it left earlier than the train; and (ii) why a timetable was only posted at the station after complaints were made to the company on the morning of 17 September 2012.

(AQW 14434/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has advised me that relevant posters in relation to the engineering works were distributed on 12 September 2012 for display at appropriate locations. This was accompanied by separate timetable information to inform those intending to use bus substitution services.

Whilst not usually staffed at weekends, staff checked on Saturday 15 September and found one poster at the University (Coleraine) area had been vandalised; this was duly replaced. Those at Portrush were still intact at that point.

Staff at Portrush station have reported that one passenger complained early on Monday (17th) morning that they were unaware of the changes to the bus substitution timetable. They were directed to the relevant timetable display.

Notification of a Replacement Bus Service at Portrush Railway Station

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Regional Development whether passengers who were late for work on 17 September 2012, because a replacement bus timetable was not posted at Portrush Railway Station which resulted in passengers missing their bus, will be entitled to compensation to cover the loss in salary/wages.

(AQW 14435/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: This is an operational matter for Translink. However as I disclosed in AQW 14434/11-15 Translink have advised that the relevant timetable information was available to intending passengers. Details of the terms and conditions of the Delay-Repay scheme can be found on Translink's website.

Passenger Capacity on the 1pm Belfast to Dublin Enterprise Train

Mr Brady asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the passenger capacity on the 1pm Belfast to Dublin Enterprise train on Sunday 16 September 2012; (ii) the number of passengers that had to stand; and (iii) the health and safety implications for passengers who had to stand.

(AQW 14449/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink advises me that the train to which you refer is actually the 13:00 Dublin to Belfast service and not the Belfast to Dublin service on Sunday 16 September 2012. This question is therefore answered on that basis. This train operated at its maximum capacity with 77 x 1st Plus and 280 Enterprise Class seats available. There was heavy demand for this service possibly because there had been a Lady GaGa concert in Dublin the previous evening.

Translink's records show that on departure from Dublin, Irish Rail, in conjunction with the Train Manager, stopped boarding at approximately 400 Enterprise Class passengers. There were also 59 passengers travelling 1st Plus. There would therefore have been some 120 passengers who had to stand rather than wait until the next available service. These passengers would have been spread over the 4 Enterprise Class vehicles and the catering vehicle.

As there were 18 x 1st Plus seats remaining available on departure from Dublin, any passenger wishing to do so could have upgraded and obtained a seat upon payment of the appropriate supplement (subject to availability). On departure from Newry, an additional 60 Enterprise Class and 9 x 1st Plus seats became available as passengers left the train.

Translink have advised me that this service was within the acceptable parameters for standing and that they are not aware of any Health & Safety implications for passengers who had to stand.

Translink are aware that many passengers on busy services are trying to make onward connections to flights, ferries and other trains and buses etc, and as such they try to facilitate as many passengers as

possible. On this occasion, some 80/90 passengers could not be accommodated and had to wait until the next scheduled service.

On the date in question Irish Rail operated a 12:40 local service to Dundalk on which approximately 40 people travelled who would normally have used the Enterprise, which also relieved some of the pressure. In addition, at short notice Irish Rail were able to operate a relief service at 13:30 which ran as far as Newry and then connected with an NIR train which had been dispatched to assist. This train carried up to 80 passengers and effectively cleared the backlog, with the exception of any passengers who wished to wait for the next Enterprise service.

Track Relaying Work Between Coleraine and Londonderry

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he expects the track relaying work between Coleraine and Londonderry to be completed, and the line re-instated, before Easter 2013.
(AQW 14512/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Phase 1 of the Coleraine to Londonderry Track Renewals project is scheduled to be completed in April 2013. As a result of the project being brought forward, the programme of works to be completed during the closure of the line between July 2012 and April 2013, including other works such as the refurbishment of the Bann Bridge, is very challenging. However, Translink will continually keep progress of the works under review and if there is any change to the timescales, interested parties will be notified accordingly.

Public Inquiry on the A6 Dualling and the Dungiven By-Pass

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Regional Development whether the public inquiry on the A6 dualling and the Dungiven by-pass is still on schedule; and when it will commence.
(AQW 14655/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that the Public Inquiry on the A6 Londonderry to Dungiven dualling scheme and the Dungiven By-Pass is on schedule.

The Public Inquiry commenced on 24 September 2012 in the Radisson Roe Park Resort Hotel, Limavady, and will end on 2 October 2012.

Department for Social Development

Housing Executive Tenants in the Foyle Constituency

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive tenants in the Foyle Constituency have reported damp and mould in their properties in the last six months.
(AQW 14048/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The Housing Executive has advised that since March 2012 they have received the following number of reports from tenants of damp/mould at their District Offices in relation to the Foyle constituency as follows: -

- Collon Terrace – 215
- Waterloo Place – 181
- Waterside – 224

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.

Atos Health Care Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development what training on dealing with people affected by mental health issues is provided to Atos health care professional staff who carry out Work Capability Assessments; and whether the training is the same for both doctors and nurses.

(AQW 14124/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Healthcare professionals carrying out Work Capability Assessments receive training that is tailored to their particular profession; for doctors it is between 8-9 days and for nurses it is between 21-24 days. This includes specific training modules and material on dealing with people affected by mental health issues.

Window Replacement Schemes for Housing Estates in the North Down Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the time table of window replacement schemes for housing estates in the North Down area over the next three years.

(AQW 14149/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I would refer the Member to the answer I gave him recently in response to AQW 13849/11-15.

Housing Point Uplifts

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development what housing point uplifts are available for serving and former members of HM Armed Forces when they are applying for social housing; and what points are allocated to people who are due to finish their prison term and those who are former prisoners.

(AQW 14154/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Selection Scheme which is approved by my Department makes provision for determining the order in which prospective tenants are allocated social housing in Northern Ireland. The rules of the scheme detail the criteria used in relation to the assessment of points used to rank applicants.

Providing any applicant, including ex Service personnel or prisoners, meets the access criteria they will be assessed and awarded points in relation to their housing need. A Housing Needs Assessment is based on four categories, namely Intimidation, Insecurity of tenure, Housing conditions and a Health and Social Well Being Assessment and points may be awarded in relation to any of these categories if appropriate.

Under the rules of the scheme points may specifically be awarded to HM Armed Forces personnel in the following circumstances. All Applicants who claim to be either homeless or threatened with homelessness are firstly considered under the Housing (NI) Order 1988 to determine whether they meet statutory homeless criteria and therefore entitled to the award of Full Duty points by the Housing Executive. Where the applicant is not considered to be a Full Duty Applicant, i.e. they do not meet the legislation criteria, but is still homeless or threatened with homelessness, Designated Officers consider the award of Other Homeless points where the applicant, or a member of the applicant's household, is a serving member of the Armed Forces and is due to be discharged and is currently living in service quarters. Evidence is required to award these points and may include the applicant's discharge papers, or statement from his Commanding Officer.

In relation to the assessment of prisoners where a person makes an application from prison, their application should not be considered until four weeks prior to release. The application will be accepted provisionally with nil points but any representations from the Probation Board should be considered. Upon release, the Housing Executive carries out a housing needs assessment and points are awarded accordingly.

Applications for accommodation may be accepted from prisoners who are participating in the pre-release scheme for life sentence prisoners. They must have entered or be about to enter i.e. within

one month, Phase 3 of the scheme when they will 'live out' more or less permanently, reporting to the prison at regular intervals only.

Ex-Offenders will be dealt with as normal applicants for social housing. However, where the Probation Board take the view that the applicant cannot return to the parental / marital / family home for security or other reasons, the Designated Officer would consider the applicant under the Homelessness legislation and, if this is not applicable, the applicant would be considered for the award of Other Homeless points.

Oaklee Housing Association's New Build Developments

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to list the names of the contractors who prequalified for the Oaklee Housing Association's new build developments, including the named electrical and mechanical sub-contractors they proposed.

(AQW 14171/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The contractors and relevant sub-contractors who pre-qualified for Oaklee Housing Association's new build developments in the 2011/12 year are outlined in the attached tables.

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Coulter Carpark Belfast	Donaghmore (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical	Irwin Electrics
	TAL (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical Services	Emerald Electrics
	Glasgiven Contracts Ltd (Annalong)	White Engineering	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Kelly Brothers (Newry)	CMK Plumbing	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	M J McBride (Draperstown)	Dan Mooney Plumbing & Heating	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Moss Construction (Armagh)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	T & A Kernaghan (Mallusk)	T&A Mechanical Services	W R Beckett
Longstone Road Annalong	Kelly Bros (Warrenpoint)	CMK plumbing	Braham Electrical
	Donaghmore (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical Services	Irwin Electrical Services
	Glasgiven (Annalong)	White Engineering	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	MSM (Portadown)	MM Building Services	James Haughey & Co
	Qmac (Dungannon)	Michael McGinn	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Eden (Warrenpoint)	John Morrison	Murray/McEvoy
	O'Hanlon/Farrell (Newry)	CMK Mechanical Services	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Cunningham (Newry)	S Mathews Ltd	Norlect Engineering Ltd

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Clifton Park Ave Belfast	Qmac (Dungannon)	M Mc Ginn	O Hanlon Farrell
	Moss (Armagh)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Donaghmore (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical	Irwin Electrical Services
	Tal (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	McGurran (Derrygonnelly)	O'Kane Plumbing	James Haughey
	Lowry Brothers (Castlederg)	Anderson Mechanical	G R White & Son Electrical Ltd
	O'Hare McGovern (Newry)	McAleer & McGarrity	Braham
	Brendan Loughran (Carrickmore)	McAleer & McGarrity	Allison Contracts
Carryduff PSNI	Hugh J O Boyle (Downpatrick)	CPL Engineer	CPL Engineering
	Tal Limited (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	T&A Kernaghan (Mallusk)	T&A Mechanical Services	W R Beckett
	Moss Construction (Armagh)	Devlin Mechanical Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	McGurran Construction (Fermanagh)	O'Kane Plumbing & Electrical Ltd	James Haughey & Co
	Eden (Warrenpoint)	John Morrison	Murray/McEvoy
131 Springfield Road Belfast	TO BE AWARDED		
	MJ Mc Bride (Draperstown)	Dan Mooney Plumbing & Heating	O Hanlon Farrell
	Qmac (Dungannon)	Michael McGinn Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Moss (Seagahan)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Tal (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	McGurran (Derrygonnelly)	O'Kane Plumbing & Electrics	James Haughey & Co
	Cunninghams (Newry)	S Mathews Ltd	Norlect Engineering (UK) Ltd

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Glenview Rathfriland	Cunninghams (Newry)	S Matthews	Norlect Engineering
	Moss (Seagahan)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Tal (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	Qmac (Dungannon)	Michael McGinn Mechanical Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Lowry Bros (Castlederg)	Anderson Mechanical	G R White & Son Ltd
	O'Hare & McGovern (Newry)	McAleer & McGarrity	Braham Electrics
	McGurran (Derrygonnelly)	O'Kane Plumbing & Electrics	James Haughey & Co

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Peters Hill Belfast	Peters Hill Belfast	Peters Hill Belfast	Peters Hill Belfast
	Tal Limited (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	Moss Construction (Seagahan)	Devlin Mechanical Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Glasgiven (Annalong)	White Engineering	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Kelly Brothers (Warrenpoint)	CMK Plumbing	Braham Electrical
	MSM Contracts (Portadown)	Hanna Mechanical	James Haughey & Co
	Geda (Coalisland)	CMK Mechanical Services	Braham Electrical
167 Andersonstown Road Belfast	Tal (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	Donaghmore Construction (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical	Irwin Electrical
	M J McBrides (Magherafelt)	Dan Mooney Plumbing	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	QMAC Construction (Dungannon)	Michael McGinn Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	T & A Kernoghan (Newtownabbey)	T&A Mechanical	W R Beckett
	Brendan Loughran & Sons (Omagh)	McAleer McGarrity Ltd	Allison Contracts Ltd
	Moss Construction (Seagahan, Armagh)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Lower Shankill Belfast	Lower Shankill Belfast	Lower Shankill Belfast	Lower Shankill Belfast
	Glasgiven (Annalong)	White Engineering	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Kelly Brothers (Warrenpoint)	CMK Plumbing	Braham Electrical
	Donaghmore Construction (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical	Irwin Electrical
	Geda Construction (Coal island)	CMK Mechanical	Braham Electrical
	O'Hanlon & Farrell (Newry)	CMK Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	QMAC Construction, (Donaghmore)	Michael McGinn	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Brendan Loughran (Carrickmore)	McAleer McGarrity	Allison Contracts
Rectory Close Loughgall	Rectory Close Loughgall	Rectory Close Loughgall	Rectory Close Loughgall
	Moss (Seaghan)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Tal (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	Qmac (Dungannon)	Michael McGinn Mechanical Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Cunningham Contracts (Newry)	S Mathews	Norlect Engineering
	Lowry Bros (Castlederg)	Anderson Mechanical	G R White & Son Ltd
	O'Hare & McGovern (Newry)	McAleer & McGarrity	Braham Electrical

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Mill Court Ph2 Belfast	Mill Court Ph2 Belfast	Mill Court Ph2 Belfast	Mill Court Ph2 Belfast
	Tal Limited (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	Glasgiven Contracts (Annalong)	White Engineering Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Donaghmore Construction (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical Services	Irwin Electrical Services
	O Hare and McGovern (Newry)	McAleer & McGarrity	Braham Electrical
	MJ McBride (Draperstown)	Dan Mooney Plumbing & Heating	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Kelly Bros (Warrenpoint)	CMK Plumbing	Braham Electrical
	MSM Contracts (Portadown)	Hanna Mechanical Services	James Haughey & Co
Donard Street Newcastle	TO BE AWARDED		
	Qmac Construction (Dungannon)	Michael McGinn Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Donaghmore Construction (Dungannon)	Anderson Mechanical	Irwin Electrical
	Glasgiven Contracts (Annalong)	White Engineering Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Kelly Bros (Warrenpoint)	CMK Plumbing	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Moss Construction 54 (Seagahan)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Tal Ltd (Lisburn)	Anderson Mechanical	Emerald Electrics
	McGurran Construction (Derrygonnelly)	O'Kane Plumbing & Electrical	James Haughey & Co

Project Title	Contractor	Mech	Elect
Killynure Code 5 (Re-tender)	TO BE AWARDED		
	O'Hanlon and Farrell (Newry)	CMK Mechanical Services	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Moss Construction (Armagh)	Devlin Mechanical	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	QMAC Construction (Dungannon) and Lagan Construction (Belfast)	Michael McGinn Mechanical Ltd	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Donaghmore Construction (Dungannon)	White Engineering	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	Geda Construction (Coalisland)	CMK Mechanical Services	Braham Electrical
	Glasgiven Contracts Ltd (Annalong)	White Engineering	O'Hanlon & Farrell
	McGurran Construction (Derrgonnelly)	O'Kane Plumbing and Electrical	James Haughey & Co

Oaklee Housing Association's New Build Developments

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Oaklee Housing Association's new build developments, to detail (i) the circumstances in which a main contractor, who has been awarded a contract, can change a nominated electrical or mechanical sub-contractor who they had nominated at the pre-qualification stage; and (ii) when a main contractor requests to change a nominated sub-contractor, whether Oaklee confirms this with the sub-contractor directly.

(AQW 14172/11-15)

Mr McCausland:

- (i) The procurement procedures under which Housing Associations operate outline that a main contractor is only permitted to change a nominated sub-contractor in exceptional circumstances, for example if a sub-contractor enters administration, ceases trading or declares bankruptcy.

In the event that a main contractor changes a sub-contractor, it must provide robust reasoning for the change and the replacement must be assessed by the contracting Housing Association.

- (ii) As the management of sub-contractors is the responsibility of the main contractor, Oaklee Housing Association would not engage directly with the sub-contractor on these matters.

Oaklee Housing Association's New Build Developments

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development, in relation to Oaklee Housing Association's new build developments, to list the projects in which the main contractor has requested to change the nominated electrical or mechanical sub-contractor at pre-qualification stage, detailing (i) the name of the main contractor; (ii) which sub-contractors were nominated at pre-qualification stage; (iii) the name of the new sub-contractor; and (iv) the reason the sub-contractor was changed.

(AQW 14176/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The projects in which Oaklee Housing Association has acceded to a request from the main contractor to change the named electrical or mechanical subcontractor and the relevant details are outlined in the attached table.

Project	Longstone Road, Annalong	Rectory Close, Loughgall	Clifton Park Ave, Belfast
Contractor	Kelly Brothers	McGurran Construction	Qmac
Named Mechanical Sub-contractor	CMK Plumbing	O’Kane Plumbing & Electrics	M McGinn
Named Electrical Sub-contractor	Braham Electrical	James Haughey & Co.	O’Hanlon & Farrell
Revised Mechanical Sub-contractor	S Mathews Ltd	CPL Antrim	O’Kane Plumbing & Electrics
Revised Electrical Sub-Contractor	Burden Electrical	PMK Electrical Ltd	No Change
Reason	Financial reasons	Named Sub-contractors were unable to carry out the works in accordance with the contractor’s programme	Named Sub-contractor appeared unable to commit to the project

Oaklee Housing Association

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development whether increasing the number of bedrooms in the bungalows in Bloomfield, Bangor, which may be transferred to Oakley Housing Association, would result in the tenants being deemed in ‘under occupancy’ under the proposed new housing benefits system. **(AQW 14184/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: An analysis of the tenants in the Bloomfield bungalows indicates that a number of households could be impacted by the proposed changes to Housing Benefit being introduced in April 2013.

In light of this, the Housing Executive is currently consulting the tenants and Bloomfield Community Association on a proposal to retain the bungalows as one bedroom accommodation, while still ensuring that the dwellings are brought up to modern standards.

Work Capacity Assessments

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how many health care professionals are currently working for Atos carrying out Work Capacity Assessments; and how many are (i) doctors; and (ii) nurses.

(AQW 14203/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Atos Healthcare currently employs 99 healthcare professionals to carry out Work Capability Assessments; 62 doctors (including 14 full time doctors and 48 sessional doctors employed on a part time basis); and 37 nurses.

Universal Credit Risk Register

Mr Brady asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department has been privy to the Department of Work and Pensions’ risk register on universal credit; and whether his Department has prepared a specific universal credit risk register to take into account local conditions.

(AQW 14236/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department is working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions on the introduction of Universal Credit. Whilst the Department for Work and Pensions has not formally issued

its risk register to my Department, Senior Officials are aware of its content due their membership of different governance fora in the Department for Work and Pensions.

In line with good programme management practices, my Department maintains a separate Universal Credit risk register for Northern Ireland. This register enables officials to identify and consider all possible risks that may occur during the development and implementation of Universal Credit.

Specific risks are assessed against their likelihood of occurring and the impact on the delivery of Universal Credit. The availability of this information facilitates the provision of comprehensive advice by officials to enable informed decisions to be made and for risks to be managed. The risk register is a living document, which is regularly reviewed and is constantly being updated and changed.

Schemes to Assist People to Insulate their Homes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what schemes his Department offers to assist people to insulate their homes.

(AQW 14259/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Warm Homes Scheme continues to be my Department's primary tool for improving the energy efficiency of homes. The Scheme is open to owner occupiers or those who privately rent their home who are in receipt of a qualifying benefit. The Scheme offers a range of heating and insulation measures including loft and cavity wall insulation. The Scheme continues to be hugely successful and further information is available by contacting the scheme managers on 0800 988 0559.

The Housing Executive implemented a major programme to install cavity wall insulation in the mid to late 1980s. Loft insulation has been installed through a combination of Housing Executive external cyclical maintenance and other schemes. Also as part of their programme to replace heating in their stock the Housing Executive upgrade roof space insulation in line with Building Control requirements. The Housing Executive topped up insulation in approximately 700 of their properties using NI Sustainable Energy Programme (NISEP) Funds and they are currently working on a potential scheme for a further 400 dwellings this year using the same funds.

Social Security Processing Centre in Downpatrick

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has considered seeking additional funding in the In-year Monitoring Round to acquire financial support to proceed with the original plans for a Social Security Processing Centre in Downpatrick.

(AQW 14307/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In Spending Review 2010, my Department submitted capital bids to enable the delivery of the remaining 8 Social Security Offices of the Jobs & Benefits Project. This included a £5.8m bid in order to deliver a single Jobs & Benefits office in Downpatrick. The necessary capital funding was not secured and the Jobs and Benefits Project was subsequently closed.

On the 1 June 2012, the Agency announced the continued roll-out of the Customer First initiative across the rest of the Social Security Working Age Network.

The rollout of Customer First had dependencies on, and interfaces with, a number of Modernisation projects, including the Jobs and Benefits Project. Early decisions on the location of Benefit Processing Centres were based upon the future accommodation estate to be delivered by the Jobs and Benefits Project. Original plans were that Benefit Processing Centres would be established at Corporation Street, Downpatrick and Newtownards. However, in light of the necessary funding no longer being available, the Agency has therefore found it necessary to deviate from its original proposal and establish Benefit Processing Centres at Royston House, Falls Road and Knockbreda.

As I have said on previous occasions, I am committed to maintaining a robust front-line presence which meets the needs of customers and no offices, including Downpatrick Social Security Office, will close.

Laps Window Scheme for North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department can take to ensure that the Housing Executive implements the Laps Window Scheme for North Down, given that the scheme has now been postponed on two occasions.

(AQW 14334/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I refer the member to my answer to AQW 13849/11-15 on 19 September, which advised that the need for double glazing schemes to be programmed through Local Area Priority schemes has now been superseded by the Housing Executive's adoption of double glazing as one of their investment priorities across Northern Ireland.

The position with regards to the double glazing schemes in North Down is as follows: -

- The Lisnabreen and Clanmorris scheme in Bangor went on site on 27 August 2012.
- The scheme in Whitehill, Bangor is due to be presented to the Housing Executive Board in October 2012, due to the scheme value of £972k, with an anticipated start date in November 2012.
- The Rathgill/Kilcooley/Loughview scheme is expected to commence on 1 October 2012.

All start dates within the Housing Executive's programme of planned improvement schemes are indicative and subject to change as schemes proceed through the various clearance and approval stages.

Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

Ms Boyle asked Minister for Social Development, given the importance of the Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge project to the socio-economic regeneration of the town and given that the availability of the necessary funding from his Department is a pre-requisite to securing substantial funding from the Department for Regional Development and other potential streams of funding associated with the project, to outline his commitment to funding the project.

(AQW 14383/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department previously indicated that it would make available funding of up to £2.5 million for the proposed Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge project. Following a tender exercise, the construction costs of the bridge came in well over budget making the project unaffordable. Strabane District Council subsequently decided to abandon the original project proposal in favour of a less costly bridge design. Because the original project proposal has been abandoned, a new business case will have to be developed for the new design which will have to go through the normal approval processes within my own Department and DFP.

The Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge project remains within my Department's forward work plan for capital projects during the current Spending Review period. I can confirm that the Department remains committed to working with Strabane District Council to bring the project forward, subject to a suitable business case being developed and all the necessary approvals being secured.

Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development when he will be in a position to announce a decision on the application by Strabane District Council to his Department for funding towards the Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge.

(AQW 14384/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Following a tender exercise, the construction costs of the Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge project came in well over budget making the project unaffordable. Strabane District Council subsequently decided to abandon that project in favour of a less costly bridge design. This will require Strabane District Council to make a new application for funding to the Department and a new business case to be developed. Until such time as the Department receives an application form and revised business case, I am not in a position to consider funding the Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge.

Public Realm Works in Bangor and Holywood

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development to outline a timescale on public realm works in (i) Bangor; and (ii) Holywood.

(AQW 14409/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Nelson McCausland: My Department is working with North Down Borough Council on a major public realm scheme for both Bangor and Holywood. Council recently appointed an Integrated Consultancy Team to develop the concept design and complete an economic appraisal and it is expected to take 4 months to complete this stage. When completed the economic appraisal will be submitted to my Department for consideration and subject to funding being available and all necessary approvals, the scheme will commence in 2013.

Housing Executive Disabled Facilities Grant

Mrs McKevitt asked the Minister for Social Development what financial criteria a person must meet in order to benefit from a Housing Executive Disabled Facilities Grant.

(AQW 14439/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Applicants applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant are subject to a means test to access any potential contribution they may have. However, where a Disabled Facilities Grant application is in respect of a child or young person for whom Child Benefit is paid, there is no means test and the grant payable shall be equivalent to the Housing Executive's approved cost of works, subject to the maximum Disabled Facilities Grant allowable, which is currently £25,000. The means test is governed by the Housing Renewal Grants (Reduction of Grant) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004 and subsequent amendments. Any grant payable is determined by offsetting any contribution arising from the means test against the Housing Executive's approved cost of works.

Where a Disabled Facilities Grant applicant is in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related) or Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit), the applicant shall have nothing to contribute towards their grant and shall receive a grant equivalent to the Housing Executive's approved cost of works, subject to the maximum Disabled Facilities Grant allowance.

Where the applicant is not in receipt of any of the benefits mentioned above, the means test will take account of the applicant's sources of income together with that of any spouse or partner and measure these against the personal allowance in the Regulations. Income cut-off point for such cases will vary according to the applicant's income and household composition.

St Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development whether St Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena has been transferred to his Department from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

(AQW 14475/11-15)

Mr McCausland: 47 houses within the St Patricks Barrack's site are currently in the process of being transferred from the Office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister to my department for onward disposal to Fold Housing Association who have been appointed to develop the site for social housing.

Job Seeker's Allowance

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what is the average length of time that Job Seeker's Allowance claimants are in receipt of the benefit.

(AQW 14494/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The most recently published Jobseekers Allowance statistics refer to May 2012. At that time there were 59,860 persons claiming Jobseekers Allowance and the average claim duration was 338.6 days.

The Information provided in this response is governed by the Principles and Protocols of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. This is enforced by UK Statistics Authority.

Pensions Service in Carlisle House, Derry: Staff

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department plans to take to address the shortage of staff at the Pensions Service in Carlisle House, Derry.

(AQW 14495/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Posts in the Social Security Agency are filled in accordance with the Northern Ireland Civil Service policy and processes for vacancy management.

As at 18th September there were only five vacancies in the Pension Centre in Carlisle House, Londonderry and in each case action is being taken to fill the posts.

On 19 September, following a routine bi-annual review, a number of new posts was created in the Pension Centre, bringing new jobs to Londonderry. Action is already in hand to fill those posts.

Housing Benefit

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development whether the Housing Executive requires that all tenants who are in receipt of Housing Benefit have the benefit paid directly to it as payment for rent.

(AQW 14543/11-15)

Mr McCausland: No. The law provides that, for Housing Executive tenants, Housing Benefit in respect of rent takes the form of a 'rent rebate'. This means that the tenant's rent account is credited by the amount of Housing Benefit for rent, rather than a payment being issued. In the case of tenants of other landlords (registered housing associations and private rented sector landlords), Housing Benefit in respect of rent takes the form of a 'rent allowance'. For these cases there is tenant choice as to whether Housing Benefit is paid to the tenant or the landlord, except in certain circumstances (such as the claimant being in arrears of an amount equivalent to 6 weeks' or more rent) where the benefit is normally paid to the landlord.

Housing Selection Scheme Preliminary Consultation

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Housing Selection Scheme preliminary consultation.

(AQW 14698/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have considered the outcome of the preliminary consultation and am clear that a more wide-ranging review of social housing allocation policy is required. I am currently considering the form such a review might take and expect to make an announcement on the way forward in the near future.

Written Answers Index

Department for Regional Development	WA 247	Tribunal Hearing in the Case of	
60 Plus SmartPasses	WA 261	Lennon-v-DRD	WA 267
Adopted Roads in the Strangford		Two Year Pay Freeze for Staff at	
Constituency	WA 251	NI Railways	WA 252
Application for Derogation of EU		Unadopted Roads in the Strangford	
Directive 91/440	WA 262	Constituency	WA 248
Belfast Bike Hire Scheme	WA 260	Unadopted Roads in the Strangford	
Bicycle Park Stands Situated in Towns	WA 261	Constituency	WA 251
Blue Badges	WA 267		
Community Transport Partnerships:		Department for Employment and Learning	WA 189
Unspent Grants	WA 266	Apprenticeship Places	WA 193
Community Transport Partnerships:		Belfast Metropolitan College	WA 190
Unspent Grants	WA 267	Co-Operation Between Universities	
Dial-a-Lift Trips Carried out by		and the Manufacturing Industry	WA 192
Community Transport Partnerships	WA 264	DEL: One Plan	WA 194
Ecar Home and Workplace Charge		Educational Underachievement	WA 193
Point Grant	WA 252	Education Maintenance Allowance	WA 190
Energy Saving Light Bulbs for Street		Education Maintenance Allowance	WA 191
Lighting	WA 268	Engineering Skills Working Group	WA 195
Group Trips Carried out by Community		Further Education: Student Finance	WA 197
Transport Partnerships	WA 265	Greater Co-Operation Between	
Illegal Posters Removed by Roads		Universities and Schools	WA 191
Service	WA 252	Higher Education for Mature	
Notification of a Replacement Bus		Students and Parents	WA 189
Service at Portrush Railway Station	WA 268	Higher Education Skills	WA 192
Notification of a Replacement Bus		Higher Education: Widening	
Service at Portrush Railway Station	WA 269	Participation	WA 197
Original Granite Kerbstones	WA 268	Job Losses at FG Wilson	WA 194
Passenger Capacity on the 1pm		Jobs and Benefits Offices: Staffing	WA 197
Belfast to Dublin Enterprise Train	WA 269	Job Seekers Allowance:	
Privately Owned Stretch of Road	WA 261	Concessionary Fee for	
Proposed New Roundabout System		Part-Time Courses	WA 193
for Craigantlet	WA 262	North West Regional College:	
Proposed New Roundabout System		Industrial Relations	WA 195
for Craigantlet	WA 262	Southern Regional College:	
Proposed Roundabout System		Higher Education	WA 196
at Craigantlet	WA 248	Youth Unemployment	WA 196
Public Inquiry on the A6 Dualling			
and the Dungiven By-Pass	WA 270	Department for Social Development	WA 270
Road Access to Kilcooley Primary School,		Atos Health Care Staff	WA 271
Bangor	WA 247	Housing Benefit	WA 282
Road and Water Surety Bonds in the		Housing Executive Disabled	
Strangford Constituency	WA 249	Facilities Grant	WA 281
Road Improvement Schemes Planned		Housing Executive Tenants in the	
for the North Down	WA 268	Foyle Constituency	WA 270
Road Resurfacing Works in Areas of		Housing Point Uplifts	WA 271
Townscape Character	WA 268	Housing Selection Scheme Preliminary	
Roads in the Strangford Constituency	WA 250	Consultation	WA 282
Rural Transport Grant Aid	WA 264	Job Seeker's Allowance	WA 281
Sustrans Bike It Campaign	WA 262	Laps Window Scheme for North Down	WA 280
Track Relaying Work Between		Oaklee Housing Association	WA 278
Coleraine and Londonderry	WA 270	Oaklee Housing Association's New	
Translink Concessionary Travel Passes	WA 267	Build Developments	WA 272

Oaklee Housing Association's New Build Developments	WA 277	Departmental Arm's-length Bodies	WA 178
Oaklee Housing Association's New Build Developments	WA 277	Fishing	WA 180
Pensions Service in Carlisle House, Derry: Staff	WA 282	Líofa 2015	WA 178
Public Realm Works in Bangor and Holywood	WA 281	Marching Bands	WA 180
Schemes to Assist People to Insulate their Homes	WA 279	North/South Language Body	WA 179
Social Security Processing Centre in Downpatrick	WA 279	Salmon Conservation	WA 178
St Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena	WA 281	Ulster's Solemn League and Covenant	WA 181
Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge	WA 280	Department of Education	WA 181
Strabane Community Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge	WA 280	84 Million Allocated to Early Years Services	WA 184
Universal Credit Risk Register	WA 278	Amalgamation of Primary Schools	WA 182
Window Replacement Schemes for Housing Estates in the North Down Area	WA 271	Competition to Appoint Members to the General Teaching Council	WA 187
Work Capacity Assessments	WA 278	Co-operation Between Schools and the Manufacturing Industry	WA 182
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	WA 165	Education and Library Boards: Departmental Policy	WA 188
A5 Dual Carriageway: Compulsory Acquisition	WA 177	Education Bill	WA 182
Anti-Social Behaviour in Castlewellan and Tollymore Forest Parks	WA 171	Empty School Desks	WA 183
Countryside Management Scheme	WA 166	Full Complement of Governors	WA 184
Departmental Headquarters	WA 176	Japanese Knotweed on South Eastern and Education Library Board Land	WA 182
Department's Headquarters: Staff	WA 173	Parkhall Integrated College	WA 188
Farming	WA 176	Post-Primary Children	WA 185
Forestry Tourism	WA 172	Post-primary Schools: Area Planning	WA 188
Glenariffe and Ballypatrick Forests	WA 169	Principals' Salary Protection	WA 184
Glenariffe and Ballypatrick Forests	WA 169	Road Cycle Training	WA 183
Grants for Farmers	WA 166	School Enrolments	WA 183
National Parks	WA 177	School Places for Year 1 Pupils in the Ballyholme and Groomsport Areas of Bangor	WA 181
Poxvirus and Adenovirus Among the Red Squirrel Population	WA 171	Schools in the Ballyholme and Groomsport Area	WA 181
Producers and Processors of the Pork and Beef Industries	WA 165	St Colm's High School, Draperstown	WA 185
Public Awareness of Animal Cruelty	WA 172	St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena	WA 188
Red Meat Industry	WA 165	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	WA 197
Rural Development Programme: GAA	WA 176	Additional Power Station	WA 202
Rural Development Programme: Strategic Projects	WA 177	Advertising Spend by InvestNI	WA 204
Single Farm Payments	WA 169	All-Island Approach to Waste-to-Energy	WA 203
Single Farm Payments	WA 170	Bed and Breakfasts	WA 198
Spread of Phytophthora Ramorum in South Down	WA 170	Bioscience and Technology Institute/Habourgate Affair	WA 199
Wind Farms in Departmental Owned Forests	WA 172	Boosting Business Programme	WA 203
Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure	WA 178	Broadband Provision in the West Tyrone Constituency	WA 204
2012 Olympics: Training	WA 179	Communication with FG Wilson/Caterpillar	WA 205
Boxing	WA 179	Enterprise Zones	WA 197
		Executive Papers	WA 199
		Giant's Causeway Visitors Centre	WA 202
		Grants for Small Businesses	WA 200
		Hydraulic Fracturing Licence	WA 203

Inclusion of a Creationism Film at the Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre	WA 199	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	WA 229
InvestNI Funding Allocated to the East Antrim Area	WA 200	Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Regional Service	WA 229
InvestNI's Operation in North and South America	WA 200	Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services	WA 229
Jobs Fund	WA 201	Contractors and Sub-Contractors Working on the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen	WA 225
Jobs Fund	WA 201	Dangers of Blood Clots to Children and Young People	WA 221
Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004	WA 205	Deep Vein Thrombosis Clinics	WA 221
Renewable Heat Incentive	WA 198	Doctors: Industrial Action on 21 June	WA 218
Reports into the Bioscience and Technology Institute/Habourgate Affair	WA 199	Exceptional Funding Applications for Avastin	WA 219
Social Economy Strategy	WA 202	Executive Papers	WA 231
Technical Assistance Budget	WA 202	Fire-Fighter Recruitment Process	WA 230
Tourism Strategy	WA 200	Glass Bottle or Glass Related Injuries	WA 227
Department of Finance and Personnel	WA 211	GP Out of Hours Consultation	WA 218
2011 Census	WA 215	GP Surgeries	WA 218
Company Headquarters	WA 214	Health Inequalities	WA 224
Effectiveness of Local Short-Term Interventions by the Executive	WA 215	Health Service Dentists	WA 219
Employee Pension Contributions	WA 215	Health Service Dentists	WA 223
Guidance on the Appointment of Special Advisers	WA 217	Higher Education Institute Fees	WA 222
Hard Landscaping Material	WA 214	Higher Education Institute Fees	WA 223
PEACE III	WA 211	Hoax Calls for Ambulances	WA 233
Rebate on the Regional Rate Payment	WA 215	Inflammatory Bowel Disease Specialist Nurses	WA 231
SEUPB	WA 211	Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence	WA 224
Transfer of Funds from the Belfast Harbour Commissioners to the Executive	WA 211	Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence	WA 225
Young People aged 16-25 who are Currently Unemployed	WA 217	Invoices Paid within 10 Days	WA 232
Youth Unemployment	WA 216	LED Screens to Transfer Information to People who are Blind or Visually Impaired	WA 218
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	WA 218	Local Intensive Psychotherapy Treatment	WA 230
Adult Safeguarding Referrals	WA 226	Lpilimumab Through the Cancer Drugs Fund	WA 219
Alcohol and Drugs Outreach Centre in Belfast	WA 223	Pupils with Type 1 Diabetes	WA 219
Ban on Cigarette Vending Machines	WA 220	Pupils with Type 1 Diabetes	WA 220
Ban on Cigarette Vending Machines	WA 233	Recruitment of a Neuromuscular Care Adviser	WA 233
Blood Donation	WA 220	Sale of Alcohol in Glass Bottles	WA 228
Blood Donations	WA 228	Short-Stay Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital	WA 232
Blood Donations	WA 230	Special Schools: Music	WA 233
Blood Donations	WA 231	Tackling Violence at Home Strategy	WA 224
Blood Donations	WA 231	Transfers from an Accident and Emergency Department	WA 225
Book and Uniform Allowance for Student Nurses	WA 222	Venous Thromboembolism	WA 221
Cancer Patients Sent Outside Northern Ireland for Radiotherapy or Radiosurgery Treatment	WA 221	Welfare Reform	WA 225
Carers of People Diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease	WA 232	Windermere Supporting Living Services in Lisburn	WA 226
		X-Ray Facility at Bangor Hospital	WA 233

Department of Justice	WA 234	Marine Conservation Zone	WA 210
Alcohol Test Purchasing	WA 245	Planning Process for Local Businesses	WA 208
Alcohol Test Purchasing	WA 245	Proposed Waste Management Schemes	WA 207
Boston Tapes	WA 238	Prosecutions for Littering	WA 209
Cases of Fraud by Abuse of Position	WA 243	Retired Staff Member Re-Employed in the Same Post	WA 207
Consultants to Private Security Firms	WA 240	Retired Staff Member Re-Employed in the Same Post	WA 210
Deaths in Custody of Female Prisoners	WA 235	Road Cycle Training	WA 210
Desertcreat Joint Public Services College	WA 246	Tamboran Resources	WA 206
Edward Connors	WA 238		
Facilities to Hold Industrial and Benefit Appeal Tribunals	WA 237	Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister	WA 159
Illicit Drugs Detected in Prisons	WA 247	Appointments to the Maze Regeneration Board	WA 161
Illicit Drugs Within Prisons	WA 240	AQW 116/11-15	WA 159
Juveniles Convicted of Sexual Assault Offences	WA 241	AQW 11698/11-15	WA 161
Loyalist Separated Prisoners in Bush House, Maghaberry Prison	WA 237	Ballykelly	WA 160
Mandatory Polygraph Tests for Sex Offenders	WA 245	Budget Review Group	WA 164
Members of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships	WA 238	Chairmanship of the Maze Regeneration Board: Recruitment and Appointment	WA 162
Members of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships	WA 237	Childcare Strategy	WA 164
New Prison at Maghaberry to Replace HMP Magilligan	WA 240	Devolution of Corporation Tax	WA 164
Northern Ireland Prison Service: Code of Conduct and Discipline	WA 237	Drawdown of Competitive European Union Funds	WA 163
Northern Ireland Prison Service: Code of Conduct and Discipline	WA 244	EC Regional Aid Guidelines	WA 162
Northern Ireland Prison Service: Governors	WA 234	Forthcoming Visit to China	WA 163
Northern Ireland Prison Service Officers	WA 238	Freedom of Information Requests	WA 160
Offences Directly Relating to Tiger Kidnappings	WA 236	Maze Corporation Board	WA 162
Offenders who Receive a Jail Term and a Victims Levy	WA 234	Maze Regeneration Board	WA 161
People Charged with Belonging to a Proscribed Organisation	WA 243	Maze Regeneration Board	WA 161
Prisoner Assessment Unit Report	WA 237	Meetings of the Cohesion, Sharing and Integration Strategy Working Group	WA 159
Prisoner Suicides and Attempted Suicides	WA 242	New Chairperson and Chief Executive of Ilex	WA 160
Private Clamping of Cars	WA 246	Photographic Services to the Executive	WA 159
Reporting Restrictions on Court Cases	WA 239	Social Investment Fund	WA 163
Republican Separated Prisoners	WA 239	Special Ministerial Advisors	WA 159
Security Improvements at Dungannon Court House	WA 235	Tickets for the Jubilee Garden Party	WA 160
Test Purchasing of Alcohol from Off-Sales	WA 245	Time Limits for Answering Written Assembly Questions	WA 159
Youth Conference Orders	WA 244	Transgender Strategy	WA 163
Department of the Environment	WA 205		
Controls on the Use of Snares	WA 208		
Development of Private Roads	WA 205		
Flooding in the North Lisburn Area	WA 207		

Revised Written Answers

Friday 28 September 2012

(AQW 14033/11-15)

My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no plans, at present, to change the existing traffic management arrangements in this area. However, I understand that the proposed relocation of the University of Ulster, from its Jordanstown campus to a site in this general vicinity, may result in some changes to how these streets are used in the future.

In the shorter term, to deal with the temporary situation which has arisen due to extensive building works in the area, officials have advised me that some of the existing waiting restrictions have been removed. As a result, there has been an increase in on-street parking which has adversely impacted on local traffic movements. In order to allow enforcement of the restrictions to resume, officials have issued instructions for the necessary signs and road markings to be reinstated. I understand that this work will be completed by the end of September 2012.



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