

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 19 October 2012

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 19 October 2012

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in relation to the recruitment and appointment of the Maze Regeneration Board, to detail (i) the number of applicants for appointment; (ii) the number who were interviewed; and (iii) the community background figures for applicants, interviewees and those appointed.

(AQW 14129/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): The number of applicants deemed appointable by the Maze/Long Kesh Chair and Board member selection panel was 26.

There were 60 applicants interviewed for the Chair and Board member positions.

The community background figures are detailed in the table below.

| MLK Board Community Background | Catholic | Protestant | Other |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Applicants | 54 | 66 | 18 |
| At Interview | 21 | 29 | 10 |
| Those appointed | 5 | 6 | 0 |

Contested Spaces Programme

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the outcomes of the projects that were supported through the Contested Spaces Programme.

(AQW 14453/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We launched the Contested Space/Interface Programme in March 2011. It is a three-year Programme representing a total investment of £4m aimed at socially disadvantaged communities where there are interfaces or issues around contested space.

The following outcomes have been identified through the rolling programme of evaluation undertaken thus far across the five operational projects.

| Project | Outcomes |
|---|---|
| Achieving Personal Potential (APP) | <p>Improved numeracy & literacy skills and personal development amongst young people who could easily be drawn into anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Increased confidence in young people who may have low self-esteem and building of respect for themselves and for others from a different community background.</p> <p>Increased capacity amongst local community groups</p> <p>Increased cross-community trust between the organisations involved.</p> |
| Active Respectful Communities (ARC) Aspire | <p>Direct engagement in confronting difference through community relations programmes which are embedded in the curriculum.</p> <p>Increased capacity in teachers to deal safely with controversial issues.</p> <p>Better ability amongst parents to deal with issues which affect their communities (symbols and emblems, sectarianism, racism, homophobia and conflict).</p> <p>Support for parents living in interface communities which suffer significant disadvantage to engage in positive parenting and become partners with teachers in educating their children (co-educators).</p> <p>Social, educational and personal development support for parents which builds cross-community trust and lasting friendships.</p> <p>Parental involvement in the schools and their children's learning conducted through a cross-community approach</p> <p>Improved behaviour amongst children and, through early intervention better educational outcomes.</p> <p>An increase in confidence and self-esteem amongst parents and pupils</p> |
| Faces and Spaces | <p>Positive impact on respecting difference and promoting good relations amongst pre-school and primary school children.</p> <p>Promotion of an intergenerational approach to good relations.</p> |
| Foyle Contested Space | <p>Shared education outcomes based on core curriculum areas at both primary and post primary levels.</p> <p>Increased teacher capacity and stronger institutional links between schools, and between the community and schools.</p> <p>Children are better equipped to make informed lifestyle choices living in a contested space city.</p> <p>Stakeholders (children, teachers, parents, education managers, governors) travel through contested space, engaging in areas that previously would have been seen as hostile. Contested space becomes shared space.</p> |

A more definitive analysis of outcomes achieved across the projects will be available on completion of the overall evaluation at the end of the Programme lifetime.

Mini Economic Forum of Executive Ministers

Mr McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the decision was taken to hold a Mini Economic Forum of Executive Ministers on 13 September 2012, and when Ministers and Departments involved were informed of the forum.

(AQW 14578/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A meeting of the Economic Sub-Group was called in response to the news of recent job losses.

The decision to hold the meeting on 13 September was made on 12 September and relevant Ministers and Departments were informed that day.

Gender Equality Strategy

Mrs D Kelly asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they will review the Gender Equality Strategy; and to outline the terms of reference for the review.

(AQW 14931/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We aim to initiate the Gender Equality Review before the end of the year. Officials are currently reviewing the options for taking forward the Review and will shortly draw up draft terms of reference for our approval.

Unspent Funding Handed Back

Mr Rogers asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the unspent funding handed back and the potential for more to be handed back, whether the £80 million earmarked for the Social Investment Fund for the next four years will be spent.

(AQW 14980/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The delivery of the Social Investment Fund is a priority and we remain committed to ring fencing the £80 million to be spent during the first phase of the SIF.

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any member of the selection panel convened to appoint the Maze Regeneration Board held membership of a political party.

(AQW 15113/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments does not require panel members to declare membership of a political party.

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether any member of the selection panel convened to appoint the Maze Regeneration Board declared an interest, or otherwise declared any knowledge of, or association with, any of the applicants.

(AQW 15114/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Members of the selection panel convened to appoint the Maze Regeneration Board did declare if they had an interest, knowledge of, or association with applicants for the Chair and Board Members positions, in line with the guidance from the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many applicants there were for appointment to the Maze Regeneration Board (i) in the first interview process; and (ii) in the second interview process; and how many were interviewed on each occasion.

(AQW 15115/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: There were 70 applications received for the Chair and Board Member positions in the first interview process; 24 applicants went forward to the interview stage.

In the second interview process, 75 applications were received with 36 called to interview.

Maze Regeneration Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many applicants for appointment to the Maze Regeneration Board declared political activity at the first interview process.

(AQW 15116/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments states that the form recording political activity must only be issued by the Department to successful applicants once the Ministerial decision to appoint applicants is made.

We did not appoint any applicants at the time of the first interview process.

Strategic Support Fund

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the number of funded posts for each group that is in receipt of Strategic Support Fund monies for 2012/2013, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 15117/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A total of 112 full-time and 55 part-time posts are funded through the Strategic Support Fund across 48 groups for 2012/13. In addition to this, 6 full-time and 4 part-time posts which were unsuccessful in their applications for 2012/13 but had previously been funded were funded on a three-month exit basis.

A breakdown by constituency is not available; however, a breakdown by District Council area is set out in Annex A.

ANNEX A

SUCCESSFUL GROUPS

| Council /Group | F/T Posts | P/T posts |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Antrim Borough Council | | |
| Antrim Youth Information & Counselling centre | 0 | 2 |
| Armagh City & District Council | | |
| Crossfire Trust | 2 | 1 |
| Restorative Action Following on The Troubles | 1 | 2 |
| REACT | 1 | 1 |
| WAVE Trauma Centre Armagh | 5 | 0 |
| Ballymoney Borough Council | | |
| WAVE Trauma Centre Ballymoney | 3 | 3 |
| Belfast City Council | | |
| Haven Victim Support Group | 1 | 1 |
| Springhill Community House | 1 | 2 |
| Families Beyond Conflict | 1 | 1 |
| Survivors of Trauma | 3 | 0 |
| New Life Counselling Service | 4 | 0 |
| Holy Trinity Centre | 2 | 2 |

| Council /Group | F/T Posts | P/T posts |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Victims and Survivors Trust (VAST) | 2 | 0 |
| Corpus Christi Services | 2 | 6 |
| Ashton Community Trust | 7 | 0 |
| Relatives for Justice | 9 | 0 |
| Lenadoon Community Counselling Network | 1 | 3 |
| Colin Community Counselling Project | 1 | 2 |
| WAVE Trauma Centre Belfast | 12 | 1 |
| Centre for Health and Wellbeing | 1 | 1 |
| Coleraine Borough Council | | |
| Regimental Association of UDR | 1 | 0 |
| Craigavon Borough Council | | |
| HURT | 3 | 0 |
| Derry/Londonderry City Council | | |
| Aurora Counselling Services | 1 | 2 |
| C.A.L.M.S | 2 | 0 |
| Columba Celtic Heritage Support Services | 2 | 0 |
| Cunamh | 3 | 3 |
| Derry Well Woman | 2 | 0 |
| Have Your Tomorrows | 0 | 2 |
| WAVE Trauma Centre Derry | 2 | 3 |
| Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council | | |
| Peace Factory | 2 | 1 |
| Relatives for Justice | 1 | 0 |
| West Tyrone Voice | 2 | 0 |
| Fermanagh District Council | | |
| Aisling Centre | 2 | 1 |
| Ely Centre | 5 | 0 |
| Firinne | 2 | 0 |
| South East Fermanagh Foundation | 2 | 2 |
| Newry and Mourne District Council | | |
| Mourne Action for Survivors of Terrorism | 1 | 1 |
| Omagh District Council | | |
| Families Moving On | 1 | 1 |
| Omagh Support & Self Help Group | 2 | 0 |

| Council /Group | F/T Posts | P/T posts |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Tara Centre | 1 | 3 |
| WAVE Trauma Centre Omagh | 3 | 3 |
| Strabane District Council | | |
| The Koram Centre | 2 | 1 |
| Groups covering more than one Council area | | |
| Contact | 0 | 2 |
| Forum for Action Against Substance Abuse | 2 | 0 |
| NI Music Therapy Trust | 2 | 0 |
| NOVA | 4 | 1 |
| South Armagh Rural Women's Network | 1 | 1 |
| This group covers all Council districts | | |
| Ex Services Mental Welfare Society | 2 | 0 |
| Total | 112 | 55 |

THREE MONTH EXIT POSTS (UNSUCCESSFUL POSTS PREVIOUSLY FUNDED)

| Banbridge District Council | F/T Posts | P/T posts |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| South Down Action for Healing Wounds | 1 | 1 |
| Belfast City Council | | |
| Wider Circle | 2 | 0 |
| Derry/Londonderry City Council | | |
| Cunamh | 1 | 0 |
| Groups covering more than one Council area | | |
| HELP NI | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 5 | 2 |

Strategic Support Fund

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the level of funding allocated to groups working with victims and survivors under the 2012/2013 Strategic Support Fund, (a) in total; (b) broken down by each group; and (c) broken down by individual service category for each recipient group.

(AQW 15118/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A total of £6,853,354.71 was allocated under the Strategic Support Fund in 2012/13 across 50 Victims and Survivors Groups and 5 service categories; Mental Health and Well Being, Social Support, Personal and Professional Development, Truth Justice and Acknowledgement and Transgenerational and Young People.

Please see Table 1 attached for a breakdown of the level of funding allocated to each individual group by service category as requested.

TABLE 1

| Name of SSF Applicant | Total SSF Awards | Workplans | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| | | Mental Health & Well Being (MHAWB) | Social Support | Personal & Professional Development (PPD) | Truth Justice & Acknowledgement (TJA) | Transgenerational & Young People (TYP) |
| Aisling Centre | £69,994.42 | £8,320.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Antrim Youth Information & Counselling Centre | £33,559.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Ashton Community Trust | £424,311.44 | £84,000.00 | £0.00 | £74,858.00 | £11,925.00 | £0.00 |
| Aurora Counselling | £91,947.73 | £33,600.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| CALMS | £194,581.08 | £34,320.00 | £11,600.00 | £8,600.00 | £0.00 | £33,800.00 |
| Centre for Health and Well Being | £42,848.32 | £12,000.00 | £0.00 | £3,862.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Colin Community Counselling | £60,290.33 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Columba Celtic Heritage Support Services | £62,927.00 | £1,080.00 | £0.00 | £2,460.00 | £0.00 | £920.00 |
| Contact | £23,714.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Corpus Christi | £175,677.26 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Crossfire Trust | £122,471.66 | £0.00 | £24,724.00 | £0.00 | £4,398.00 | £10,526.00 |
| Cunamh | £172,490.39 | £6,900.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Derry Well Woman | £94,039.22 | £30,780.00 | £0.00 | £9,890.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Ely Centre | £259,902.36 | £22,500.00 | £37,522.00 | £6,660.00 | £23,675.00 | £28,268.00 |
| Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society | £81,642.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |

| Name of SSF Applicant | Total SSF Awards | Workplans | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| | | Mental Health & Well Being (MHAWB) | Social Support | Personal & Professional Development (PPD) | Truth Justice & Acknowledgement (TJA) | Transgenerational & Young People (TYP) |
| Families Beyond Conflict | £70,252.93 | £6,000.00 | £4,348.00 | £7,472.00 | £0.00 | £7,140.00 |
| Families Moving On | £126,887.98 | £9,000.00 | £16,836.00 | £3,740.00 | £9,490.00 | £16,080.00 |
| Firinne | £161,815.07 | £12,000.00 | £34,844.00 | £22,460.00 | £13,236.07 | £0.00 |
| Forum For Action on Substance Abuse (FASA) | £84,073.00 | £12,000.00 | £5,568.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £12,000.00 |
| HAVEN | £76,446.00 | £3,960.00 | £13,567.00 | £6,484.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Have Your Tomorrows | £43,916.40 | £20,650.00 | £0.00 | £790.00 | £0.00 | £10,700.00 |
| HELP NI | £14,074.61 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Holy Trinity Centre | £92,475.01 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| HURT | £197,530.00 | £26,640.00 | £25,788.00 | £0.00 | £8,820.00 | £40,632.00 |
| Koram Centre | £131,640.40 | £37,200.00 | £0.00 | £3,443.20 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Lenadoon Counselling Project | £78,739.89 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Mourne Action for Survivors of Terrorism (MAST) | £82,186.00 | £2,000.00 | £19,523.00 | £6,304.00 | £0.00 | £11,748.00 |
| New Life Counselling | £150,422.63 | £2,400.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| NI Music Therapy Ttrust | £76,891.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| NOVA | £120,293.00 | £1,300.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Omagh Support & Self Help Group | £139,953.38 | £12,000.00 | £23,798.00 | £0.00 | £15,400.00 | £0.00 |

| Name of SSF Applicant | Total SSF Awards | Workplans | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| | | Mental Health & Well Being (MHAWB) | Social Support | Personal & Professional Development (PPD) | Truth Justice & Acknowledgement (TJA) | Transgenerational & Young People (TYP) |
| Peace Factory | £156,168.80 | £19,860.00 | £22,728.00 | £5,385.00 | £1,650.00 | £20,772.00 |
| RAFT | £152,274.16 | £72,386.00 | £0.00 | £1,446.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| REACT | £99,989.00 | £16,300.00 | £27,890.00 | £2,610.00 | £4,170.00 | £0.00 |
| Regimental Association of UDR | £57,916.31 | £0.00 | £5,998.00 | £1,120.00 | £7,600.00 | £0.00 |
| Relatives for Justice | £545,715.26 | £72,540.00 | £46,148.00 | £23,960.00 | £5,845.00 | £31,534.00 |
| South Armagh Rural Women's Network | £80,930.30 | £1,500.00 | £17,059.00 | £7,925.00 | £700.00 | £0.00 |
| South Down Action for Healing Wounds | £13,893.49 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF) | £271,679.48 | £26,495.00 | £46,719.00 | £25,129.00 | £14,270.00 | £26,124.00 |
| Springhill Community House | £103,662.72 | £23,130.00 | £0.00 | £20,598.00 | £7,200.00 | £0.00 |
| Survivors of Trauma | £145,970.92 | £21,500.00 | £8,700.00 | £18,285.68 | £3,862.50 | £0.00 |
| Tara Centre | £112,437.14 | £19,000.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| Victims and Survivors Trust (VAST) | £142,181.86 | £18,414.00 | £15,612.00 | £2,676.00 | £4,240.00 | £6,510.00 |
| WAVE Armagh | £195,993.00 | £26,390.00 | £8,055.00 | £5,604.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| WAVE Ballymoney | £172,221.00 | £33,757.00 | £2,660.00 | £4,500.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| WAVE Belfast | £496,793.50 | £52,580.00 | £13,890.00 | £8,094.00 | £17,792.50 | £1,680.00 |
| WAVE Derry | £174,589.00 | £43,247.00 | £6,298.00 | £2,385.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |

| Name of SSF Applicant | Total SSF Awards | Workplans | | | | Transgenerational & Young People (TYP) |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| | | Mental Health & Well Being (MHAWB) | Social Support | Personal & Professional Development (PPD) | Truth Justice & Acknowledgement (TJA) | |
| WAVE Omagh | £243,288.00 | £88,420.00 | £2,848.00 | £2,510.00 | £785.00 | £0.00 |
| West Tyrone Voice | £113,045.36 | £7,500.00 | £28,552.00 | £5,760.00 | £4,750.00 | £0.00 |
| Wider Circle | £16,611.90 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £0.00 |
| | £6,853,354.71 | £921,669.00 | £471,275.00 | £295,010.88 | £159,809.07 | £258,434.00 |

Strategic Support Fund

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to list the groups which applied to the Strategic Support Fund but were unsuccessful in 2012/13; and to identify which of these groups had been in receipt of Strategic Support Fund monies in 2011/12.

(AQW 15119/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The following groups were unsuccessful in their applications to the Strategic Support Fund in 2012/13:

Cromac Regeneration Initiative;

- FAIR;
- Help NI;
- Kilcooley Women's Centre;
- Lifeways;
- South Down Action for Healing Wounds;
- Streetbeat;
- Teach na Failte;
- Westwinds;
- Wider Circle; and
- Youth Action NI.

Of these groups, three were funded under the Strategic Support Fund in 2011/12:

- Help NI;
- South Down Action for Healing Wounds; and
- Wider Circle.

Strategic Support Fund

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to list the groups which received Strategic Support Fund support under the 2012/2013 programme which had previously not availed of either the Strategic Support Fund in 2011/12, or the previous CORE funding scheme which was administered by the Community Relations Council.

(AQW 15120/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The following groups received funding under the Strategic Support Fund in 2012/13 and had not previously availed of either the Strategic Support Fund in 2011/12, or the previous CORE funding scheme administered by the Community Relations Council:

- Centre for Health and Well Being;
- Crossfire Trust;
- FASA;
- Have Your Tomorrows; and
- South Armagh Rural Women's Network.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Farmers Income

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department intends to take to increase the income of farmers.

(AQW 14914/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): My Department will continue to do what it can to support producers and is involved in a range of initiatives to help farmers produce and market high quality produce and to maximise their income.

Under the competitiveness measures of the Rural Development Programme, my Department provides funding of £45m for a number of measures aimed at supporting restructuring, development and innovation in farming. Measures include the Focus Farm Programme, Benchmarking, Farm Family Options, Farm Modernisation and the Supply Chain Development Programme – all of which are designed to inform farmers and support them in the business decisions they make to maximise incomes.

In the area of animal health, I am pleased with the progress being made that will help to reduce costs for producers and increase trading opportunities. Our active work on tackling animal health issues, in partnership with the industry, is an example of where we can start to make a real impact on the profitability and competitiveness of our farms – crucial in these difficult economic times.

Farmers can also benefit from the ongoing programme of research undertaken by the Agri Food Biosciences Institute and obtain advice on farm management and planning through CAFRE.

In addition to the actions that my Department is already taking I also recently announced a new measure to support the farming sector.

I have decided not to apply a further year of voluntary modulation for the 2013 Single Farm Payment year. This will have the effect of adding an additional €19m - about £15m at today's exchange rate - to the total funding available for the 2013 Single Farm Payment. This is money directly into farming pockets through next year's SFP. This will provide some much needed additional income for farmers in their 2013 SFP payments and will help stimulate the rural communities in which farmers live and spend their money.

Unfortunately, a lot of the issues affecting farming incomes, such as pricing and global markets, are beyond our control. My Department will however continue to offer advice and assistance to the sector in these difficult times to ensure they are operating in the most efficient and cost-effective way they can.

Glenariffe Forest

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans the Forest Service has to involve the community in the Glens in helping to design the Glenariffe Forest for local benefit and for the purposes of tourism.

(AQW 14939/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Key to the continued development of community involvement in forest-based tourism is the establishment and maintenance of working partnerships with local government. These partnerships will aim to ensure that forests play as full a role as possible in supporting regional and local recreational and tourism agendas.

Senior Forest Service officials recently met Moyle District Council officers to discuss the importance of forests in the Moyle area for tourism development and invited the officers to consider whether a formal relationship between Forest Service and the Council would be of help to them. If that is the preferred way forward then Forest Service would naturally look to the Council to take the lead role in developing

plans to improve the tourism contribution from Glenariffe and other forests for the benefit of the local community.

Rivers Agency's Offer to Supply Sandbags Free of Charge

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development which councils did not take up Rivers Agency's recent offer to supply sandbags free of charge.

(AQW 14966/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Rivers Agency has been working closely with those councils in the Greater Belfast Area most affected by the June flooding. The sandbag protocol being developed between these councils and the drainage authorities has not yet been fully rolled out across all council areas, and it is therefore not appropriate to list councils at this stage of the process as having not taken up the offer. However I can confirm that Belfast City Council has agreed to hold a stockpile of sandbags on its premises and either Belfast City Council or Rivers Agency can deliver/deploy these during flood emergencies as required. As well as Belfast City Council 5 other councils affected by the June flooding have indicated they may be willing to deploy sandbags to members of the public, or community collection points as directed by Rivers Agency. Namely Castelreagh Borough Council, North Down Borough Council, Lisburn City Council, Down District Council and Ards Borough Council. Rivers Agency will continue to work with the remaining councils, some of which have provided storage facilities for the Rivers Agency.

Increased Sentences for Animal Cruelty

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in light of the Assembly's support for increased sentences for animal cruelty, what action her Department intends to take.

(AQW 14972/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Until the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 has been fully tested in the Courts and has been given the opportunity to be fully implemented by DARD in relation to farmed animals and by Councils in relation to other animals, I remain firmly of the view that the penalties contained within the Act should not be amended at this time.

During the Debate I made my position very clear and stated that I strongly support tough penalties for animal welfare offences and the full use of the newly extended sentences introduced by the Welfare of Animals Act 2011.

As I said during the Debate, I want the new Welfare of Animals Act to be given sufficient time to bed down before any modifications are made to it. I believe that this is important not only for DARD but also for Councils and the PSNI who also have enforcement powers under the Act. The Courts must also be afforded the opportunity to apply the Act as it is a matter for the Judiciary to decide the penalties applicable in each case.

I would point out that I am seeking meetings with the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Education on a number of matters which were raised during the Debate.

For the reasons that I have outlined above I therefore do not propose to implement the Assembly's Resolution to extend the sentences under the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 at this time.

Countryside Management Scheme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many payments, under the Countryside Management Scheme, have been made before the 1 October 2012; and how many payments remain outstanding.

(AQW 14982/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department makes Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) payments on an on-going basis. CMS is claimed throughout the year around the anniversary date of the agreement and funding of approximately £20 million is paid annually to participants in this Scheme.

The new Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS) is claimed annually on the Single Application Form. Table 1 summarises NICMS payments at 1 October 2012.

TABLE 1 NICMS PAYMENTS AT 1 OCTOBER 2012

| Claim year | Payments | Payments Outstanding |
|------------|----------|----------------------|
| 2009 | 937 | 0 |
| 2010 | 901 | 15 |
| 2011 | 54 | 853 |

It is an EU requirement that all scheme inspections must be complete before payments can begin. NICMS inspections were completed in late August and the first batch of 54 payments for 2011 NICMS claims were approved for processing on 27 September. By 8 October 2012 there were 106 payments sent to the Bankers' Automated Clearing Services (BACS) system for payment. Once a payment has been entered into BACS it takes up to 10 working days for the claimant to receive the money.

Relocation to Ballykelly

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what is the cost to her Department of relocating to Ballykelly.

(AQW 15007/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The estimated cost of providing modern office accommodation for headquarters staff is £26m. It follows that by using the Executive-owned site, and utilising the buildings on the site, there is potential to reduce that cost significantly.

I have directed my officials to produce a business case detailing the options available at Ballykelly. The final cost of the project will be dependent upon the agreed configuration.

Department Headquarters in Ballykelly

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an estimate of the number of staff in her Department who do not wish to relocate to the new departmental headquarters in Ballykelly.

(AQW 15008/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Department has currently around 800 permanent posts in its offices at Dundonald House and Hydebank, which will be affected by the relocation of the new headquarters at Ballykelly. The Department has not yet assessed the number of staff who do not wish to relocate to the new headquarters in Ballykelly.

Welfare of Animals Legislation

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline how her Department will assess whether the new welfare of animals legislation will lead to more convictions and will prove successful, given that the data sets on the number of convictions in the past are not comparable.

(AQW 15050/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Welfare of Animals Act 2011 is enforced by my Department in relation to farmed animals and by Councils in relation to other animals.

My Department's Veterinary Service maintains records of the cases that it prosecutes regarding farmed animals.

Regarding data relating to other animals, I have sought input from the Department of Justice who have informed me that whilst work is ongoing on the datasets that they maintain, convictions data from 27 November 2009 onwards will be coming from a single comparable source, which will facilitate the evaluation of the introduction of the new Welfare of Animals Act 2011.

The Department of Justice encountered technical difficulties in translating files from legacy systems in producing sentencing and convictions data beyond 2006. An alternative source for convictions data was used from 1

January 2007 to 26 November 2009. Whilst this data is subject to rigorous quality checks, caution must always be used in making direct comparisons using data from different management information systems.

Grants for Breathing Apparatus

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she is considering the provision of grants for breathing apparatus for farmers with slurry tanks.

(AQW 15232/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Current HSENI advice is any person who enters a slurry tank must wear breathing apparatus with its own air supply. Such work is a specialist operation and is best left to fully trained competent contractors. They must be properly trained to use the equipment. The equipment must be regularly maintained, and the person entering the tank must be connected by harness and lifeline to two people outside the tank.

I will give serious consideration to any recommendations from the Farm Safety Partnership in the short and medium term to fund or resource any proposals that will improve health and safety on our farms. If there is a further tranche of the FMP we will consult with stakeholders on safety items which could be included specifically in relation to slurry tank mixing and will consider if they can be financed under this Programme.

The recent tragic events only confirm my belief that Health and Safety awareness must be incorporated into the day to day activities of the entire farm family. My Department is working through the Farm Safety Partnership to deliver a health and safety message at the start of each Focus Farm meeting as well as distributing advisory leaflets prepared by HSENI and allocating space for HSENI display at the large scale Greenmount open days. My Department is also working closely with HSENI to develop a new health and safety short course directed towards the farming family and I am keen for this to progress as quickly as possible.

DARD Headquarters

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why the St Patrick's Barracks site was not considered as a potential site for the new DARD headquarters, given the comparisons to the Ballykelly site, and the fact that Ballymena is described as a hub in the Bain Report.

(AQW 15238/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In relation to the decision to relocate to Ballykelly, there were a number of steps taken before reaching my final decision. The first stage in the process was to develop a long list of potential locations. The list was taken from the new Regional Development Strategy. Using the 23 local government districts my officials scored each against a defined set of criteria. This included 9 different socio-economic factors considering such things as unemployment levels, deprivation and earnings levels, as well as practical considerations such as the number of public sector and civil service jobs already sited in the area.

While Ballymena was included in the longlist, the top two areas following the analysis were both in the North West. Flowing from that analysis it was the availability of the Executive-owned site at Shackleton Barracks at one of those top two areas and the availability of buildings on that site which could potentially be converted to office accommodation that led to my decision that Ballykelly should be the site for the relocation. Using this site and the buildings available has the potential to reduce the cost of this relocation from the £26m that is the estimated cost of a new build.

In my view the relocation of the DARD headquarters represents an important first step to relocate a significant share of public sector jobs and could pave the way for a much larger programme of

relocation in the public sector. It would naturally greatly enhance the economic and social development of rural communities and bring a greater realisation of the outcomes envisaged by Bain.

Farmers: Financial Assistance

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) when farmers will receive the additional £15 million, made available by reducing the amount of modulation money; and (ii) to what scheme/programme the £15 million was allocated before this decision was taken.

(AQW 15394/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The additional €19m (roughly £15m at current exchange rates) that I have made available to farmers as a result of my decision not to apply voluntary modulation in 2013 relates to the 2013 Single Farm Payment scheme year. These payments are due to commence in December 2013.

The €19m is part of the overall budget available for Single Farm Payment in 2013. Before this decision was taken it was not allocated to any scheme or programme within either the current or next Rural Development Programme. The funds available through the application of voluntary modulation in 2013 would only have been available to the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme for which the budget is not yet known.

NI Countryside Management Scheme

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why Orchard House, Londonderry, has been instructed to stop the payment of NI Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS) monies by her Department, after it was stated that all NICMS inspections were complete and payments had commenced in September and would be completed by early November.

(AQW 15522/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Staff in Orchard House have not been instructed to stop making NICMS payments. Following the completion of inspections, payment processing for 2011 claims has been on-going since September 2012. At 8 October 2012, 106 payments had been processed out of 903 claims. The speed at which payments progress depends on a number of issues including the number of queries that arise during claim validation and the possible need to carry out additional inspections to meet EU requirements. The on-going payment of claims will continue into November and the timescale for completion of payment may be affected by the requirement to complete additional inspections. Claims cannot be paid until my Department is satisfied that all work claimed has been completed to the required standard.

Farm Safety

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Executive, is taking to raise awareness of farm safety issues.

(AQO 2665/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department has joined with the Health & Safety Executive NI and the Ulster Farmers' Union (UFU) to form the Farm Safety Partnership which I launched with Minister Foster in May of this year.

Since it was formed the Partnership has been working to improve farm safety. This work has included:-

DARD

- The training of 58 Focus Farmers to deliver a short health and safety message as part of their on farm training session to the 3,500 farmers that visit Focus Farms each year;
- The delivery of a short health and safety message at all CAFRE training events. CAFRE, is also distributing advisory leaflets prepared by HSENI, at large scale Greenmount open days.

Health and Safety Executive NI

- HSENI continues to carry out farm safety inspections, and has organised practical health and safety demonstrations at a number of major regional agricultural shows. HSENI is also planning to undertake an intensive four week programme of visits during November to deliver key health and safety messages directly to farms.

Ulster Farmers' Union

- The UFU 2012/2013 Winter Programme will focus heavily on farm safety with the aim of raising awareness of the importance of sensible and practical health and safety to its 12,000 members. The first event was held on the 1 October with others scheduled between now and March next year.

I am acutely aware that 41 farmers, farm workers, or members of farm families have died on our farms since April 2007 and I want to take this opportunity to extend my sincere condolences to all of the families that have lost loved ones. This stark statistic only serves to reinforce the need for my Department to work with the Health and Safety Executive and the Ulster Farmers' Union to reduce and ultimately bring a halt to work related fatalities on our farms.

All-island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on progress with the All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy.

(AQO 2666/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Full co-operation on animal health issues on the island of Ireland has the potential to help reduce and prevent animal disease spread, to facilitate trade and to improve the sustainability of farming in the north.

The All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy was agreed by Ministers at the North South Ministerial Council in March 2010 as part of a commitment to closer co-operation. The ultimate objective of the Strategy is to facilitate trade through the free movement of animals on the island. This will be done by optimising the animal health status of the island through alignment of policies to control animal disease.

The practical outworkings of the Strategy have included taking a joint approach to protecting the island from the threat of animal diseases through liaison on policies to prevent the introduction of animal disease, and co-operation on contingency planning in the event of disease outbreaks.

Agreement of the Strategy signalled the start of formally working with Dublin, London and Brussels towards the objective of free movement of animals. The European Commission is developing proposals for a new Animal Health Law which is intended to simplify legislation and provide for a more animal disease prevention-driven approach. Within the new Animal Health Law, which we expect to be published early in 2013, The Commission is considering some relaxation of conditions for movement of animals between Member States, in accordance with the assessment of risk. On-going co-operation on this issue therefore seeks to shape the Animal Health Law as this could help to secure and deliver the All-Island Strategy's key objective.

Progress on the actions to deliver the Strategy is reported at NSMC Agriculture meetings. At the meeting in July, Ministers welcomed the submission to the EU by both Departments of the applications for Aujeszky's Disease free status, a successful joint cross-border contingency plan mapping exercise and the continued liaison on the Commission's proposed new EU Animal Health Law.

Young People: Rural Areas

Ms Fearon asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department is taking to assist young people in rural areas.

(AQO 2667/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Young people are vital to the long-term growth and sustainability of our Rural Areas and I am supporting rural young people through a variety of programmes and measures being delivered by my Department.

Under Axis 3 of the RDP 2007-13 the Department is committed to spend at least 5% of the Axis 3 budget on projects which benefit children and young people and to date 13.8% of grant paid to all completed projects is to those recorded as benefiting children and young people. The Farm Family Options programme under Axis 1 of the RDP is providing business mentoring and skills training to farmers and farm family members aged 17 and over to assist them identify and consider opportunities for both their own future and that of the farm business. Through the Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework, my department is supporting two rural youth initiatives aimed at increasing employability and promoting entrepreneurship - the Youth Employability Programme and the Rural Youth Entrepreneurship (RYE) Programme. The Rural Challenge Programme 2012 has Children and Young People as a target beneficiary group and will provide grants up to £10,000 to address localised poverty or social isolation issues.

My Department is also providing a 3 year grant support to the Young Farmers' Clubs to engagement with other organisations. Through CAFRE we continue to provide education and training for young people entering the Agri-Food Industry.

I am confident that, through the variety of actions and initiatives being undertaken by my Department, we will continue to develop our young people so as to contribute positively to the economic, social and environmental growth and sustainability of our rural areas.

Agriculture: Renewable Energy

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action she intends to take to help the agriculture sector to contribute to the government target of producing 40 percent of electric and 10 percent of heat from renewable sources by 2020.

(AQO 2668/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am keen to see the agriculture sector make a significant contribution to the targets of 40% of electricity and 10% of heat should come from renewable sources. My department contributed to the Strategic Energy Framework document which defined these targets. In 2010, my department published its Renewable Energy Action Plan (REAP) which outlined our priorities in this area and defined how DARD intends to encourage the growth of renewable energy technologies on-farm. The actions outlined in this plan include:-

- increasing awareness of the benefits of renewable energy amongst the agricultural sector;
- providing renewable energy training to increase the skills base amongst the local farming industry;
- supporting a programme of scientific research at AFBI to inform business decisions amongst the farming industry and to add to the local knowledge base;
- supporting the construction of renewable energy technologies through the Biomass Processing Challenge Fund.

The REAP is encompassed within OFMDFM's Sustainable Development Strategy, as well as DETI's Strategic Energy Framework and Sustainable Energy Action Plan. I want to ensure the Action Plan is as effective as possible and is updated regularly to react to change. I have asked an external group of stakeholders to review my department's progress and to make further recommendations to add value to the process. I have also supported other renewable energy technologies such as wind turbines and solar panels through the Rural Development Programme.

National Ploughing Championships

Mr Anderson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the total cost to her Department for attendance at the 2012 National Ploughing Championships in the Republic of Ireland.

(AQO 2669/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: At this stage the costs for attendance at the 2012 National Ploughing Championships at New Ross, County Wexford, have not been finalised.

The estimated cost including staff costs will be around £30,000.

I will write to you when all costs have been finalised.

Fishing: Strangford Lough

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what progress has been made in extending the restriction zone for fishing in Strangford Lough.

(AQO 2670/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I approved the introduction of "The Strangford Lough (Sea Fishing Exclusion Zones) Regulations on 2 of October. The ARD committee considered the Regulations on 9 October and agreed that they should proceed to the next legislative stage.

As the regulations are cross cutting, Executive approval is required under the Ministerial Code. My intention is that this will be obtained during November 2012 with the Regulations coming into operation as soon as possible thereafter.

The regulations will prohibit all sea fishing from fishing boats, with the exception of fishing by rod and line, within two zones at a depth marked as deeper than 10 metres on Charts. The first covers the area identified as containing horse mussel reef in the Modiolus Restoration Group Report. The second smaller area covers Green Island Passage.

National Ploughing Championships

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the benefits of the National Ploughing Championships in Co Wexford for local businesses.

(AQO 2671/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The National Ploughing Championships is the largest outdoor agricultural show in Europe with an attendance of around 200,000 visitors. It provides huge opportunities for promoting goods and services and developing new markets and sales across the island of Ireland and further afield. This year saw a 20% increase in the number of exhibitors from last year to over 1,200. Over 90 of these businesses and organisations were from the North and most of these are regular exhibitors. This, I believe demonstrates the commercial benefits of attending this event.

While it is not possible to put a figure on the commercial benefits to businesses from the North, from exhibiting at the championships, I have visited a number of them over the past two years while attending the championships and they are very clear that this is a good place to do business.

I am also delighted that through my Department's attendance at the event I can support a number of small rural businesses to access new markets.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Cost of the Event in Custom House Square

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the cost of the event in Custom House Square to mark the first year since the launch of the Líofo initiative; and from where in her departmental budget it was funded.

(AQW 13899/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Líofo Birthday event at Custom House Square cost £17,972. This funding will be met from within the Department's Líofo budget.

Funding for Irish League Football Clubs

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on funding for Irish League football clubs.

(AQW 14410/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The IFA, with the help of SportNI, are developing a draft Strategic Outline Case (SOC) outlining the areas where sub-regional funding might be required. I understand that this draft SOC will be considered by the IFA at its next board meeting at the end of October 2012. Subject to IFA Board approval the draft will then be taken to the SportNI Board, scheduled for 13 November 2012, for their consideration.

Subject to SportNI Board approval the SOC will then formally be submitted to DCAL for consideration.

Protestant Band Culture

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action her Department intends to take to promote the Protestant band culture.

(AQW 14616/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department does not recognise the term/designation 'Protestant Band culture'.

Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to the Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013, why no sporting, cultural or artistic events will be held outside the Derry City Council area and no such events will be included in the Programme of Events, given that the Culture Company, and others, consulted with local authorities across the North West on the benefits for the region.

(AQW 14693/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The Culture Company 2013 Ltd have developed a Cultural Programme of activities and events which are designed to achieve specific benefits in 2013 and contribute to a legacy for the City and region.

Target outcomes have been set to 2020 including increase in number of jobs, skills building, changing perceptions of the City, increasing attendance at cultural events and attracting more visitors.

While, Cultural Programme events will be concentrated in Derry, opportunities to develop complementary events and derive economic benefits have been discussed with neighbouring Councils.

For example Culture Company is engaged with a community project in Bready, with Strabane Ethnic Community, a number of events in a cross-border partnership with Donegal and an event called "On Home Ground" which will take place in South Derry and will be featured in the Cultural Programme. Culture Company has also been working with the Rural Development Fund which has a consortium of representatives from Limavady, Omagh, Strabane and Derry Council areas.

Councils should develop their own projects and encourage local arts organisations, accommodation providers and so on to maximise the opportunities presented by the City of Culture year.

Opportunities to avail of funding include schemes run by the Culture Company, for example the Music Promise Small Grants awards for music projects based in and around the Derry area: [http://www.cityofculture2013.com/Get-Involved/be-part-of-it/Music-Promise-Small-Grants-\(MPSG\)-Award.aspx](http://www.cityofculture2013.com/Get-Involved/be-part-of-it/Music-Promise-Small-Grants-(MPSG)-Award.aspx)

NITB and Big Lottery Fund, in partnership with Arts Council also offer small grants which target projects whose objectives complement the City of Culture plans and outcomes. Further information can be found on their websites.

The Great Escape Event

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what financial, or other, support The Great Escape event at the Culturlann Uí Chanáin centre in Londonderry received from her Department or its arm's-length bodies.

(AQW 15018/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department and its arm's length bodies did not provide financial, or other, support for the Great Escape event at the Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin Centre.

Culturlann Uí Chanáin Centre in Londonderry

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much the Culturlann Uí Chanáin centre in Londonderry has received in public money in each year since opening.

(AQW 15019/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Since its opening in September 2009 Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin has received the following funding through my department:

ARTS COUNCIL

| Year | Amount |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 2009/2010 | 113,500.00 |
| 2010/2011 | 137,000.00 |
| 2011/2012 | 137,000.00 |
| 2012/2013 | 143,850.00 |
| Total | £531,350 |

FORAS NA GAEILGE

| Year* | Amount |
|--------------|-----------------|
| 2009 | £134,700 |
| 2010 | £135,817 |
| 2011 | £147,469 |
| 2012 | £156,642 |
| Total | £574,628 |

* Year runs January - December

Limavady Council through the Community Festivals Fund provided a small sum of funding of approximately £500 or below in each of the years 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12. This sum included the Council's match funding.

Filming Locations

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in light of the success of the film and television industry, whether she would consider meeting with the Minister for Regional Development to discuss and ensure that areas that are used as filming locations, which are also of considerable character or heritage, such as Rugby Road in South Belfast, are preserved so that film crews will want to use them in the future.

(AQW 15130/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have been informed that the Minister of Regional Development is aware of concerns raised by residents over his Department's proposal to resurface the carriageway and footways of Rugby Road.

I have also been informed that, in light of this, the scheme has been postponed and his Department's Roads Service is engaging further with the residents and their representatives in an effort to address the concerns raised.

A meeting at this stage would be premature.

Culture Company

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when and how she became aware of the decision by the City Council in Londonderry to assume control of the marketing function of the Culture Company.

(AQW 15219/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I became aware of this decision on 4 October 2012 through a media enquiry submitted to my Department.

Northern Ireland Screen: Funding

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding her Department has provided to Northern Ireland Screen in each of the last five years; and how has the funding been distributed by Northern Ireland Screen.

(AQW 15236/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has provided the following funding to NI Screen in each of the last five years:

| | £ |
|-------|-----------|
| 07/08 | 1,850,997 |
| 08/09 | 1,470,987 |
| 09/10 | 1,449,960 |
| 10/11 | 1,375,702 |
| 11/12 | 1,779,179 |

This funding has been distributed as follows:

| Distribution of Income | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 |
|---------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| NI Screen direct resource spend | 291,445 | 488,628 | 469,960 | 291,684 | 513,941 |
| Amma Centre | 117,667 | 93,750 | 93,750 | 93,750 | 101,160 |
| Belfast Film Festival | 54,000 | 54,000 | 54,000 | 63,950 | 120,000 |
| Cinemagic | 150,000 | 110,000 | 110,000 | 140,000 | 161,556 |
| Cinemobile | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 29,795 | 9,800 |
| Nerve Centre | 367,992 | 268,750 | 266,250 | 304,800 | 288,444 |
| Northern Visions | 344,000 | 105,000 | 105,000 | 105,000 | 50,000 |
| QFT | 81,000 | 81,000 | 81,000 | 90,800 | 81,000 |

| Distribution of Income | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Studio On | 434,893 | 238,846 | 240,000 | 245,923 | 445,278 |
| Early Years | | | | | 8,000 |
| University Ulster | | 21,013 | 20,000 | 10,000 | |
| Total | 1,850,997 | 1,470,988 | 1,449,960 | 1,375,702 | 1,779,179 |

Northern Ireland Screen

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether there is an entry level for film makers funded by Northern Ireland Screen.

(AQW 15241/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Screen has a number of funding programmes open to all applicants who meet the criteria attached to each; its Individual Production Scheme is open to entry level filmmakers.

Northern Ireland Screen's Individual Development Programme

Mr Humphrey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the recipients of Northern Ireland Screen's Individual Development Programme in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15246/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Details of the recipients of Screen's Individual Development Programme Awards are as follows:

2009/10

| Project Title | Applicant Name | Award (£) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Arcade | Peter Curran | 2,250 |
| Gaia | Tom Johnstone | 2,250 |
| Here Before | Stacey Gregg | 2,250 |
| Land of Ire | Quentin Devine | 2,250 |
| Mis-understood Appearances | Cecilia McAllister | 2,250 |
| Sympathy for the Devil | Kieran Doherty | 2,250 |
| Taking Stock | Maeve Murphy | 2,250 |
| The Amazing Donna | Dave Kinghan | 2,250 |
| The Book of Daniel | Paula Clamp | 2,250 |
| The Cyclist | Steven Benson | 2,250 |
| The Night Before | Terence McKenna | 2,250 |
| Two Nice Girls | Verity Peet | 2,250 |
| Wee Buns - Individual | Christine Murphy | 2,250 |
| Wolves in the City | Jonathan Haren | 2,250 |
| Women on the Verge of HRT | Marie Jones | 2,250 |
| | Total | 33,750 |

2010/11

| Project Title | Applicant Name | Award (£) |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Ring Theory | Joseph Campo | 2,250 |
| Pilgrimage | Chris Boyle | 2,250 |
| Interface | Marcus Corkerell | 2,250 |
| Titanic 3D Model | George Herron | 2,250 |
| The Countdown | Stuart Drennan | 2,250 |
| Blood Moon | Paul Kennedy | 2,250 |
| | Total | 13,500 |

2011/12

| Project Title | Applicant Name | Award (£) |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Priests And Robbers | Terence Barry | 2,250 |
| Knights In Shining Armour | Niraj Kapur | 2,250 |
| The Wrath | Richard O'Rawe | 2,250 |
| Tout | Emer Catherine Gillespie | 2,250 |
| Havanna Blades | Pearse Elliot | 2,250 |
| Sent by an Angel | Lee Dunne | 2,250 |
| Gentle Rise and Fall | Ewen Glass | 2,250 |
| Minds Eye | Andrew Parkhill | 2,250 |
| She Sells Her Love | Malachy Campbell | 2,250 |
| High Lows | Alessio Zanin | 2,250 |
| SCALP | Gavin Patton | 2,250 |
| Two Dogs Caged | Jonathan Waite | 2,250 |
| 6.2 | Robert James | 2,250 |
| Happy Birthday Dad | Caoimhe McLaughlin Mclvor | 2,250 |
| We were Here | Paula McFetridge | 2,250 |
| Hearth | Laura Graham | 2,250 |
| Don Eugenio | Martin McCann | 2,250 |
| Vampire Dawn | Philip Henry | 2,250 |
| Stroke City | Len Collin | 2,250 |
| Even | Richard McMahon | 2,250 |
| The Long Way Home | Stephen Don | 2,250 |
| The Emigrant's Farewell | Liam Browne | 2,250 |
| Beyond The Ropes | Sean Duncan | 2,250 |
| | Total | 51,750 |

Business Case for Brandywell Stadium

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what progress has been made on the business case for Brandywell Stadium.

(AQW 15350/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am aware that Derry City Council have produced a Business Case to examine options for the development of the Brandywell Stadium, Brandywell Showgrounds and the Daisyfield.

I have written to Derry City Council to explain that Government funding is not currently available to support stadium development at sub regional level.

By way of background, a process has been put in place to take forward sub-regional stadium development should funding become available at that time. The IFA, with the help of SportNI, are developing a draft Strategic Outline Case (SOC) outlining the areas where sub-regional funding might be required. This will provide initial statements of strategic aims, business needs and project objectives. Once completed the SOC will be considered by the Department and DFP who assess if the proposals merit the production of Outline Business Cases (OBC) for the various projects within the sub-regional development programme. These OBCs will be used to inform possible bids for funding in the next CSR period.

Nevertheless, I have suggested that Derry City Council meet with DCAL Sports Branch officials and SportNI representatives to discuss the Showgrounds and Daisyfield aspects of the planned development which have specific socio-economic and equality implications beyond sub regional stadium considerations.

Athletes from Northern Ireland

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what action her Department is taking to ensure that athletes from Northern Ireland can compete for the nation of their choice.

(AQW 15430/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is fully supportive of the principle that athletes from the north of Ireland can compete for the nation of their choice. Partly for that reason, the Department, through Sport NI, provides support to local athletes to enable them to meet the performance standards necessary to qualify for international competition.

However, athletes must also meet the required eligibility and selection criteria of the sports concerned. This will vary across the sports and will be dependant on the affiliation structures within the sport, the rules and processes of their governing organisations, and the rules, eligibility and selection criteria applied by the competition organising committees.

City of Culture 2013

Mr Ó hOisín asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how the initial programme, as envisaged by Culture Company 2013 Ltd, will best serve the North West region.

(AQO 2678/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: City of Culture 2013 is shaping up to be an exciting year with opportunities for the Derry and the North West region of Ireland to benefit both in the short and longer term.

Not only will local people have the opportunity to attend international events like the Turner Prize and All Ireland Fleadh on their doorstep, but the City of Culture will bring a huge increase in overseas visitors to the area, build capacity in local organisations and it will boost local skills and job opportunities for people in and around Derry.

The Culture Company are engaged with partners in neighbouring council areas to make sure that the opportunities presented are fully exploited.

2013 provides an opportunity for community and arts organisations across the North West to arrange events which will persuade visitors to stay longer and explore the North West. Local businesses are also being encouraged to gear up to provide accommodation and tourism services for visitors during 2013.

Ulster-Scots Agency

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of corporate governance at the Ulster-Scots Agency.

(AQO 2679/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The 2010 annual assurance statement given by the Ulster-Scots Agency's Internal Auditors was a rating of satisfactory. The internal audit review for 2011 will be completed shortly and the outcome is expected to be consistent with the 2010 rating.

Throughout the year monitoring meetings are held between the Agency and Sponsor Departments enabling the Chief Executive and his senior officials to report on progress against performance in relation to corporate governance issues. This also affords the sponsor departments the opportunity to seek the CEO's personal assurances and allow any issue to be challenged in respect of corporate governance.

Lough Neagh: Fish Stocks

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the fish stocks in Lough Neagh.

(AQO 2680/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Currently DCAL has information on stock levels of eels in Lough Neagh and salmon migrating to some rivers off the Lough in line with commitments to the EU Eel Management Plans and the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO).

Records conclude that salmon populations in the Rivers Maine and Blackwater, which both flow into Lough Neagh, are failing to consistently achieve conservation limits and are outside safe biological limits.

Scientific advice received from the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) concerning the European eel, concludes that the European eel stock as a whole is outside safe biological limits. Robust estimates of what represents 40% of pristine eel escapement for Lough Neagh have been developed as required by the EC eel regulation.

The status of the population of migratory trout in Lough Neagh is unknown at present. My Department has commissioned the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) to produce a trout stock status report for the DCAL area, including Lough Neagh and its catchment. This is currently in draft form and will be published in due course.

There is currently no data on populations of pollan, roach, rudd, bream, rudd/roach/bream hybrids, pike, perch, tench, stone loach, gudgeon, minnow and stickleback which make up coarse fish present in Lough Neagh.

AFBI has also engaged a PhD student to carry out other research on Lough Neagh that, when completed, will provide information on the location and population levels of fish species in the Lough. The results of this will be published in due course.

Sport: Youth Participation

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the recent figures relating to youth participation in sport.

(AQO 2681/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The figures published by my Department in March 2012, which are based on the findings of NISRA's 2010 Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey (YPBAS), are the most up to date and reliable figures relating to youth participation in sport. YPBAS is a school based survey carried out among 11-16 year olds. It found that nearly all the young people surveyed (99.5%) reported that they had participated in sport or physical activity in the previous 12 months and 97% had participated in the previous 7 days. These figures would suggest that good progress is being made on the implementation of my Department's strategy for sport, Sport Matters, in terms of those actions and targets aimed at young people.

Líofa 2015

Mr G Kelly asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on her Department's Líofa campaign.

(AQO 2682/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: So far, over 2,900 people have signed up to the Líofa challenge, this is a tremendous achievement.

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.

Recently my Department organised a Líofa Birthday event at Custom House Square to celebrate Líofa's first birthday and the success of the initiative as a whole. It is estimated that over 2000 people attended the event which reflects the interest and awareness of the Líofa campaign.

The Líofa initiative has been successful in breaking down the barriers and preconceptions which have surrounded the Irish Language, and opening Irish up to everyone.

Ulster Scots: Reserved Matters

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what engagement she has had with Ministers in Westminster on reserved matters, such as broadcasting, in relation to Ulster Scots culture and heritage.

(AQO 2683/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have had no specific discussions with Ministers in Westminster about Ulster Scots culture and heritage but I wrote to Ed Vaizey Broadcasting Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries in May and reiterated that I believe that culture has a significant role to play in helping communities in the North to understand each other and to understand how we move forward as a more cohesive and integrated society.

At the moment my focus is on local consultation for indigenous language. I am looking forward to what the two strategy consultations will yield

once they close on 27 November. I will then need to consider the way forward and broadcasting is likely to be an element.

Boxing: Sectarianism

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of the report compiled by Sandy Row Amateur Boxing Club detailing sectarian abuse within the sport.

(AQO 2684/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am aware of the report compiled by Sandy Row Amateur Boxing Club (SRABC) and of the allegations detailing sectarian abuse contained within the document. I deplore any form of sectarianism or racism in sport which is entirely contrary to Government's wider commitment to promote community cohesion in sport within the context of a Shared Future. For that reason, I have

asked, on several occasions, to meet with SRABC to discuss their concerns. To date the club has not taken up this offer, which remains open to them. Until that happens it is not possible to offer a full assessment of the report. I would say, however, that I believe this matter can ultimately only be resolved through direct engagement between the club and the governing body. DCAL, with support from Sport NI, stands ready to assist in this process.

Archery

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to fund the sport of archery over the next three years, given the upsurge in interest since the London Olympics.
(AQO 2685/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI is responsible for the distribution of funding for sport in the north of Ireland. Sport NI is currently in discussion with the governing body of archery, the NI Archery Society (NIAS), regarding funding under the Performance Focus investment programme for 2013-2017. This process is still ongoing and no decision has yet been made. I am aware, however, that the NIAS claims that there has been 50% increase in interest in archery in the north of Ireland since the London Olympics through attendance at 'beginners' courses at archery clubs. This is most welcome and is a positive indication of the legacy of the Games which I would like to see replicated across all sports.

DCAL: Procurement

Mr F McCann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline her Department's approach to enhancing and promoting social clauses, and wider socio-economic benefits, through public procurement.
(AQO 2686/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is currently compiling its strategy to ensure delivery against the PfG target to "...include Social Clauses in all public procurement contracts for suppliers, services and construction" and to maximise the socio-economic impacts achievable. It will include the use of social clauses as an award criteria for capital projects, services and supplies across DCAL and its Arms Length Bodies.

Specifically in relation to the stadia development, action has been taken to embed social clauses and strategies into all elements of the project delivery and procurement processes to ensure returns are maximised. Relevant clauses and measures have been factored into both contracts for those professional services and construction works / contracts put out to tender and will be included as an important element within the contract award criteria going forward.

In regard to other areas of Departmental procurement my officials are engaging with the Chief Executive and the 2013 World Police and Fire Games Company to maximise social impacts from the World Police and Fire Games not only in procurement but across the range of the Company work streams.

My Department is also providing resource funding to Derry City Council to support the Derry~Londonderry City of Culture 2013 Cultural Programme and will require Derry City Council to seek best value for money by maximising opportunities for local economic, environmental and social benefits when allocating funds to execute the City of Culture Cultural Programme.

LibrariesNI have included the requirement for social clauses to be included in the contract for the procurement of their new IT system which is to be awarded in March 2013. The requirement for social returns has been incorporated into the scoring matrix which will ultimately be used to select the successful bidder.

I hope the above provides an assurance that social clauses and strategies for maximising social returns are being, and will continue to be, firmly embedded by my Department and its Arms Length Bodies (ALBs) in all procurement and delivery processes for capital projects, services and supplies.

Department of Education

Irish Medium Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils at each Irish Medium (i) primary and (ii) post-primary school.

(AQW 14565/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The information requested is detailed in the table below.

ENROLMENTS AT IRISH MEDIUM PRIMARY SCHOOLS – 2011/12

| School name | Total enrolment |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Bunscoil an Iuir | 92 |
| Bunscoil an Traonaigh | 31 |
| Bunscoil An Tsleibhe Dhuibh | 176 |
| Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain | 114 |
| Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche | 75 |
| Bunscoil Cholmcille | 126 |
| Bunscoil Mhic Reachtain | 61 |
| Bunscoil Phobal Feirste | 280 |
| Gaelscoil an Chaistil | 80 |
| Gaelscoil an Lonnain | 41 |
| Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí | 29 |
| Gaelscoil Aodha Rua | 12 |
| Gaelscoil Eadain Mhoir | 146 |
| Gaelscoil Eanna | 70 |
| Gaelscoil Ghleann Darach | 66 |
| Gaelscoil Leim an Mhadaidh | 18 |
| Gaelscoil Na Bhfal | 184 |
| Gaelscoil na Daroige | 54 |
| Gaelscoil na gCrann | 110 |
| Gaelscoil na Mona | 83 |
| Gaelscoil na Spéiríní | 27 |
| Gaelscoil Uí Dhochartaigh | 152 |
| Gaelscoil Uí Neill | 172 |
| Scoil An Droichid | 143 |
| Scoil na Fuisseoige | 107 |

ENROLMENTS AT THE IRISH MEDIUM POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL – 2011/12

| School name | Total enrolment |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Colaiste Feirste | 550 |

Source: school census

Note:

- 1 Figures for primary schools relate to pupils in nursery, reception and Year 1 – 7 classes.
- 2 In addition, there were 708 pupils enrolled in Irish medium units at English medium primary schools and 212 pupils enrolled in Irish medium units at English medium post-primary schools.

Bangor Central Integrated Primary School

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education why Bangor Central Integrated Primary School was not included in his recent announcement on new builds.

(AQW 14676/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A major capital works project for Bangor Central Integrated Primary School is one of a large number of proposals with the Department placed on hold.

SEELB has identified Bangor Central IPS as a core school with a sustainable enrolment. The Board has been seeking to secure additional land needed for a new build by acquiring an adjacent site, by means of a land swap, from a private developer. The extended site option has been the subject of regular correspondence from political representatives, the school, parents and pupils.

The new school build projects I announced in June were advanced in planning and approvals and could draw down capital expenditure within the current budget period.

While Bangor Central Integrated Primary School was not included in my announcement to the Assembly, this in no way implies that it will not be considered for funding at a later stage within the area planning process.

Area plans for schools will require scrutiny and public consultation. In the interim I will continue to examine the case for capital investment and expect to make a further announcement before the end of the calendar year.

Proposals for the Bangor Central Integrated Primary scheme will be considered alongside other new build propositions as part of any future announcement.

GCSE Examinations Grading Issue

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education whether he has established if pupils in different schools were disadvantaged to different degrees as a result of the GCSE examinations grading issue this year.
(AQW 14737/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Following the publication of GCSE results on 23 August, there were a significant number of schools and colleges in England and Wales that expressed concerns that their English results were not in line with performance last year or with predicted outcomes. Similar concerns were expressed by some schools here. However, I should make the point that the overall grade outcomes for GCSE English here were in line with last year's results.

I asked the CCEA regulator to look into these matters and report to me on any issues. I appreciate the complexity of the issues with GCSE English this year. There were new specifications being taught for the first time, and significant changes had been made to assessment, moving from linear to modular assessment. The changes are aimed at promoting alignment with English/literacy skills within the 4-16 curriculum here. This is important as I want to ensure that 14-19 Education builds on the aims of our revised curriculum.

I have read and accepted the regulator's final report. He has made a number of recommendations which I have asked him to take forward. This work will be carried out by the CCEA Regulator in conjunction with the other fellow regulators to ensure that the recommendations are implemented across all Awarding Organisations operating here.

Furthermore, as there will now be an early re-sit opportunity for many pupils if they wish, I have asked CCEA to work with my officials to consider what additional measures can be put in place to support schools as they prepare pupils for these exams. Details will be communicated directly to schools in the coming weeks.

I will ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged by this issue.

Amalgamation of St Mary's Primary School, Glenravel and Glenravel Primary School

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Education what work has been done by his Department and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools to prepare for a possible amalgamation of St Mary's Primary School, Glenravel and Glenravel Primary School.

(AQW 14887/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Any significant change to a school, such as a school amalgamation, requires the publication of a statutory Development Proposal to support that intent.

It is the responsibility of the relevant school managing authority, in the first instance, to bring forward proposals to the Department.

The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools is continuing to investigate the potential amalgamation of these two schools. No Development Proposal has been received by the Department.

Ofqual Reports in Relation to GCSE and A level Examinations

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to list the reports which have been published, over the last 5 years, by Ofqual in relation to GCSE and A level examinations provided by the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment.

(AQW 14918/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Ofqual was established in April 2010. Ofqual works with the regulators here and in Wales to produce a range of reports relating to awarding organisations that offer GCSEs and A levels i.e. AQA, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC. These reports include:

- Standards Reviews – these are produced by the regulators to ensure that standards and demand are maintained over time and across awarding organisations;
- Scrutiny Reports – these aim to ensure that awarding organisations' processes and procedures are in line with the regulatory code of practice; and statistical bulletins; and
- Statistical Reports – these cover issues of malpractice, access arrangements, special considerations, and Enquiries about results (EARs).

Following issues with the results for CCEA A level Chemistry in summer 2010, the Department commissioned Ofqual to undertake an investigation. Two reports were produced subsequently by Ofqual.

Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many children have been impacted by the unilateral decision of Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment in February 2012 to stop providing examinations to schools in England and Wales.

(AQW 14920/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: No students have been impacted. GCSE students who started a course in September 2011 will be allowed to finish their course with CCEA in summer 2013. At GCE, centres in England who

are already registered with CCEA, will still be able to start CCEA courses up until September 2013, with final examinations taking place in summer 2015, with a re-sit opportunity in January 2016.

CCEA is still offering qualifications in Wales.

GCSE and A level Examinations

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last five years, to list the examination centres in England and Wales where the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment provided GCSE and A level examinations, broken down by Local Education Authority.

(AQW 14921/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment does not hold Local Education Authority information for centres in England and Wales however I have arranged for information broken down by country to be placed in the Assembly library.

Examination Centres in England and Wales

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what consultation took place with examination centres in England and Wales prior to the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment's decision to stop providing examinations in England and Wales.

(AQW 14922/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The decision to withdraw qualifications from England was taken because of emerging policy differences between England and the north of Ireland. In September 2011, without consultation, the Minister for Education in England, took the decision that GCSEs would become linear in England for all candidates starting their courses of study in September 2012.

I consulted with schools from October to December 2011. Following this consultation, I decided that schools here should have the choice to offer linear and unitised GCSEs to their pupils. CCEA offered a small number of GCSEs in England.

To offer qualifications in England and meet requirements would have meant developing new linear specifications. This was an operational decision approved by the CCEA Council. No consultation with centres in England took place. CCEA qualifications continue to be offered in Wales where unitisation remains.

Purchasing Temporary Classrooms

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Education what checks are in place to ensure that Education and Library Boards comply with defined procurement procedures when purchasing temporary classrooms; and whether the procurement procedures are being complied with in the Southern Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 14929/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Education and Library Boards are responsible for the procurement of temporary accommodation in schools in the controlled sector, special schools and controlled youth club in their Board area.

The procurement of temporary classrooms by the Boards is in accordance with the relevant EU Public Procurement Directives, The Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 as amended, as well as the Public Procurement Policy and Procurement Guidance Notes issued on behalf of the Procurement board by the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD).

Based on the operation of the Standing Orders and the Board governance, the Boards monitor and control procurement from the tendering stage through the use of electronic procurement portals that encourage competition and provide transparency of data through to the review and approval of all procurement tenders prior to the award of contracts. Boards have established systems and processes in place to oversee all procurement expenditure. Procurement is also subject to ongoing compliance

reports to the Department of Education (DE) and CPD through well-established channels. Audit reviews are conducted by the Internal Audit, DE Audit and subject to Audit Office (NIAO) audits as well as the Departmental Healthcheck and Gateway reviews providing independent and objective assessments and evidence compliance.

As with all Board areas, the above procedures apply to the Southern Education and Library Board area.

School Maintenance Backlog

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education to detail the current maintenance backlog for each school in Upper Bann

(AQW 14933/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The current maintenance backlog in schools in the Upper Bann constituency is as follows:

| Site Name | School Type Description | Maintenance Backlog |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Abercorn Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 491,318.00 |
| Ballydown Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 29,091.00 |
| Ballydown Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 1,000.00 |
| Ballyoran Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 254,980.00 |
| Ballyoran Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 21,360.00 |
| Banbridge Academy* | Grammar School Controlled | £ 844,292.00 |
| Banbridge Academy | Nursery School Controlled | £ 27,335.00 |
| Banbridge Academy | School Meals Accommodation | £ 61,670.00 |
| Banbridge High School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 105.00 |
| Banbridge High School | Secondary School Controlled | £ 55,330.00 |
| Birches Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 97,705.00 |
| Birches Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 43,000.00 |
| Bleary Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 12,395.00 |
| Bleary Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 3,500.00 |
| Bocombra Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 70,840.00 |
| Bocombra Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 11,125.00 |
| Bridge Integrated Primary School | Primary School Integrated | £ 46,315.00 |
| Brownlow College | School Meals Accommodation | £ 226,770.00 |
| Brownlow College | Secondary School Integrated | £ 196,285.00 |
| Carrick Primary School (Lurgan) | Primary School Controlled | £ 396,485.00 |
| Carrick Primary School (Lurgan) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 21,900.00 |
| Ceara School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 1,100.00 |
| Ceara School | Special School Controlled | £ 32,410.00 |
| Ceara Special School | Special School Controlled | £ 18,825.00 |
| Clounagh Junior High School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 336,230.00 |

| Site Name | School Type Description | Maintenance Backlog |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Clounagh Junior High School | Secondary School Controlled | £ 1,214,735.00 |
| Craigavon Senior High School | Secondary School Controlled | £ 722,631.00 |
| Dickson Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 175,555.00 |
| Dickson Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 16,000.00 |
| Donacloney Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 100,920.00 |
| Donacloney Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 10,450.00 |
| Donard Special School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 100.00 |
| Donard Special School | Special School Controlled | £ 14,725.00 |
| Downshire Nursery School | Nursery School Controlled | £ 38,790.00 |
| Drumcree College | School Meals Accommodation | £ 45,380.00 |
| Drumcree College | Secondary School Maintained | £ 658,210.00 |
| Drumgor Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 276,225.00 |
| Drumgor Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 11,470.00 |
| Drumnamoe Nursery School | Nursery School Maintained | £ 230.00 |
| Edenderry Primary School (Portadown) | Nursery School Controlled | £ 35,220.00 |
| Edenderry Primary School (Portadown) | Primary School Controlled | £ 336,665.00 |
| Edenderry Primary School (Portadown) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 1,550.00 |
| Edenderry Primary School Banbridge | Primary School Controlled | £ 199,861.00 |
| Edenderry Primary School Banbridge | School Meals Accommodation | £ 4,740.00 |
| Hart Memorial Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 343,070.00 |
| Hart Memorial Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 88,123.00 |
| Killicomaine Junior High School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 48,900.00 |
| Killicomaine Junior High School | Secondary School Controlled | £ 734,725.00 |
| King`s Park Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 837,940.00 |
| King`s Park Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 3,650.00 |
| Lismore Comprehensive | School Meals Accommodation | £ 26,950.00 |
| Lismore Comprehensive | School Meals Accommodation (no.2) | £ 35,210.00 |
| Lismore Comprehensive | Secondary School Maintained | £ 1,818,980.00 |
| Lurgan College | Grammar School Controlled | £ 927,975.00 |
| Lurgan College | School Meals Accommodation | £ 34,290.00 |
| Lurgan Junior High School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 55,500.00 |
| Lurgan Junior High School | Secondary School Controlled | £ 1,146,450.00 |
| Lurgan Model Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 163,285.00 |

| Site Name | School Type Description | Maintenance Backlog |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Lurgan Model Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 22,400.00 |
| Maralin Village Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 2,425.00 |
| Maralin Village Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 2,290.00 |
| Millington Primary School | Nursery School Controlled | £ 6,610.00 |
| Millington Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 232,661.00 |
| Millington Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 75.00 |
| Millington Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 13,050.00 |
| Milltown Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 20,100.00 |
| Moyallon Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 3,050.00 |
| Moyallon Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 1,220.00 |
| New-Bridge Integrated College | Secondary School Integrated | £ 83,530.00 |
| Portadown College | Grammar School Controlled | £ 1,376,565.00 |
| Portadown College | School Meals Accommodation | £ 7,420.00 |
| Portadown Integrated P.S. | Primary School Integrated | £ 89,600.00 |
| Presentation Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 133,320.00 |
| Presentation Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 8,150.00 |
| Richmount Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 54,600.00 |
| Richmount Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 5,000.00 |
| Scarva Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 26,700.00 |
| Scarva Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 3,315.00 |
| Seagoe Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 78,920.00 |
| Seagoe Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 300.00 |
| St Anthony`s Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 99,130.00 |
| St Anthony`s Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 16,875.00 |
| St Brendan`s Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 248,025.00 |
| St Brendan`s Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 2,800.00 |
| St Colman`s Primary School (Bann) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 19,500.00 |
| St Colman`s Primary School (Bann) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 1,225.00 |
| St Francis Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 1,085,265.00 |
| St Francis Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 5,485.00 |
| St Francis Primary School (Aghaderg) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 17,655.00 |
| St Francis Primary School (Aghaderg) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 4,880.00 |
| St John the Baptist Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 135,270.00 |
| St John the Baptist Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 15,900.00 |

| Site Name | School Type Description | Maintenance Backlog |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| St John`s Primary School (Gilford) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 87,150.00 |
| St John`s Primary School (Gilford) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 210.00 |
| St Mary`s Girls` Junior High School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 74,500.00 |
| St Mary`s Girls` Junior High School | Secondary School Maintained | £ 517,052.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Banbridge) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 565,925.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Banbridge) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 20,685.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Derrymore) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 132,320.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Derrymore) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 5,000.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Derrytrasna) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 110,650.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Derrytrasna) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 19,560.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Maghery) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 106,775.00 |
| St Mary`s Primary School (Maghery) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 2,000.00 |
| St Michael`s Grammar School | Grammar School Voluntary | £ 1,907,165.00 |
| St Patrick`s College (Banbridge) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 3,895.00 |
| St Patrick`s College (Banbridge) | Secondary School Maintained | £ 461,871.00 |
| St Patrick`s Primary School (Aghacommon) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 141,650.00 |
| St Patrick`s Primary School (Aghacommon) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 2,700.00 |
| St Patrick`s Primary School (Derrynaseer) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 56,310.00 |
| St Patrick`s Primary School (Derrynaseer) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 3,180.00 |
| St Patrick`s Primary School (Magheralin) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 171,635.00 |
| St Paul`s Junior High School (Lurgan) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 27,050.00 |
| St Paul`s Junior High School (Lurgan) | Secondary School Maintained | £ 436,450.00 |
| St Teresa`s Primary School (Lurgan) | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 203,940.00 |
| St Teresa`s Primary School (Lurgan) | School Meals Accommodation | £ 6,250.00 |
| Tandragee Junior High School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 11,600.00 |
| Tandragee Junior High School | Secondary School Controlled | £ 388,080.00 |
| Tannaghmore Primary School | Primary Schools Maintained | £ 702,205.00 |
| Tannaghmore Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 4,910.00 |
| Tullygally Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 158,540.00 |
| Tullygally Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 18,450.00 |

| Site Name | School Type Description | Maintenance Backlog |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Waringstown Primary School | Primary School Controlled | £ 22,105.00 |
| Waringstown Primary School | School Meals Accommodation | £ 1,300.00 |

* The maintenance backlog at Banbridge Academy relates to items that were not addressed by recent capital works involving a new build extension and refurbishment at the school.

Integrated Services

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the role of Integrated Services in contributing to the raising of educational standards in disadvantaged areas of North and West Belfast. **(AQW 14944/11-15)**

Mr O'Dowd: An independent evaluation of the Integrated Services for Children and Young People (ISCYP) project undertaken by Quaesitum has concluded that there is significant evidence to show that the model of working has been effective in tackling disadvantage, improving educational attainment and enhancing health and emotional wellbeing.

A copy of the Final Evaluation Report on the ISCYP project can be found on the Belfast Education and Library Board's website: <http://www.belb.org.uk/Documents/578.pdf>.

School Buses

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how many school buses does each Education and Library Board own (i) that are not currently in use and (ii) are currently in use, broken down by the age of the bus.

(AQW 15029/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am advised by the Education and Library Boards that their combined fleet is comprised of 850 buses of which 739 are in daily use on scheduled school transport routes, and 97 are used regularly to provide cover for vehicles undergoing maintenance or safety checks, repairs, PSV testing, etc. Of the remaining 14 vehicles, 6 are used to provide spare parts and 8 are awaiting sale.

The number of buses owned by each Board, broken down by age, (i) that are currently not in use on scheduled school transport routes (but provide cover for these) is:

| Education and Library Board | 0-3 Years | 4-6 Years | 7-10 Years | Over 10 Years | Total |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------|-----------|
| Belfast | 0 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| North Eastern | 0 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 19 |
| South Eastern | 0 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 13 |
| Southern | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 25 |
| Western | 2 | 3 | 11 | 13 | 29 |
| Total | 2 | 25 | 22 | 48 | 97 |

and (ii) that are currently in regular use on scheduled school transport routes is:

| Education and Library Board | 0-3 Years | 4-6 Years | 7-10 Years | Over 10 Years | Total |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------------|-------|
| Belfast | 44 | 28 | 0 | 0 | 72 |
| North Eastern | 40 | 49 | 20 | 2 | 111 |

| Education and Library Board | 0-3 Years | 4-6 Years | 7-10 Years | Over 10 Years | Total |
|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| South Eastern | 80 | 49 | 15 | 0 | 144 |
| Southern | 32 | 53 | 69 | 27 | 181 |
| Western | 46 | 111 | 71 | 3 | 231 |
| Total | 242 | 290 | 175 | 32 | 739 |

Working Group for a Sectoral Support Body for Controlled Schools

Mr Kinahan asked Minister of Education, in relation to his announcement on 27 September 2012, (i) to detail the terms of reference for the working group; (ii) why the working group is only focusing on controlled schools; and (iii) for how long he envisages the working group functioning.

(AQW 15030/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Sectoral Support Bodies (SSBs) shall be independent organisations created by their sectors for their sectors, receiving funding from DE. On 9 October, 2012 the Department wrote to those parties it intends to assist as they establish the relevant SSB for their sector. This included the Working Group for the establishment of the SSB for Controlled Schools alongside CnaG, NICIE and NICCE for the establishment of the SSBs for Irish-medium, Integrated and Catholic schools respectively. The Department enclosed a paper entitled Sectoral Support Post-RPA (September 2012), which can be found in the Assembly Library. The paper broadly defines the role and functions of an SSB. This paper describes the overarching basis for Departmental funding of sectoral support.

The Working Group's focus is on the establishment of a Sectoral Support Body for Controlled Schools because, due to this sector's size, diversity and history, it singularly lacks and needs the defined capacity or lead-organisation to establish its Sectoral Support Body.

I envisage the Working Group functioning until the SSB is established which should, of course, be for the operational deadline for the ESA.

Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education whether he has considered making a distinction between the curriculum authority role and the examinations body delivery role of the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment, given the separation of these roles in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 15040/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There is value in these two functions being linked. We want to ensure that the aims set out for the statutory curriculum for 4 to 16 year olds are reflected in the qualifications available within 14-19 Education. This is particularly true of GCSE qualifications which are taken by over 90% of 14 to 16 year olds. Within the statutory curriculum we have placed a great deal of emphasis on skills development and I would want to ensure that GCSEs build on this focus.

Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Education, given that Northern Ireland qualifications have to possess the equivalence of English qualifications so that students are not disadvantaged in seeking places at UK universities, what formal liaison arrangements he has put in place between the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment and the English curriculum authorities.

(AQW 15041/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In England the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) was responsible for both the curriculum and qualifications development. With the establishment of Ofqual (April 2010) there is no longer a statutory body responsible for curriculum or qualifications development.

In the context of qualifications regulation, CCEA works closely with Ofqual (and with the Welsh Government) to ensure that there is comparability in demand and standards across qualifications whether these are awarded in England, Wales or here.

The Government at Westminster has made proposals for changes to GCEs in England. I have asked my officials to work with CCEA to monitor these reforms and their implications for us. In due course I will announce how we will respond to any changes made to GCEs in England (or Wales). In doing this I will want to ensure continued comparability.

Working Class Protestants: Higher Education

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education how he plans to increase the number of working class Protestants who can go on to participate in higher education in the (i) short-term; and (ii) long-term. **(AQW 15108/11-15)**

Mr O'Dowd: The number of Protestants from deprived backgrounds that leave school and go on to higher education is very low: in 2011 there were 25 boys and 39 girls who were entitled to free school meals and left non-grammar schools to go to university. There were an additional 23 boys and 33 girls entitled to free school meals that left grammar schools to go to university. This gives a total of 120 out of the 1109 Protestant school leavers entitled to free school meals that progressed to higher education, which is 10.8%. This compares with 544 of the 2474 Catholic school leavers entitled to free school meals that progress to higher education, which is 22.0%.

I am determined to take action to break the link between social disadvantage and educational underachievement. I have in place a coherent set of policies designed to improve educational outcomes for young people and to address the root causes when pupils are not achieving to their full potential.

My Department engaged with the Department for Employment and Learning in the development of the 'Access to Success', the Regional Strategy for Widening Participation in Higher Education, which was published on 11 September 2012. My Department will continue to work in conjunction with DEL and the HE Institutions in reviewing and improving mechanisms to gather data on access to, and participation in, higher education and as well as identifying mechanisms to identify a wider group for participation in HE. One group that is specifically targeted by the strategy is young protestant males from areas of high social deprivation.

My focus is on every young person achieving to their full potential from every sector and every background. My policies are about putting the pupil first and this is why I am introducing the Entitlement Framework. The Entitlement Framework is about ensuring that pupils have access to a range of relevant, engaging and economically relevant courses, with clear progression pathways. It is about ensuring that young people have timely access to high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance so that they can make informed choices leading to the most appropriate route for them. It is about schools, as well as young people and their parents, having high aspirations and then achieving them.

When a young person is engaged in their own learning, can see the relevance of what they are doing in school and the progression pathways it can lead to for their future, they are more likely to achieve; more likely to focus in both the short term and the long term and more likely to progress into higher education, or training, or employment.

It is also important that parents are encouraged to aspire to a better education and future for their children. Parental involvement and encouragement, no matter how small, can have a direct and long-lasting effect on a child's educational achievements. It must be made clear to parents that no matter who you are; no matter what your background; your child can achieve educationally and improve their large chances. That is why I launched the Education Works advertising campaign which aims to inform and engage all parents, but in particular those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, to become more engaged in their child's education. It will achieve this by providing parents with consistent,

authoritative information on schooling and the steps they can take to support their child in achieving good educational outcomes.

There is also an important role to be played by Unionist political leaders in raising educational awareness and aspiration in socially deprived communities. Continued academic selection in the interests of selective schools does not benefit the education or the needs of Protestant pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Television Advert on the Get Involved Initiative

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education what is the total cost of his Department's television advert on the Get Involved initiative, some of which will be broadcast in Irish, including the cost of the advertising slots on each television channel.

(AQW 15129/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I launched the "Education Works" advertising campaign on 17 September 2012. The campaign is of vital importance to our society and aims to raise the value, we as a society, place on education. The campaign aims to inform and engage all parents, in particular those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, to become more involved in their child's education. It is intended to impact upon home/family and attitudinal factors by providing parents with consistent, authoritative information on the importance of education and the steps they can take to support their child in achieving good educational outcomes.

Research has shown that children provided with good opportunities to learn in the home before they started school were over five times more likely to score well in English by the time they left primary school than those who were not and that those who had a bedtime story read to them in Primary 1 did much better at school than those who had not.

Parental involvement and encouragement, no matter how small, can have a direct and long-lasting effect on a child's educational achievements. It must be clear to parents that no matter who you are; no matter what your background; your child can achieve educationally and improve their life chances.

We know that parents want the best for their children. This campaign helps to give them ideas for simple steps they can take to make a difference. The campaign is supported by a dedicated website on NIDirect to give parents advice and guidance on how to develop their child's talking, reading and counting skills.

The campaign will run on television, radio, outdoor posters and online and will be taken forward in English and in Irish.

The projected total cost of the television advert for the "Education Works" campaign in 2012/13 is £91,113.

The projected costs of advertising on each television channel is as follows:

| Television Channel | Cost (£) |
|--------------------|---------------|
| UTV | 36,957 |
| Channel 4 | 14,684 |
| Channel 5 | 7,529 |
| Daybreak | 1,105 |
| Total | 60,275 |

The television advert was screened from 17th September to 7th October and will be repeated from 1st – 31st January 2013.

Early Years Funding

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 14335/11-15, for a breakdown of the £3.14 million allocated to the Early Years Fund; and to outline the mechanism used for allocating of this money.

(AQW 15137/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The breakdown of the £3.14 million allocated to the Early Years Fund is as follows:

| Funding allocated to: | 2012-13 £k |
|---|-----------------------|
| DE Early Years Fund:- allocated by a panel to 155 groups which offer early childhood services. The fund is administered to groups by Early Years – the organisation for young children. | £2,479k |
| Administration Grant for DE Early Years Fund:- Early Years – the organisation for young children. | £310k |
| Toybox:- supports a project for pre-school traveller children which is administered by Early Years – the organisation for young children. | £356k |
| Total | £3,145k |

Service Level Agreements are in place between the Department of Education and Early Years – the organisation for young children, which administers the Early Years Fund and Toybox.

Co-operation Between Schools and the Manufacturing Industry

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 14241/11-15, (i) what type of organisation is Sentinus; (ii) what is its remit; and (iii) how it helps 50,000 pupils per annum to develop skills for the work place.

(AQW 15164/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Sentinus is an educational charity and a private company limited by guarantee. The organisation operates on a non profit making basis to provide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) support, enrichment and enhancement to supplement the delivery of the Revised Curriculum through discrete timetabled lessons.

Sentinus delivers a portfolio of STEM programmes to both primary and post-primary schools across all Key Stages, to promote innovation and creativity in STEM and support the development of scientific, technological, employability and life skills through challenging and exciting experiences linked to the world of work.

These programmes are managed by STEM professionals and delivered with the support of STEM Ambassadors and advisers from a wide range of sectors. Through partnership with business, industry, academia and the public sector, Sentinus provides opportunities to pupils to develop skills for the workplace and discover the exciting range of careers available to them in STEM disciplines.

Co-operation Between Schools and the Manufacturing Industry

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 14241/11-15, how many other organisations like Sentinus are in existence.

(AQW 15165/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department is not aware of any other organisations, across the north, like Sentinus which has the capacity, capability and expertise in delivering high quality STEM programmes to over 50,000 pupil engagements annually involving experienced STEM professionals.

Teaching and Non-Teaching Posts

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education, for each of the last two years, to detail and provide a breakdown on the number of teaching and non-teaching posts for each school in North Down that were (i) suppressed; (ii) unfilled; and (iii) filled on a temporary basis.

(AQW 15172/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

2010/2011 (TEACHING POSTS)

| School | Number of Redundancies | Temporary Appointments |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Bloomfield Primary School (MLD Unit) | 1 | |
| Towerview Primary School (MLD Unit) | 1 | |
| St Columbanus College Bangor | | 1 |
| St Comgalls PS Bangor | | 1 |
| Total | 2 | 2 |

2011/2012 (TEACHING POSTS)

| School | Number of Redundancies | Temporary Appointments |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| Towerview Primary School | 2 | |
| Priory College | 1 | |
| Bangor Academy and Sixth Form College | 3 | |
| Redburn Primary School (School closure) | 4 | |
| Glenlola Collegiate School | 4 | |
| St Columbanus College | 3 | |
| St Columba's College, Portaferry | 2 | |
| St Annes PS Donaghadee | | 1 |
| Total | 19 | 1 |

2011/2012 (NON-TEACHING POSTS)

| School | Number of Redundancies |
|---|------------------------|
| Towerview Primary School | 1 |
| Priory College | 1 |
| Movilla HS | 2 |
| Redburn Primary School (School closure) | 8 |
| St Columbanus College | 2 |
| Total | 14 |

The Education and Library Board are unable to provide any figures regarding posts that have been unfilled within the last 2 academic years (2010/11 2011/12). They also do not have records to identify the number of posts filled on a temporary basis within the last 2 academic years.

School Maintenance Backlog

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the current maintenance backlog for each school in North Down.

(AQW 15173/11-15)

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

| School | Maintenance Backlog (£) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bangor Nursery | 53,545 |
| Hollywood Nursery | 1,500 |
| Trinity Nursery | 63,920 |
| Ballymagee Primary | 3,290 |
| Ballyvester Primary | 28,550 |
| Bloomfield Road Primary | 313,680 |
| Clandeboye Primary | 274,395 |
| Crawfordsburn Primary | 20,450 |
| Donaghadee Primary | 139,580 |
| Grange Park Primary | 154,940 |
| Hollywood Primary | 138,769 |
| Kilcooley Primary | 219,047 |
| Millisle Primary | 125,235 |
| Rathmore Primary | 367,230 |
| Redburn Primary | 604,405 |
| Saint Anne's Primary | 29,615 |
| Saint Comgall's Primary | 5,190 |
| Saint Malachy's Primary | 210,958 |
| Saint Patrick's Primary | 298,945 |
| Bangor Central Integrated Primary | 53,850 |
| Glencraig Integrated Primary | 62,775 |
| Saint Columbanus College | 527,685 |
| Priory College | 561,685 |
| Bangor Grammar School | 4,791,098 |
| Clifton Special | 5,100 |
| Killard Special | 8,355 |
| Total | 9,063,792 |

There is a programme of planned maintenance across the schools' estate that influences the overall maintenance backlog (currently £310m for the estate). In addition reactive maintenance is required to

address unexpected emergency issues such as a heating system failure. The cost of emergency work is not reflected in the maintenance backlog.

Youth Clubs in South Belfast: Funding

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Education for a breakdown of the (i) capital; and (ii) revenue funding provided by his Department to each of the youth clubs in South Belfast, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15178/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Revenue funding for local youth service provision and capital funding for statutory youth service provision in the South Belfast constituency area are allocated by the Belfast Education and Library Board and the South Eastern Education and Library Board. Capital funding for voluntary youth service provision is allocated by the Department of Education.

i) The BELB and SEELB have advised that the capital funding provided to youth clubs in the South Belfast constituency area in the last 5 years was as set out in the table below.

| Youth Centre | Spend 07/08 £'000s | Spend 08/09 £'000s | Spend 09/10 £'000s | Spend 10/11 £'000s | Spend 11/12 £'000s |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Charter YC | 19 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| Donegall Pass YC | 0 | 0 | 112 | 0 | 206 |
| Finaghy YC | 127 | 0 | 4 | 41 | 380 |
| Nubia YC | 0 | 49 | 352 | 12 | 10 |
| Suffolk YC | 0 | 0 | 12 | 4 | 3 |
| Taughmonagh YC | 104 | 0 | 20 | 3 | 127 |
| Ballybeen | 0 | 64 | 539 | 14 | 5 |
| Belvoir | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Castlereagh | 0 | 0 | 0 | 27 | 0 |

The Department has also allocated capital funding to some voluntary youth sector organisations in South Belfast constituency area during this period. However, this information is not held in the format required by this request and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

ii) The BELB and SEELB have advised that the recurrent funding, including maintenance and earmarked funding, provided to youth clubs in the South Belfast constituency area in the last 5 years was as set out in the table below.

| Youth Centre | Spend 07/08 £'000s | Spend 08/09 £'000s | Spend 09/10 £'000s | Spend 10/11 £'000s | Spend 11/12 £'000s |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Charter YC | 72 | 112 | 68 | 56 | 83 |
| Donegall Pass YC | 4 | 18 | 17 | 14 | 39 |
| Finaghy YC | 142 | 123 | 135 | 84 | 118 |
| Nubia YC | 56 | 79 | 71 | 78 | 87 |
| Suffolk YC | 12 | 40 | 33 | 29 | 46 |
| Taughmonagh YC | 42 | 63 | 36 | 22 | 35 |

| Youth Centre | Spend 07/08 £'000s | Spend 08/09 £'000s | Spend 09/10 £'000s | Spend 10/11 £'000s | Spend 11/12 £'000s |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| City of Belfast YMCA Vol YC | 8 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 0 |
| PHAB Fleming Fulton YC | 3 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 14 |
| Rosario Vol YC | 52 | 79 | 56 | 73 | 75 |
| St Brigid's Vol YC | 2 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 7 |
| St John Vianney VYC | 65 | 48 | 79 | 89 | 80 |
| St Malachy's Vol YC | 12 | 28 | 19 | 30 | 21 |
| St Bernadettes Youth Club | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 8 |
| Ballybeen Youth Club | 11 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 11 |
| Cairnshill Methodist Church YC | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| St Joseph's Youth Club | 3 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| Moneyrea PS YC | 11 | 10 | 16 | 6 | 7 |
| Cregagh YC | 15 | 78 | 101 | 18 | 55 |
| Belvoir Youth Centre | 20 | 18 | 18 | 22 | 15 |
| Ardcarnet Youth Centre | 39 | 47 | 60 | 48 | 51 |
| Brooklands Youth Centre | 3 | 3 | 34 | 38 | 45 |

Primary Schools in the Mid-Ulster Constituency

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Education to outline the plans to review and consult on the future of primary schools in the Mid-Ulster constituency.

(AQW 15179/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: You will be aware that the area planning work I commissioned includes primary provision.

The five Education and Library Boards are currently consulting on the area plans for post-primary provision and are working to finalise the area plans for primary provision.

The Area Plans for primary provision will also be published for public consultation. The publication date has not as yet, been finalised and will be dependent on a number of factors including the level of response to the post-primary plans and the extent of refinement needed for those plans. When the post-primary consultation is over and the responses are assessed I will be in a better position to determine the exact timing and duration of the primary area plans consultation process.

Any proposal to make a significant change to a school requires the publication of a Development Proposal, a key aspect of this process is consultation. It is important that the area planning process is not used to delay necessary decisions and I will continue to make decisions on development proposals in advance of agreed area plans.

Admission to Primary Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what is the definition of exceptional circumstances, in instances where a pupil is granted admission to a primary school after initially being refused admission to that school.

(AQW 15181/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There is no specific definition of exceptional circumstances in the context of consideration of admission of pupils to a primary school. Admissions criteria are drawn up by schools' Boards of Governors and the Department does not have a role in this other than to provide general guidance on what must or must not be included to comply with statutory requirements. Where a school does include special circumstances (e.g. medical or social factors) in its criteria, it is recommended that they should be specific about the grounds against which these would be considered, and that supporting evidence should be provided to the school by the parents.

Appeals Against Refusal of Admission to Primary Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many appeals against refusal of admission to primary schools have been made in each of the last five years; and how many were successful.

(AQW 15182/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of appeals against refusal of admission to primary schools in each of the last five years and the number which were successful were as follows:

| Year | Appeals Heard | Appeals Upheld |
|---------|---------------|----------------|
| 2008/09 | 24 | 2 |
| 2009/10 | 25 | 7 |
| 2010/11 | 24 | 4 |
| 2011/12 | 55 | 10 |
| 2012/13 | 105 | 26 |

Enrolment Numbers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail, for each of the last five years, (i) the number of applications for primary 1 admission to; (ii) the number of pupils enrolled in; and (iii) the maximum allowable enrolment number for (a) Ballyholme Primary School; (b) Towerview Primary School; (c) Kilmaine Primary School; (d) Ballymagee Primary School; (e) Bangor Central Integrated Primary School; and (f) Bloomfield Primary School.

(AQW 15183/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The data requested is set out in the tables below

2008/09 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 94 | 90 | 683 | 592 |
| Towerview PS | 42 | 42 | 405 | 310 |

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Kilmaine PS | 96 | 90 | 610 | 602 |
| Ballymagee PS | 62 | 60 | 406 | 397 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 91 | 80 | 551 | 551 |
| Bloomfield PS | 30 | 30 | 408 | 253 |
| Kilcooley PS | 22 | 22 | 567 | 105 |
| Clandeboyne PS | 20 | 20 | 544 | 165 |
| Grange Park PS | 61 | 51 | 361 | 357 |
| Rathmore PS | 62 | 62 | 631 | 427 |

2009/10 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 78 | 78 | 630 | 580 |
| Towerview PS | 41 | 41 | 319 | 299 |
| Kilmaine PS | 89 | 89 | 610 | 606 |
| Ballymagee PS | 63 | 58 | 406 | 401 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 83 | 83 | 555 | 557 |
| Bloomfield PS | 41 | 41 | 408 | 249 |
| Kilcooley PS | 17 | 17 | 567 | 104 |
| Clandeboyne PS | 14 | 14 | 544 | 133 |
| Grange Park PS | 52 | 52 | 361 | 354 |
| Rathmore PS | 79 | 79 | 631 | 463 |

2010/11 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 84 | 84 | 630 | 588 |
| Towerview PS | 50 | 50 | 319 | 295 |
| Kilmaine PS | 93 | 88 | 610 | 614 |
| Ballymagee PS | 58 | 58 | 406 | 398 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 91 | 87 | 580 | 569 |
| Bloomfield PS | 44 | 44 | 408 | 261 |
| Kilcooley PS | 21 | 21 | 567 | 116 |
| Clandeboyne PS | 21 | 21 | 544 | 132 |
| Grange Park PS | 42 | 42 | 361 | 360 |

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|-------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Rathmore PS | 77 | 77 | 631 | 493 |

2011/12 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 128 | 90 | 630 | 615 |
| Towerview PS | 77 | 49 | 319 | 319 |
| Kilmaine PS | 122 | 87 | 610 | 611 |
| Ballymagee PS | 81 | 60 | 406 | 395 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 98 | 87 | 588 | 575 |
| Bloomfield PS | 65 | 60 | 408 | 301 |
| Kilcooley PS | 15 | 15 | 567 | 118 |
| Clandeboyne PS | 23 | 23 | 544 | 146 |
| Grange Park PS | 79 | 52 | 361 | 360 |
| Rathmore PS | 101 | 85 | 552 | 519 |

2012/13 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 105 | 91 | 630 | N/A |
| Towerview PS | 77 | 54 | 319 | N/A |
| Kilmaine PS | 114 | 90 | 610 | N/A |
| Ballymagee PS | 75 | 60 | 406 | N/A |
| Bangor Central IPS | 115 | 87 | 618 | N/A |
| Bloomfield PS | 75 | 59 | 408 | N/A |
| Kilcooley PS | 22 | 22 | 567 | N/A |
| Clandeboyne PS | 44 | 44 | 544 | N/A |
| Grange Park PS | 86 | 60 | 402 | N/A |
| Rathmore PS | 105 | 84 | 552 | N/A |

Notes:

- 1 Figures on applications and admissions were provided by the South-Eastern Education and Library Board and represent the position at the end of the Open Enrolment process.
- 2 Application numbers are for the total number of preferences considered by each school so can include 2nd/ 3rd/other preferences passed to them in respect of applicants who were unsuccessful in obtaining a place in their 1st preference school.
- 3 The enrolment number is the number approved by the Department for overall enrolment in the school. This can be exceeded where a temporary variation has been approved by the Department.

- 4 Actual enrolments are taken from the annual school census as at the Friday of the first full week in October of each year. Figures for 2012/13 enrolments are not available as this years' data has not yet been received/verified.
- 5 All figures exclude pupils in receipt of a statement of special educational need

Enrolment Numbers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail, for each of the last five years, (i) the number of applications for primary 1 admission to; (ii) the number of pupils enrolled in; and (iii) the maximum allowable enrolment number for (a) Kilcooley Primary School; (b) Clandeboye Primary School; (c) Grange Park Primary School; and (d) Rathmore Primary School.

(AQW 15184/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The data requested is set out in the tables below

2008/09 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 94 | 90 | 683 | 592 |
| Towerview PS | 42 | 42 | 405 | 310 |
| Kilmaine PS | 96 | 90 | 610 | 602 |
| Ballymagee PS | 62 | 60 | 406 | 397 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 91 | 80 | 551 | 551 |
| Bloomfield PS | 30 | 30 | 408 | 253 |
| Kilcooley PS | 22 | 22 | 567 | 105 |
| Clandeboye PS | 20 | 20 | 544 | 165 |
| Grange Park PS | 61 | 51 | 361 | 357 |
| Rathmore PS | 62 | 62 | 631 | 427 |

2009/10 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 78 | 78 | 630 | 580 |
| Towerview PS | 41 | 41 | 319 | 299 |
| Kilmaine PS | 89 | 89 | 610 | 606 |
| Ballymagee PS | 63 | 58 | 406 | 401 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 83 | 83 | 555 | 557 |
| Bloomfield PS | 41 | 41 | 408 | 249 |
| Kilcooley PS | 17 | 17 | 567 | 104 |
| Clandeboye PS | 14 | 14 | 544 | 133 |
| Grange Park PS | 52 | 52 | 361 | 354 |
| Rathmore PS | 79 | 79 | 631 | 463 |

2010/11 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 84 | 84 | 630 | 588 |
| Towerview PS | 50 | 50 | 319 | 295 |
| Kilmaine PS | 93 | 88 | 610 | 614 |
| Ballymagee PS | 58 | 58 | 406 | 398 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 91 | 87 | 580 | 569 |
| Bloomfield PS | 44 | 44 | 408 | 261 |
| Kilcooley PS | 21 | 21 | 567 | 116 |
| Clandeboyne PS | 21 | 21 | 544 | 132 |
| Grange Park PS | 42 | 42 | 361 | 360 |
| Rathmore PS | 77 | 77 | 631 | 493 |

2011/12 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 128 | 90 | 630 | 615 |
| Towerview PS | 77 | 49 | 319 | 319 |
| Kilmaine PS | 122 | 87 | 610 | 611 |
| Ballymagee PS | 81 | 60 | 406 | 395 |
| Bangor Central IPS | 98 | 87 | 588 | 575 |
| Bloomfield PS | 65 | 60 | 408 | 301 |
| Kilcooley PS | 15 | 15 | 567 | 118 |
| Clandeboyne PS | 23 | 23 | 544 | 146 |
| Grange Park PS | 79 | 52 | 361 | 360 |
| Rathmore PS | 101 | 85 | 552 | 519 |

2012/13 SCHOOL YEAR

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Ballyholme PS | 105 | 91 | 630 | N/A |
| Towerview PS | 77 | 54 | 319 | N/A |
| Kilmaine PS | 114 | 90 | 610 | N/A |
| Ballymagee PS | 75 | 60 | 406 | N/A |
| Bangor Central IPS | 115 | 87 | 618 | N/A |
| Bloomfield PS | 75 | 59 | 408 | N/A |

| School | Applications for Admission | Numbers Admitted to P1 | Enrolment No. | Actual Enrolment |
|----------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Kilcooley PS | 22 | 22 | 567 | N/A |
| Clandeboye PS | 44 | 44 | 544 | N/A |
| Grange Park PS | 86 | 60 | 402 | N/A |
| Rathmore PS | 105 | 84 | 552 | N/A |

Notes:

- 6 Figures on applications and admissions were provided by the South-Eastern Education and Library Board and represent the position at the end of the Open Enrolment process.
- 7 Application numbers are for the total number of preferences considered by each school so can include 2nd/ 3rd/other preferences passed to them in respect of applicants who were unsuccessful in obtaining a place in their 1st preference school.
- 8 The enrolment number is the number approved by the Department for overall enrolment in the school. This can be exceeded where a temporary variation has been approved by the Department.
- 9 Actual enrolments are taken from the annual school census as at the Friday of the first full week in October of each year. Figures for 2012/13 enrolments are not available as this years' data has not yet been received/verified.
10. All figures exclude pupils in receipt of a statement of special educational need

Schools: New Computer Based Assessment System

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what steps he is taking to assist primary schools in dealing with the problems arising from the new computer based assessment system.

(AQW 15217/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is important to emphasise that these assessments are not "high stakes" and are not collected or collated centrally. Nonetheless, I recognise the pressures that the current technical issues have placed on some schools and, importantly, pupils. This is why as soon as I became aware of the difficulties I wrote to schools advising them to cease the assessments where necessary and reassuring them that they will not be required to report results to parents if the technical problems persist.

A dedicated CCEA Helpdesk for computer-based assessment is available to schools and CCEA and C2K have jointly provided a technical checklist for schools to follow before they begin the assessments. Schools still experiencing issues have also been informed in the first instance to contact the C2k helpdesk urgently and notify them of the precise technical difficulties experienced. In addition, Northgate have undertaken courtesy calls to schools that initially experienced issues, to ascertain if tests have been completed and to offer further assistance and support if issues remain.

C2k are embarking on more detailed analysis of the system-based issues in conjunction with all of the involved parties for those schools still reporting intermittent problems with the operation of the assessments. I met with Northgate, CCEA and the assessment suppliers on 16 October and instructed that this work is taken forward as a matter of urgency and that schools are informed as and when the assessments can be accessed without these difficulties.

I will be monitoring progress closely until a satisfactory resolution is found and I will be requesting a full report on the difficulties experienced by schools, including an analysis of why these were not apparent during the extensive trials run earlier this year.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Education, in light of the consultation underway on Education Maintenance Allowance, whether he will consider increasing the maximum income threshold for the £30 band for students whose household has more than one dependent child.

(AQW 15234/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A public consultation on the future of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) scheme was launched by the Minister for Employment and Learning and I on 30 July. The consultation period will end on 2 November 2012 and I would encourage everyone who has views on the matter to respond by that date.

The consultation document outlines five options for the future structure of EMAs in light of the need to better target the scheme. Whilst increasing the income threshold for families with more than one dependent child was not one of the five options put forward both Departments will, of course, consider carefully all responses received and alternative approaches suggested as part of the consultation process when deciding on the way forward.

Language at Schools

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary pupils have (a) a language other than English or Irish as their first language; or (b) English as an additional language, in each of the last three years; and what percentage of the total school population this represents.

(AQW 15242/11-15)

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

Pupils at primary schools¹ whose first language is not English or Irish 2009/10 – 2011/12

| Year | Pupils who have a first language other than English or Irish ² | Total school population | % |
|---------|---|-------------------------|-----|
| 2009/10 | 6,218 | 163,771 | 3.8 |
| 2010/11 | 6,793 | 163,451 | 4.2 |
| 2011/12 | 7,476 | 164,812 | 4.5 |

Pupils at post-primary schools whose first language is not English or Irish 2009/10 – 2011/12

| Year | Pupils who have a first language other than English or Irish ² | Total school population | % |
|---------|---|-------------------------|-----|
| 2009/10 | 3,204 | 147,759 | 2.2 |
| 2010/11 | 3,585 | 147,902 | 2.4 |
| 2011/12 | 4,097 | 146,747 | 2.8 |

Source: school census

Note:

- 1 Figures for primary schools include children in nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.
- 2 Pupils classified as Newcomer are a subset of this group.

Language at Schools

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary pupils in South Belfast have had (a) a language other than English or Irish as their first language; or (b) English

as an additional language, in each of the last three years; and what are the ten other languages most frequently used.

(AQW 15244/11-15)

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

PUPILS WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE WAS NOT ENGLISH OR IRISH², RESIDENT IN THE SOUTH BELFAST CONSTITUENCY, 2009/10 – 2011/12

| Year | Primary school ¹ | Post-primary school | Total |
|---------|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| 2009/10 | 772 | 364 | 1,136 |
| 2010/11 | 857 | 388 | 1,245 |
| 2011/12 | 917 | 436 | 1,353 |

THE 10 MOST FREQUENTLY RECORDED LANGUAGES, FOR THOSE PRIMARY SCHOOL¹ PUPILS RESIDENT IN THE SOUTH BELFAST CONSTITUENCY, WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE WAS NOT ENGLISH OR IRISH², 2009/10 – 2011/12

| 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Polish | Polish | Polish |
| Arabic | Arabic | Arabic |
| Chinese (Cantonese) | Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua) | Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua) |
| Chinese (Mandarin) | Chinese (Cantonese) | Malayalam |
| Hindi | Hindi | Chinese (Cantonese) |
| Filipino | Tagalog/Filipino | Hindi |
| Chinese (other) | Romany | Tagalog/Filipino |
| Malayalam | Malayalam | Romanian |
| Urdu | Bengali/Bangla/Sylheti | Bengali/Bangla/Sylheti |
| Bengali | Romanian | Chinese (any other) |

THE 10 MOST FREQUENTLY RECORDED LANGUAGES, FOR THOSE POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS RESIDENT IN THE SOUTH BELFAST CONSTITUENCY, WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE WAS NOT ENGLISH OR IRISH², 2009/10 – 2011/12

| 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Polish | Polish | Polish |
| Chinese (Cantonese) | Chinese (Cantonese) | Chinese (Cantonese) |
| Arabic | Arabic | Arabic |
| Chinese (other) | Tagalog/Filipino | Tagalog/Filipino |
| Romanian | Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua) | Chinese (Mandarin/Putonghua) |
| Filipino | Romanian | Romanian |
| Bengali | Bengali/Bangla/Sylheti | Bengali/Bangla/Sylheti |
| Spanish | Hindi | Malayalam |

| 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Indian (not specified) | French | Hindi |
| = Chinese (Mandarin) / Malayalam /Russian /Tagalog | Malayalam | Urdu |

Source: school census

Note:

- 3 Figures for primary schools include children in nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.
- 4 Pupils classified as Newcomers are a subset of this group.
- 5 Figures relate to pupils resident in the South Belfast constituency.
- 6 Language codes were revised from 2010/11 onwards. Additional languages, previously recorded as ‘other’ were added to the list of languages that schools could record.

First Language of Pupils

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Education how much additional funding is available to schools to meet the needs of pupils who do not have English or Irish as their first language.

(AQW 15245/11-15)

Mr O’Dowd: All grant-aided schools are funded under the Common Funding Formula, a mechanism to distribute funding in a consistent and equitable way to schools using common measures of identified needs. Under the Newcomer Pupil Factor, funding is provided to meet the needs of pupils who do not have English or Irish as their first language. In the 2012-13 financial year £8.4 million was allocated directly to schools to support Newcomer Pupils.

In addition my Department provides an additional £0.84 million earmarked funding to the Education and Library Boards to fund the regional Inclusion and Diversity Service to provide advice and support to all schools.

Establishment of the Education and Skills Authority

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education whether his Department prepared, or commissioned, a business case on the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority; and to detail (i) whether this commissioning process was based on a competitive tender action; (ii) when the competition took place; (iii) when the business case was provided; and (iv) when would it have been regarded necessary to re-commission a new business case to account for passage of time.

(AQW 15251/11-15)

Mr O’Dowd: In 2007, and following an Invitation to Tender published by DE on 30 August, 2007, DE commissioned external consultants to produce the Outline Business Case (OBC) for ESA. Work on the OBC completed in May, 2008. On 3 September, 2012, DE commissioned the same consultants to build on and validate their work on the OBC in the completion of a Full Business Case (FBC) for ESA. The need for an FBC, in order to complete the process begun by the OBC, and conducted at the appropriate stage in the legislative progress towards the establishment of ESA, has been understood since completion of the OBC.

Apprentices Employed Through Departmental Contracts

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Education how many apprentices have been employed through departmental contracts in this financial year; and what percentage this number represents of the total posts allocated.

(AQW 15259/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There are currently no apprenticeship programmes available within the Department of Education.

Shared Education Programmes

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Education how many children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes; and how many schools currently share facilities.

(AQW 15261/11-15)

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

The Programme for Government includes a range of commitments on advancing shared education including to:

- ensure all children have the opportunity to participate in shared education programmes by 2015;and
- substantially increase the number of schools sharing facilities by 2015;

During the current financial year I will set objectives for these commitments.

Free School Meals

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary pupils are currently in receipt of free school meals, broken down by (a) school type; and (b) Education and Library Board.

(AQW 15268/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of children taking school meals varies from week to week. However, information collected annually from the School Meals Census provides a snapshot of the numbers present and taking meals on the day on which census information is gathered. The most recent figures available on pupils taking free school meals, taken from the 2011 School Meals Census, are contained in the table below:

NUMBER OF PUPILS PRESENT AND TAKING FREE SCHOOL MEALS ON CENSUS DAY (7TH OCTOBER 2011) BY EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD AND SCHOOL TYPE – 2011/12

| School Type | Management Type | Belfast | Western | North Eastern | South Eastern | Southern | Total |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Primary1 and Preparatory Department | Controlled | 3020 | 1997 | 4025 | 2719 | 2245 | 14006 |
| | Voluntary | # | - | 0 | * | 0 | 12 |
| | Catholic Maintained | 4561 | 5709 | 1775 | 2303 | 4995 | 19343 |
| | Other Maintained | # | 195 | 69 | # | 146 | 915 |
| | Controlled Integrated | 137 | 12 | 253 | 260 | 22 | 684 |
| | Grant Maintained Integrated | 216 | 298 | 241 | 104 | 198 | 1057 |
| | Total | | 8378 | 8211 | 6363 | 5459 | 7606 |

| School Type | Management Type | Belfast | Western | North Eastern | South Eastern | Southern | Total |
|--------------|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| Post-Primary | Controlled | 820 | 902 | 1535 | 1055 | 911 | 5223 |
| | Voluntary | 807 | 923 | 370 | 186 | 704 | 2990 |
| | Catholic Maintained | 2271 | 3126 | 1188 | 942 | 2599 | 10126 |
| | Other Maintained | 144 | - | - | - | - | 144 |
| | Controlled Integrated | - | - | 92 | 144 | 125 | 361 |
| | Grant Maintained Integrated | 555 | 458 | 310 | 308 | 136 | 1767 |
| | Total | | 4597 | 5409 | 3495 | 2635 | 4475 |

Source: NI School Meals Census 2011/12

Note:

- 1 Primary includes nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes in grant-aided primary schools.
- 2 Some Nursery units of Primary schools have not introduced all pupils to school by the Census date so the numbers taking a school meal may be lower than if collected later in the year.
- 3 Some Nursery unit pupils only attend a half day session which may not include time for a midday meal.
- 4 Reception pupils and primary 1 pupils in some schools attend for only a half-day session until the end of October which may not include time for a midday meal.
- 5 * denotes fewer than 5 pupils.
- 6 # denotes figure greater than or equal to 5 suppressed due to potential identification of individual pupils
- 7 - indicates no schools in this category

Projected Capital Spend

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to outline the projected capital spend for (i) 2012/13; (ii) 2013/14; and (iii) 2014/15; and how much of this spend will be allocated in each year to progress the 18 projects that were announced on 25 June 2012.

(AQW 15269/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The gross capital budget for Education over the remaining 3 years of the budget period is 2012/13 - £104 million, 2013/14 - £108 million, stepping up to £183 million in 2014-15. This budget is required to cover investment in youth, transport, ICT, early years, School Enhancement Fund, minor works and committed major works, as well a number of other capital requirements. The department is currently on course to spend the 2012/13 budget in full .

On 25 June 2012 the Minister announced capital investment plans of £133m across 18 major capital build projects, including 5 Special Schools.

On the assumption that all of the 18 newly announced build projects successfully commence as planned there will be contractual commitments for these projects of 2012/13 - £1.5m, 2013/14 - £21.1m and 2014/15 - £63.9m. The balance of the investment on these 18 projects will fall into the next budget period and will be factored into budgetary planning for 2015-16 and beyond.

These projects will be progressed with the relevant managing authority and the timescales for doing so will be subject to the necessary planning and building processes being completed. It should be noted

that due to the nature and the degree of uncertainty associated with timings of capital projects these allocations are subject to fluctuation and will be continually reviewed.

Enrolment Numbers

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to outline the methodology used by his Department to calculate the enrolment and admissions number of a (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary school.

(AQW 15271/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Enrolment and admissions numbers are determined by the Department in line with its statutory duties under Articles 11 and 12 respectively of the Education (NI) Order 1997, having regard to a number of factors and in particular to the teaching accommodation available at a school.

Paragraphs 13 to 22 of DE Circular 2012/12 "Open Enrolment in Primary Schools" which is available on the Department's website at

http://www.deni.gov.uk/circular_201212_-_open_enrolment_in_primary_schools_pdf_593_kb.pdf explain how the admissions and enrolment numbers are determined for primary schools.

For post-primary schools, admissions and enrolment numbers are set taking into account a number of additional factors including; the availability of places in an area; the Long Term Enrolment number and Pupil Teacher Ratios.

The actual number of pupils in a school can exceed the enrolment or admissions number for a number of reasons. Pupils in receipt of a statement of special educational need and pupils admitted on appeal, or by direction of the Exceptional Circumstances Body (post-primary schools only) 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.

Curriculum and Advisory Support Service

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many staff are currently employed in the Curriculum and Advisory Support Service, in each Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 15272/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

| | Number of officers employed in CASS |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| BELB | 36 |
| WELB | 53 |
| NEELB | 37 |
| SEELB | 32 |
| SELB | 36 |

Enrolment Numbers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what flexibility his Department has in adjusting the cap on the enrolment numbers of individual schools.

(AQW 15279/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The role of the Department of Education in setting enrolment numbers for schools is set out in article 11 of the Education (NI) Order 1997. The Department determines the enrolment number of a school having regard to directions under Article 18 of the Education (NI) Order 1986 (the conditions of the school premises) and the accommodation available for use by the pupils at the school. The Department may also vary the enrolment number of the school at any time. Before

either setting the numbers or varying them the Department must consult with the Board of Governors of the school, the relevant Education and Library Board, and, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools where appropriate. Where a request to vary the numbers has come from the school itself this constitutes consultation and therefore the Department is not required to consult with the school a second time. Ultimately, after any such consultation has taken place, it is the Department's legal duty to set the school's numbers as it deems to be appropriate.

In considering a request from a school for a temporary increase of their enrolment number, the Department considers each case on its own merits taking account of factors such as the statutory requirement upon a school to admit up to its admissions number, the availability of places at other schools in the same educational sector within reasonable travelling distance, and (for post-primary schools with sixth forms) re-admission of pupils to Year 13.

Any permanent increase to a school's enrolment number which fundamentally changes the character of a school e.g. from a 5 class base school to 6, can only be considered through the area planning process and after publication and approval of a Development Proposal.

Capital Projects

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Education to detail the number and value of the capital projects completed in the last three years in (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools in East Derry.
(AQW 15290/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There have been no major capital projects undertaken by my Department in the last three years, in either the primary or post-primary sector, in the East Derry constituency area.

Educational Underachievement

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education for an update on his proposal for a new initiative to tackle educational underachievement in Belfast.
(AQW 15328/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have made available £250k in 2012/13, with a further £500k in 2013/14 and 2014/15 to develop a project in the Greater Belfast area, covering West Belfast, Shankill, Collin Glen, Twinbrook and Poleglass. This initiative will be tightly focused, aimed at raising educational standards and tackling disadvantage and linked to my raising standards priorities and PfG commitments.

Whilst there have been improvements in educational standards in Belfast over recent years, particular challenges remain. Belfast displays:

- much higher levels of deprivation among primary school children than the NI average;
- the lowest proportion across all the ELBs of pupils at the expected level at the end of primary school in English and maths; and
- the lowest proportion across all the ELBs of Year 12 pupils getting at least 5 GCSEs at A* - C (or equivalent) including GCSEs in English and maths in both grammar and non-grammar schools.

The Belfast Education and Library Board will have responsibility for the delivery of the project and discussions are currently ongoing between the Belfast and South-Eastern Education and Library Boards, the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and my Department on how best to take this initiative forward and the arrangements to be put in place to distribute funding.

Irish-Medium Schools

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW10780/11-15, for an update on progress in determining how much each school has been paid for rent in each of the last three years.
(AQW 15330/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department has been working with the Education and Library Boards (ELB's) to gather details of any rent that had already paid in order to cross-reference with new claims to avoid duplication. This verified information together with supporting documentation has been forwarded to the appropriate ELB, as funding authority, to make payments directly to landlords on behalf of schools.

AQW 11685/11-15 and AQW 12331/11-15 provided detail on the amount of rent paid by ELB's over the last 10 years.

Consultation on Area Planning Proposals

Mrs Dobson asked Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 14834/11-15, what legal advice he has received, with particular reference to Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, in relation to the timescale given to schools to respond to the Area Planning process, given that the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools engaged in a similar Area Planning exercise in 2010 which did not have imposed time constraints.

(AQW 15343/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have neither sought nor received any specific legal advice in relation to the timescale given to schools to respond to the Area Planning Process.

All DE policies are screened to ensure that there is no adverse differential impact on Section 75 groups or if there are opportunities to promote equality of opportunity or better community relations. As advised in my earlier answer, the Area Planning process does not therefore require a separate Section 75 screening as it is the delivery of policies that have already been subject to separate individual screening exercises.

The timescale for the consultation process currently underway lasts 16 weeks which exceeds the minimum consultation period of 12 weeks as set out in the Equality Commission Good Practice Guidelines for Public Authorities.

The "Area Planning exercise carried out in 2010", to which you refer, was a sector specific strategic planning process carried out by the Commission for Catholic Education (NICCE) to inform the future development of the Catholic Maintained sector in line with Departmental policies. This is an independent body and the timeframe for this exercise and any consultation was therefore a matter entirely for NICCE to determine.

Admission to Primary Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education, in each of the last five years, how many times pupils, who were initially refused admission to a primary school, have subsequently been admitted to that primary school on the grounds of exceptional circumstances.

(AQW 15180/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department of Education does not collect data on individual pupils and the circumstances of their admission to primary school. This information should be sought from the primary schools in question.

Education Bill

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education what was the consultation process followed in respect of the Education Bill (NIA 14/11-15); and how this process complies with departmental guidance on consultations.

(AQW 15376/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As there was extensive public consultation on the underlying policy proposals, it was not considered necessary to consult on the draft Bill, and there is no formal requirement to do so.

Sectoral Working Group on Voluntary Grammar Schools

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education when he will set up a sectoral working group on voluntary grammar schools.

(AQW 15386/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have no plans to set up a sectoral working group in regards to Voluntary Grammar schools.

Special Needs Assessment

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to detail the number children who were awaiting a special needs assessment at 1 October 2012, broken down by Education and Library Board; and how this compares to the same period of each of the last five years.

(AQW 15387/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The initial referral of a child to an educational psychologist will, in almost all cases, take place at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

The Chief Executives of the education and library boards have informed me that the number of children awaiting a Stage 3 assessment by an educational psychologist is as follows:

| | BELB | NEELB | SEELB | SELB | WELB |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 October 2008 | 66 | 280 | 214 | 298 | 136 |
| 1 October 2009 | 43 | 228 | 180 | 304 | 132 |
| 1 October 2010 | 65 | 236 | 225 | 320 | 172 |
| 1 October 2011 | 52 | 235 | 300 | 377 | 195 |
| 1 October 2012 | 66 | 246 | 263 | 397 | 203 |

Pupils Awaiting Special Needs Assessment

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education how his Department ensures that all schools adequately submit returns detailing the current numbers of pupils awaiting special needs assessment.

(AQW 15389/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is the Education and Library Boards which are responsible under special educational legislation for assessing the special educational needs of children in their areas. This legislation does not give the Department of Education any role in the process which is intended to be conducted between parents, schools and boards.

The Education and Library Boards have confirmed that a time allocation model for educational psychology services is used across all Boards which is based upon the need for commonality, consistency and equity of practice across the five boards.

Under this system schools are given an annual allocation of time from their Board's educational psychology service and the school prioritises potential referrals to the service. It is, therefore, the schools which prioritise the pupils whom they deem to be most in need of assessment, usually through discussion with the Boards' educational psychology services. This model allows schools to appraise the needs of pupils on their waiting lists on an ongoing basis.

Children from the Traveller Community

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many children from the traveller community attend schools, broken down by (i) sector; and (ii) Education and Library Board.

(AQW 15408/11-15)

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

TRAVELLER2 PUPILS BROKEN DOWN BY ELB – 2011/12

| ELB | Nursery schools | Primary ¹ | Post primary | Special | Total |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Belfast | 0 | 132 | 49 | 10 | 191 |
| Western | * | 138 | 76 | # | 224 |
| North Eastern | * | 41 | 21 | # | 69 |
| South Eastern | * | 9 | 29 | * | 42 |
| Southern | * | 310 | 140 | # | 461 |
| Total | 5 | 630 | 315 | 37 | 987 |

Source: School census

Note:

- 1 Figures for primary schools include children in nursery, reception and year 1 – 7 classes.
- 2 Figures include Irish and Roma Travellers.

'*' denotes figures less than 5

'#' denotes figure more than or equal to 5 suppressed to avoid possible identification of individuals.

Education Support Service for the Travelling Community

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what costs are associated with the establishment of a education support service for the traveller community.

(AQW 15410/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards are in the process of establishing a regional Traveller Education Support Service (TESS) to be operational by April 2013. The costs incurred are being met from within the existing earmarked budget for traveller education. The planned budget for the new service for 2013/2014 is £423,000.

Legislation: Children of a Parent Travelling on Business

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education whether his Department will be reviewing the legislation which allows the children of a parent travelling on business to attend school only 100 days per year.

(AQW 15411/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department will be reviewing the legislation and this is included in the recently published Draft Traveller Child in Education Action Framework. Views are being sought from stakeholders during the consultation on the draft Action Framework and they will inform the way forward.

Education Support Service for the Travelling Community

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what regulations will be required for the introduction of an education support service for the travelling community.

(AQW 15412/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There are no regulations required for the introduction of the Traveller Education Support Service. This service is being established by Education and Library Boards within existing lead board arrangements to move towards shared and regionalised services.

Computer-Based Assessments in Literacy and Numeracy

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education what is the past, current and ongoing financial commitment to the companies providing the computer-based assessments in literacy and numeracy; and whether there is any claw-back facility arising from the unsatisfactory performance of these systems
(AQW 15423/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The software licence costs associated with the previously specified InCAS assessments were as follows:

| 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 (note 1) | Totals |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|
| £104,160 | £160,745 | £315,756 | £135,016 | £334,764 | £1,050,441 |

Note 1: Software Licence - full cost for 2011/12 to end of contract 18 Jan 2012

The contracts for the current computer-based assessment tools are for a 3-year period (with the option to extend for up to 2 further years).

The contract costs for the two new assessment suppliers are as follows:

| | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | Totals |
|------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|
| NILA | £446,754 | £195,287 | £187,741 | £829,782 |
| NINA | £404,000 | £162,700 | £141,500 | £708,200 |

In the event that any part of the services supplied do not meet the requirements of the contract, or differ in any way from those requirements, both contracts contain claw-back clauses.

Enrolment Figures at Holywood Primary School

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the enrolment figures at Holywood Primary School for each of the last five years; and what is the enrolment cap at the school.
(AQW 15426/11-15)

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

| Year | Total enrolment | Approved enrolment |
|---------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 2007/08 | 332 | 523 |
| 2008/09 | 343 | 523 |
| 2009/10 | 342 | 523 |
| 2010/11 | 324 | 523 |
| 2011/12 | 306 | 523 |

Note:

- 1 Actual enrolment figures are sourced from the school census.
- 2 Approved enrolment is the maximum number of pupils who can be enrolled at the school. This number is determined by the Department having regard to a number of factors and in particular to the teaching accommodation available at a school.

Training for Teachers who Work with Children with Autism

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Education what training is provided for teachers to help them work with children with autism.

(AQW 15451/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The education and library boards are responsible for providing autism-specific training in mainstream schools and all boards deliver a range of autism-specific training for school staff.

In addition, the Middletown Centre for Autism has provided a comprehensive range of training opportunities for those supporting children with autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs) across all schools. Each year schools receive a detailed prospectus of training courses available from the Centre.

The training provided by the Centre is tailored to the needs of educational professionals, school staff and parents. A range of sessions are specifically designed to the needs of staff in mainstream schools. In partnership with the inter-board ASD teams, the Centre also provides tailored whole school training for schools upon request.

Development Proposal for Drumragh Integrated College

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education, given the comment in his speech of 26 September 2012 on Putting Pupils First- shaping our future, that some successful schools are currently oversubscribed but that guidance from his Department will make it clear that these plans should allow for popular oversubscribed schools to grow further, to explain the reasons behind his recent decision to refuse the development proposal for Drumragh Integrated College.

(AQW 15585/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The reference I made in my speech to allowing popular oversubscribed schools to grow was made within the context of Area Planning the focus of which is to determine the future needs of pupils on an area across all sectors. It was never my intention that any school could simply grow without that growth being contextualised within an area plan.

The area planning process for Omagh is at an early stage of development and it is through this process that the need and pattern of post-primary provision in the area will be identified in a coherent and strategic manner, involving the collaboration and agreement of all sectors. No sector is exempt from this process.

Each published Development Proposal is considered on its individual merits and against the backdrop of Departmental policies and in the local area context. When examining the case for an increase in enrolments for Drumragh Integrated College, I took into consideration a wide range of factors impacting on the local area, including the local demographics, the potential impact on other school providers, the level of unfilled places in the overall Omagh area, the number and nature of objections received, the number and nature of support received and the fact that this school recently benefited from over £22.5m capital investment for its current accommodation and site, which cannot accommodate further expansion to facilitate the proposed 30% increase in enrolment.

It is important to note that I have a statutory obligation, when deciding on a Development Proposal, to consider the impact of a change in any school on other grant-aided schools. It is entirely proper therefore that I consider the impact of the proposed increase in size of Drumragh Integrated College on other schools in the area.

I am fully aware of my Department's statutory duty under Article 64 of the Education Reform (NI) Order 1989 to 'encourage and facilitate' the development of integrated education and my Department's commitment to fulfilling this duty has been clearly demonstrated over many years through the provision of funding and the support given to allow the sector to grow. I also recognise that we have a diverse education system which represents the expressed wishes of all parents. Expression of parental preference is a long established entitlement and is fully articulated in the Education (NI) Order 1997. I must however still be mindful of other statutory requirements, including the need to balance parental

preference against the provision of efficient and effective education and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.

Development Proposal for Drumragh Integrated College

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education, given the commitment contained in the Education Order 1989 to encourage the growth of integrated schools, how the decision to refuse the development proposal for Drumragh Integrated College can be justified on the grounds of its effect on other schools in the area.

(AQW 15588/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The reference I made in my speech to allowing popular oversubscribed schools to grow was made within the context of Area Planning the focus of which is to determine the future needs of pupils on an area across all sectors. It was never my intention that any school could simply grow without that growth being contextualised within an area plan.

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Development Proposal for Drumragh Integrated College

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education, in the light of the decision to refuse the development proposal for Drumragh Integrated College, whether his Department remains committed to the extension of the Integrated school movement and the principle of parental choice.

(AQW 15590/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The reference I made in my speech to allowing popular oversubscribed schools to grow was made within the context of Area Planning the focus of which is to determine the future needs of pupils on an area across all sectors. It was never my intention that any school could simply grow without that growth being contextualised within an area plan.

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Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Education whether there are budgetary implications resulting from the CCEA's decision to withdraw from offering examinations in England.

(AQO 2687/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The decision by CCEA to withdraw from offering examinations in England was taken in the context of the remit of CCEA as a commercial awarding organisation. This decision was approved by the CCEA Council.

The main reason for this withdrawal was due to the decision taken by Michael Gove that all GCSEs offered in England from September 2012 would revert to linear end-of-course assessment. To continue to offer GCSE qualifications in England, CCEA would have needed to revise its specifications so that a linear form of assessment only is made available.

There are no budgetary implications resulting from this decision other than a small reduction in gross profit of approximately £100k p.a. CCEA will continue to receive allocations from my Department to carry out its statutory duties, in the north of Ireland, in relation to the curriculum, examinations and assessment. The income received from its commercial operations is separate to that.

As is standard practice, if any funding gaps are identified, to enable CCEA to carry out its statutory duties here, that organisation will advise my Department as part of the normal financial monitoring process.

School Closures

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education how many (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools does he expect to close by the end of 2013.

(AQW 15608/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is the responsibility of the relevant school managing authority, in the first instance, to manage provision in the schools estate and to bring forward proposals. Any significant change to a school, such as a school closure, requires the publication of a statutory Development Proposal.

Based on published Development Proposals on which I have made a decision, three post-primary schools are expected to close by the end of 2013 as follows:

- St Eugene's High School, Castleterg
- St Peter's High School, Derry
- Garvagh High School

A Development Proposal has been published for the closure of St Gemma's High School, Belfast with effect from 31 August 2013. The statutory 2 month period is due to end 13 November 2012, after which I will make a decision.

Review of 'A' Levels and GCSEs

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what is the proposed timescale of his Department's review of 'A' Levels and GCSEs.

(AQW 15638/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As I announced in the Assembly on 1 October 2012, CCEA has been tasked to undertake the review of A Levels and GCSEs and to set-up a Steering Group consisting of key stakeholders from schools, Further Education and Higher Education sectors and employers. CCEA will produce 2 interim reports in January 2013 and March 2013 respectively, with a final report due in June 2013.

Development Proposals Awaiting a Ministerial Decision

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Education to list his Department's current development proposals that are awaiting a Ministerial decision.

(AQW 15651/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There are currently 11 published Development Proposals – 9 of which are recent publications that are still within the 2-month statutory objection period and these are:

| School | ELB Area | Date of Publication | 2-month objection period ends | Detail of Proposal |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| St Malachy's PS, Castlewellan | SEELB | 03/09/12 | 03/11/12 | Proposal that the three Moderate Learning Difficulty Units located at St Malachy's Primary School should be changed to Learning Support Units. The modified Units will accommodate 30 P1 to P7 pupils and will be operational from 31 August 2013. |
| Carryduff PS | SEELB | 03/09/12 | 03/11/12 | Proposal that a Learning Support Unit is created at Carryduff Primary School. This unit will accommodate 6 to 8 P1 to P7 pupils and will be operational from 31 August 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter. |

| School | ELB Area | Date of Publication | 2-month objection period ends | Detail of Proposal |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| St Gemma's HS | BELB | 13/09/12 | 13/11/12 | Proposal that St Gemma's High School Belfast will close with effect from 31 August 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter. |
| Orchard County PS | SELB | 14/09/12 | 14/11/12 | To extend the capacity of Orchard County Primary School from a 5 to a 6 class base primary school from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter. |
| Fairhill PS, Dromore, Co Down | SELB | 14/09/12 | 14/11/12 | To extend the capacity of Fairhill Primary School from a 10 to an 11 class base primary school from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter. |
| Ballycolman NS, Strabane | WELB | 08/10/12 | 10/12/12 | Proposal that Ballycolman Nursery School will close from 31 December 2012 or as soon as possible thereafter. Predicated upon prior Ministerial approval being given to DP232 |
| St Mary's PS Strabane | WELB | 08/10/12 | 10/12/12 | Proposal that St Mary's PS establish an additional double nursery unit (52 fulltime places) using the existing site of Ballycolman NS, to increase the enrolment to 104 fulltime places with effect from 1 Jan 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter |
| New-Bridge Int. College | SELB | 18/10/12 | 18/12/12 | To increase the admission and enrolment number at New-Bridge Integrated College from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter. |
| Donacloney PS | SELB | 18/10/12 | 18/12/12 | To extend the capacity of Donacloney Primary School from a 9 to an 10 class base primary school from 1 September 2013 or as soon as possible thereafter. |

The remaining 2 Development Proposals currently under consideration are for:

- Colaiste Feirste, a Belfast based Irish Medium Post Primary school, to establish a post primary satellite of Colaiste Feirste in Maghera: and
- Dungannon Nursery School to establish a third full-time nursery unit.

Schools: Absenteeism

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Education how his Department works in partnership with other Departments and agencies to improve school attendance in the thirty wards with the highest levels of absenteeism.

(AQO 2695/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department is committed to tackling school absenteeism particularly in those areas and schools with the highest levels of absenteeism. We have been working collaboratively with Education Welfare Service, DHSSPS, DEL, Health Trusts and third party organisations such as VOYPIC and Fostering Network to develop programmes and guidance to provide targeted support for vulnerable groups of children.

My Department has also commissioned research into improving attendance in schools serving deprived areas and this has identified a range of strategies that can be applied to promote good attendance. These include implementing attendance policies, having designated staff with roles and responsibilities for attendance, providing additional support for poor attendees and creating strong relationships between schools, parents and carers.

My officials are taking forward the findings of this research and are working with the Education Welfare Service, other agencies and schools to target resources and strategies where they are most needed and develop best practice guidance based on these recommendations.

Schools: Key Stage Assessments

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education what the main learning points were from the 'Shadow Year' trial of the proposed processes for the forthcoming end of Key Stage assessments.

(AQO 2690/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Revised assessment arrangements are at the heart of "Count, read; succeed", my policy to raise standards in literacy and numeracy for our young people.

For this to be effective, parents, pupils, teachers and policy makers all need to have confidence in assessment outcomes.

The requirements of moderated teacher assessment will be new to many schools and, for this reason, it was agreed that the introduction of the new arrangements should be deferred for a year while CCEA operated a "shadow year", designed to trial the arrangements with a view to ensuring that they are both robust and manageable.

I have been assured by CCEA that the findings of that shadow year have informed the Council's final advice to me on moderation arrangements for 2012/13 and that the arrangements themselves have been amended in light of lessons learned during the shadow year.

However, I do recognise the ongoing challenges of change and have been conscious of concerns expressed in recent weeks about timescales and workload, particularly in the primary sector. I have therefore asked CCEA to increase its engagement with school principals in order to identify what further practical support might be provided and to ensure that the moderation arrangements operate with minimal bureaucracy.

A full report on the findings from the Shadow Year has been produced by the CCEA Statistics and Research Team and will be available on the CCEA website in the near future.

Kilcooley Primary School in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many pupils are enrolled in Kilcooley Primary School in Bangor.

(AQW 15710/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Figures submitted for the 2012/13 census return indicate that there are 165 children enrolled in Kilcooley Primary School in the current school year.

Pupils Travel Passes

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Education to outline the process whereby school pupils are able to sell their travel passes back to the Education and Library Boards.

(AQW 15716/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Pupils do not sell their travel passes back to Boards. This erroneous interpretation of the school transport policy arose in the media.

Boards apply the current school transport policy when assessing the eligibility of pupils. Eligible pupils are then legally entitled to receive assistance, and this may take the form of a seat on a bus (Translink, Board, or privately operated) or taxi, or in certain circumstances their parents may receive a monetary allowance in lieu of transport.

Exchanging a Translink ticket for an allowance is permitted only during the period of September to October as Boards have not, at that time, been invoiced by Translink for tickets issued. Therefore, the exchange from ticket to allowance does not result in additional cost to a Board. After the Translink invoice has been received (usually by 31st October) no further ticket exchanges are permitted as this would result in additional expenditure to the Board.

Schools: Entitlement Framework

Mr McCartney asked the Minister of Education whether more can be done to ensure that parents and pupils are fully informed of the benefits and choices available under the Entitlement Framework.

(AQO 2696/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is essential that parents and pupils are made aware of the changes to and the opportunities and flexibility offered by the entitlement framework which becomes statutory from September 2013. I have asked my officials to develop a communications strategy and a number of prospective channels to raise awareness amongst parents and pupils are under active consideration. In addition, in year 3 of my "Education Works" campaign, the focus will broaden the target group to include parents and pupils preparing for public examinations at GCSE level and I fully expect that the campaign will provide an additional and very visible vehicle for the entitlement framework message.

GCSEs and A Levels

Mrs McKevitt asked the Minister of Education how experiences of the Scottish and Republic of Ireland examinations systems will be included in the Review of GCSE and A Level qualifications.

(AQO 2697/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have seen details of the Scottish and south of Ireland qualification systems and visited the Scottish Minister, Michael Russell recently. I am also in regular contact with my southern counterpart, Ruairi Quinn.

In Scotland I was impressed by a system which enjoys all the benefits of our qualifications system with seemingly none of the disbenefits. There would be nothing to stop us from recreating a similar system here if we were minded to do so. The same is the case with the current model in the south.

The review of qualifications will look at all local qualifications systems including the south. Nothing is being ruled out.

What we must do, irrespective of the system in place is ensure that a learner can take his or her qualifications and use them anywhere across these islands to apply for a university place or job as is currently the case.

I can assure you that our qualifications system here will continue to be one that is capable of attracting the confidence of young people, parents, teachers, employers and universities.

DE: Budget

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Education what engagement he has had with the Executive about securing additional funding for the education budget.

(AQO 2699/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It was clear that the Budget 2011-15 outcome for education presented major challenges and so, since taking up office, I have consistently made it clear that I would lobby Executive colleagues for additional resources to help alleviate pressures on the education budget. In January this year, following discussions with the First Minister, Deputy First Minister and Finance Minister, I was successful in securing an additional £120m for education over the next 3 years. This funding will be allocated straight to schools to help lessen pressures facing the classroom.

More recently the First Minister and Deputy First Minister announced on 10 October additional support to provide 230 young unemployed teachers with an opportunity to get teaching experience while contributing to one of my key priorities of raising educational achievement. This will be achieved by delivering one to one tuition for children in primary and post primary schools who are at risk of under achieving. By focussing on the core skills of literacy and numeracy we will ensure more young people can achieve to their full potential.

In addition, I have sought from the Executive additional funding in monitoring rounds. I submitted two resource bids in the June Monitoring round for the drawdown of schools surpluses and schools maintenance costs, for £5 million and £9.4 million, respectively. The former was met in full and £4.0 million of the £9.4 million maintenance bid was agreed by the Executive.

In the current October monitoring round, my Department submitted three capital bids totalling £7.2 million, including funds to address the recent fire damage to Arvalee Special School and Resource Centre. In addition, my Department submitted one resource bid of £2.0 million for additional schools estate maintenance costs. I await the outcome of the current monitoring round, which will be discussed by the Executive next week.

Any additional funding that I have secured is, of course, welcome but the education sector continues to face significant financial pressures and I will continue at every opportunity to lobby my Executive colleagues in order to secure additional funding.

Special Educational Needs: South Eastern Education and Library Board

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Education why it takes six months to complete a statutory assessment and statement of special educational needs for children within the South Eastern Education and Library Board area.

(AQO 2700/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education (Special Educational Needs) Regulations (NI) 2005 detail that following a decision to complete a statutory assessment, all education and library boards have 26 weeks to complete the assessment and statementing process, subject to permitted exceptions.

This 26 week period is broken down as follows:

- to issue the decision on whether or not to carry out a statutory assessment - 6 weeks.
- to complete the statutory assessment and decide whether or not to make a statement – 10 weeks
- after completing the assessment the board must either issue a proposed statement or inform the parent that it does not propose to make a statement - 2 weeks
- if the board chooses to make a statement, to issue the completed final statement – 8 weeks

Education and Skills Authority: Membership

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister of Education how members will be appointed to the Education and Skills Authority.

(AQO 2701/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is my intention that members will be appointed in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Education Bill that I introduced to the Assembly on 2 October 2012.

Department for Employment and Learning

Students who have City and Guilds Level 2 Qualifications in Essential Skills

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) whether he is aware of the difficulties faced by students who have City and Guilds Level 2 qualifications in Essential Skills who are applying to higher education courses at universities in England, Scotland and Wales that refuse to accept the qualifications' equivalence to GCSE English and Mathematics, and other similar qualifications that are accepted elsewhere; and (ii) how the Essential Skills qualifications compare to similar qualifications elsewhere.

(AQW 14852/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): No specific concerns have been brought to my attention regarding difficulties faced by students applying to higher education courses at universities in England, Scotland and Wales, who have achieved Essential Skills level 2 qualifications, and who are seeking these qualifications to be accepted in lieu of GCSE or other equivalent or alternative level 2 qualifications.

Universities in England, Scotland and Wales, as well as in Northern Ireland, are autonomous bodies and are responsible for setting their own policies and entry criteria. However, a number of these institutions recognise that applicants for courses may have a wealth of different experiences and have followed a variety of educational pathways, with the result that many now accept a range of other level 2 qualifications as alternatives to GCSE, such as Northern Ireland's Essential Skills qualifications, England's Key Skills and Functional Skills, Essential Skills Wales and Scotland's Core Skills.

Our Essential Skills qualifications are based on the same standards as these similar qualifications across the UK. They are also on the Register of Regulated Qualifications for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with the level 2 qualifications being placed at the same level as GCSE's at Grades A*-C. Therefore, there are no reasons for universities not accepting our Essential Skills qualifications in situations where any of these alternative qualifications to GCSE are considered to be appropriate.

However, it is important to note that these types of qualifications will not be acceptable for all courses at universities. Where they are acceptable, it will tend to be in lieu of universities' general entry conditions in respect of English or Mathematics. Therefore, for example, an Essential Skills qualification in numeracy is less likely to be acceptable for a university course in mathematics or engineering. This broad approach would apply to our local universities, as well as to universities in the rest of the UK.

I would like to comment on your use of the term "equivalence". While the alternative qualifications described are broadly similar in terms of the level of demand and are considered comparable to GCSEs, they are not equivalent to GCSEs. This is quite a technical distinction, and arises from the fact that, unlike GCSE, there is no compensatory element within Essential Skills qualifications, with learners having to pass all elements of the qualification; also unlike GCSEs, there is no grading applied to Essential Skills qualifications, other than either pass or fail.

The answer to the second part of your question is answered through the information provided above.

Finally, I would add that our Essential Skills qualifications are continuing to attract significant numbers of learners, and I am pleased that their growing popularity is beginning to provide learners in Northern Ireland with an alternative route into higher and further education.

Funding for Universities

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much funding his Department has allocated to each university in each of the last five years.

(AQW 14853/11-15)

Dr Farry: The funding provided by my Department to each university in the last five academic years is set out in the table below:

| University | Academic Year (£m) | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 |
| Queen's University | 121.0 | 112.7 | 132.2 | 128.7 | 111.8 |
| University of Ulster | 98.3 | 100.4 | 104.9 | 103.8 | 90.6 |

First4Skills Ltd

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many learners have been affected by First4Skills going into administration; and what support his Department has offered those learners to allow them to complete their courses.

(AQW 14923/11-15)

Dr Farry: When First4Skills went into administration there were 989 apprentices in training.

My Department has been working closely with the Administrator for First4Skills to ensure an effective resolution to the situation currently faced by these apprentices. My primary concern is to ensure that the apprentices are able to continue with their training in order to allow them to complete their apprenticeships. I would like to stress that none of the apprentices have lost their jobs as a result of First4Skills going into administration.

Training Contract held by First4Skills

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether the training contract, held by First4Skills, with his Department can be passed to a new company if a buyer is found.

(AQW 14924/11-15)

Dr Farry: When First4Skills announced their closure Deloitte were appointed as Administrator for the Company. My Department has been working closely with the Administrator to ensure an effective resolution to the situation and this will include consideration, in conjunction with Central Procurement Directorate and the Departmental Solicitors Office, of the complex issues associated with any proposals related to the training contract.

First4Skills Staff

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what support his Department has offered to staff who have been made redundant as a result of First4Skills entering administration.

(AQW 14935/11-15)

Dr Farry: As soon as my Department became aware of the job losses within First4Skills, my officials firstly attempted to make contact with the company directly and subsequently made contact with the administrator, Deloitte. Deloitte has provided the Department with details of those who have been made redundant and my Department, through the Employment Service, has written to each individual offering our Redundancy Advice Service.

The Redundancy Advice Service is organised and delivered by my Department in partnership with other Departments and Agencies such as the Social Security Agency, Invest NI, Educational Guidance Service for Adults and HM Revenue and Customs, and the package of support is tailored to meet the needs of the employees. Employees will be provided with information and professional advice and guidance regarding the options and support available, including employment, training and education opportunities, careers advice, and a range of other issues such as benefits, taxation and money management.

When responses from the First4Skills redundant employees have been collated, redundancy clinics will be organised as soon as possible, in convenient locations. The Department's network of 35 Jobs and Benefits offices and Jobcentres across Northern Ireland has been alerted to the situation.

Catholic Certificate of Education

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) for his assessment of whether the process of obtaining a Catholic Certificate of Education discriminates against Protestant applicants; and (ii) what action he intends to take in relation to any discrimination.

(AQW 14978/11-15)

Dr Farry: All student teachers in Northern Ireland, who wish to do so, have an opportunity to obtain the required Certificate of Religious Education via a number of routes. Where the Certificate is not delivered or supported in a teacher education institution, I believe that those students may be at a disadvantage. I have made my views known on this on a number of occasions.

Responsibility for the policy in relation to the teachers' exemption with regard to the Certificate rests with the Department of Education. I am advised that the Department of Education is currently undertaking a review of employment opportunities for teachers which will consider the implications of the requirement to possess the certificate. That review is due to be published early in the New Year.

I am currently engaging in a two-stage study of the teacher training infrastructure within Northern Ireland. The first stage, which is examining the financial sustainability of the two teacher training colleges, will report shortly. The second stage will look at options for sharing across the estate and will include issues such as differential access to aspects of teacher training.

Staff Facing Internal Investigations

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many members of staff in his Department are currently (i) suspended due to internal investigations, and (ii) not suspended whilst facing internal investigations.

(AQW 15080/11-15)

Dr Farry: There are currently two Departmental staff who are suspended due to internal investigations; and two Departmental staff who are not suspended whilst facing an internal investigation.

Provost for the University of Ulster's Coleraine and Magee Campuses

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Employment and Learning following the announcement that the role of Provost for the University of Ulster's Coleraine and Magee campuses was created as part of a restructuring of senior management portfolios within the University, whether the new post will mean any reduction in commitment to each campus.

(AQW 15103/11-15)

Dr Farry: Staffing, including the structuring of senior management portfolios, is a matter for the University of Ulster as an autonomous body. Departmental officials have contacted the University regarding your question. They have replied with the following:

"The determination of the scale and the scope of the activity at each campus is the responsibility of the University's Council and Senate. The restructuring of senior management portfolios, and in

particular the creation of the post of Pro Vice Chancellor (Communication) and Provost (Coleraine and Magee), does not signify any change in the University's commitment to any of its campuses."

I trust that you find this response helpful.

Unemployment for 16 to 24 Year Olds

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how he plans to reduce unemployment for 16 to 24 year olds in working class areas which have lost their traditional manual labour industries.

(AQW 15109/11-15)

Dr Farry: Addressing youth unemployment, including in working class areas that have lost traditional industries, 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 £31 million in these measures over the next 3 years.

Opportunities range from short 2 to 8 week work experience placements through 6 to 9 month training opportunities to subsidised job opportunities coupled with sector specific skills training. My Department is actively working with employers to secure as many opportunities as possible as quickly as possible. I have been encouraged by the response of employers so far and I expect many more to come forward to offer opportunities for young people in the coming months.

A key aspect of this initiative is to target support at sectors that have future jobs growth potential. This will help to rebuild and rebalance the Northern Ireland economy in line with the Executive's Economic Strategy. We need to recognise that many traditional, low skilled, industries are in decline so we need to re-skill and up-skill the future workforce to take advantage of the job opportunities that will be created when the economy begins to grow again.

You will also be aware of the NEETs Strategy "Pathways to Success", which was endorsed by the Executive on 31 May and launched by means of an oral statement to the Assembly on 11 June.

The strategy also contains an Action Plan with 56 action points across Departments. Work is well under way on the implementation of the strategy.

New initiatives specifically for 16 to 18 year olds to include:

- case management by the Careers Service of young people aged 16 and 17 who drop out of provision or do not have a positive destination when they leave school;
- a new training allowance for 16 and 17 year olds participating on existing programmes funded by the European Social Fund;
- a community based access programme to engage and mentor young people using community and voluntary sector organisations. The organisations will provide continuity of support for young people to engage or re-engage with learning and to progress through mainstream training provision into employment. Individual action plans will be introduced for 16-18 year olds participating in the community based access programme; and
- an innovation fund to test new approaches based on sound evidence aimed at piloting a range of other approaches to re-engaging those young people in the NEET category.

A new Community Family Support Programme pilot is also being introduced which will focus on the needs of the most disadvantaged families, to enable young people to re-engage with education, training or employment. Such a programme will require involvement from a range of Departments. We will invest £10 million in Pathways to Success over the next 3 years.

The aspiration is that by 2020 every young person will not only have an opportunity to access education, training or other preparation for employment but, to the extent that they are able, they also avail of that opportunity.

Further and Higher Education

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how he plans to increase the number of working class Protestants who participate in higher education in the (i) short-term; and (ii) long-term. **(AQW 15111/11-15)**

Dr Farry: Early interventions to raise aspirations and educational attainment levels while young people are still in school are essential to increasing the participation rate in higher education of individuals from a working class background. While this is primarily the responsibility of the Department of Education and the school sector, my Department currently provides special project funding for programmes such as, Discovering Queen's and the University of Ulster's Step-Up programme. These programmes target post-primary schools in disadvantaged areas to raise awareness of the benefits of higher education and to help pupils, including those from a Protestant working class background, to attain the necessary qualification for entry. My Department allocates around £2.3 million each year to widen participation from groups which are currently under-represented in higher education.

In the longer term my Department will be implementing Access to Success, the new regional strategy for widening participation in higher education. The main aims of the Strategy will be to widen participation among those groups which are currently under-represented in higher education. This will be achieved through a centralised programme to raise awareness of the benefits of higher education and additional "outreach" projects which will expand the range of attainment raising programmes in schools, colleges and the wider community. Additional support measures will also be developed to sustain the continuing participation of students through targeted bursaries, fee waivers and other forms of direct support. The strategy has identified young males from a working-class Protestant background from lower participation neighbourhoods as a clearly defined target group.

Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 14241/11-15, to outline the remit of the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group. **(AQW 15160/11-15)**

Dr Farry: Recently I announced the creation of an Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group and subsequently chaired the first meeting of the Group on 19 September 2012. The purpose of this Group is to agree a coordinated approach to assess the sector's current skills needs and put in place interventions if necessary. The Working Group will focus on developing an Action Plan that will articulate short, medium and long-term actions to address the skills needs of the sector under the themes of skills provision, sector attractiveness and coordination and communication.

The Working Group comprises membership from further and higher education, business leaders, industry representatives and government departments. The following organisations provide representation to the Group:

- Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce;
- FG Wilson;
- The Confederation of British Industries (CBI);
- John Huddleston Engineering;
- Thales UK;
- Bombardier;
- Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE);
- Diageo;
- JTI Gallagher;
- Moyola Engineering;
- Michelin;

- Schrader;
- CDE Ireland;
- Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (SEMTA);
- Energy and Utility Skills;
- the Further Education sector;
- CollegesNI;
- Queens University Belfast;
- University of Ulster;
- Aerospace, Defence and Security Industries (ADS);
- Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment;
- Invest Northern Ireland;
- Department of Education;
- Department for Employment and Learning.

Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 14241/11-15, to detail the membership of the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Working Group.

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- Energy and Utility Skills;
- the Further Education sector;
- CollegesNI;
- Queens University Belfast;
- University of Ulster;
- Aerospace, Defence and Security Industries (ADS);
- Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment;
- Invest Northern Ireland;
- Department of Education;
- Department for Employment and Learning.

Queen's University Belfast: Funding

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much funding his Department has provided to Queen's University Belfast in the each of the last five years.

(AQW 15176/11-15)

Dr Farry: The funding provided by my Department to Queen's University Belfast in the last five academic years is set out in the table below:

| University | Academic Year (£m) | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 07/08 | 08/09 | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 |
| Queen's University | 121.0 | 112.7 | 132.2 | 128.7 | 111.8 |

Queen's University Belfast: Student Accommodation

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, over the last five years, whether he or any of his officials have had discussions with Queen's University Belfast regarding the provision of student accommodation.

(AQW 15177/11-15)

Dr Farry: As my Department does not provide funding to higher education institutions for the provision of student accommodation, I can confirm that there have been no direct discussions, at ministerial or official level, with Queen's University Belfast on this issue over the last five years.

However, my Department has considered the Belfast City Council commissioned 'Holyland and Wider University Area Strategic Study' in detail, particularly those recommendations which emphasise the need to ensure a coherent approach to where and how students will live within the city in the medium and long term future.

An official from my Department currently chairs a Student Housing Strategy Working Group, comprising representatives from Queen's University, the University of Ulster, Department for Social Development, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Belfast City Council, to take forward recommendations from the Strategic Study.

Staff Charged with Criminal Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) whether any departmental staff have been charged with criminal offences; and (ii) what is his Department's position regarding staff employment whilst court proceedings are pending.

(AQW 15286/11-15)

Dr Farry: The NICS Standards of Conduct require civil servants to report, as soon as possible, if they are arrested for, charged with or convicted by a court of any criminal offence (except a traffic offence with a private vehicle for which the penalty has not included imprisonment or disqualification from driving).

The Department is aware of some instances when staff have been charged with criminal offences. Records are retained where disciplinary action is taken as a result of those criminal offences. In the period from 2008 onwards, two members of staff have been subject to disciplinary action for committing criminal offences.

While court proceedings are pending, the Department's position is detailed in the Discipline Policy in the NICS HR Handbook. The policy states that there is no rigid code which automatically assigns specific penalties to particular offences. As such, any action is taken is determined by the specific facts of each individual case.

Board of Governors of Stranmillis University College, Belfast

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the appointment of a chairman to the Board of Governors of Stranmillis University College, Belfast.

(AQW 15567/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have this matter under active consideration.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

InvestNI: Management Fees Paid to E-Synergy

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the management fees that InvestNI has paid to E-Synergy for the management of the Northern Ireland Spin Out Funds; and (ii) what grants and investments InvestNI has paid to E-Synergy, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 14703/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): To date, management fees of £1,991,625 have been paid by Invest NI to E-Synergy for the management of the NISPO suites of funds from its commencement in April 2009 to December 2012.

No grants or investments are paid to E-Synergy for its own use.

E-Synergy

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in addition to management fees, whether E-Synergy charges board fees and deal fees on investments made from the Invest Growth Fund start-ups; and whether the fees are monitored by InvestNI to ensure they are justified and reasonable.

(AQW 14704/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In accordance with the legal agreements, E-Synergy can charge monitoring and deal fees on investments made in Invest Growth Fund start-ups. These fees are appraised by Invest NI as part of the project evaluation process to ensure they are justified and reasonable.

Remuneration of E-Synergy

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) why the remuneration of E-Synergy is not linked to the performance of profitable investments, instead of flowing as of right; and (ii) how many of the investments made have (a) been successful; and (b) failed.

(AQW 14705/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) E-synergy earns a fee for the management of the NISPO suite of funds based on the amount submitted in the tender. There is also the potential for E-Synergy to increase their earnings based on pre-determined performance targets.
- (ii) 19 investments have been made
 - (a) 17 of these companies are still trading

Strategies for Major Job Losses

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the strategies her Department deploys when major job losses are announced; and how the strategies have evolved over the last five years.

(AQW 14904/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Given the underlying economic conditions of the last three years, job losses have been inevitable in companies across Northern Ireland. Thankfully, the instances which have involved significant numbers of redundancies have been fairly small however, when they have been made, such as in the recent Caterpillar case, they have naturally caused significant reverberations across the local economy.

In such circumstances, the nature of the support provided will be determined by the skill sets of the employees involved. However, the key focus is always on helping those workers likely to be affected through the provision of appropriate support mechanisms. This may be in terms of initial practical advice on redundancy through to identifying alternative job opportunities and re-training. As such, both my Department and a number of other agencies will be involved in working together to help ensure that these efforts are effectively co-ordinated to deliver real benefits to those impacted by such announcements. Over the last few years these relationships have strengthened to the extent that there is now a very clear package of measures which can be put in place quickly when necessary.

In particular, my Department works closely with the Department for Employment and Learning to deliver a series of Redundancy Clinics which are aimed at providing impacted employees with one to one advice and support in identifying potential employment, training and business start opportunities. My Department, through Invest NI's regional office teams will also be actively engaged in doing all they can to revitalise the areas most affected and minimise the impact on local traders and businesses.

In addition, as in the case of Caterpillar, we are working with the company to see if there are any opportunities to mitigate the losses by attracting other Group activities into Northern Ireland.

If my own personal involvement is at all helpful then, where possible, I will also be actively engaged at executive level to try and influence the key decision makers within the company in question. In the recent Caterpillar case, for example, I have personally written to and received a reply from the Chairman and CEO of Caterpillar Inc., Doug Oberhelman, in which he confirmed the company's plan to continue manufacturing operations in Northern Ireland. I also had two telephone calls with the Head of Caterpillar's global Electric Power Division which was followed by a face-to-face meeting (along with Invest NI's Chief Executive) in the US at the end of September at which we emphasised the importance of the company to our local economy and offered whatever further support we could to ensure that there were no further large scale job losses in the future.

Co-operative Movement

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans he has to promote the principles of the Co-operative Movement as an alternative to public/private enterprise.

(AQW 14928/11-15)

Mrs Foster: DETI has led, on behalf of the Executive, on the development of social economy policy for Northern Ireland. The co-operative movement shares many of the principles of a social economy organisation and as such is seen as a leading stakeholder in the sector.

In direct response to the findings of an independent evaluation of the Northern Ireland social economy sector in 2011, DETI has recently appointed Social Enterprise Northern Ireland (SENI) to design, manage and deliver a Social Economy Work Programme (SEWP), for up to a maximum of three years. The main objective of the SEWP is to develop and implement a programme of initiatives to enable the continued growth of a sustainable social economy sector. Delivery of this programme will provide SENI with an opportunity to explore areas of best practice within the sector, such as the co-operative model, and to develop new financial products/services for the benefit of the sector.

DETI and DSD are also currently undertaking a scoping exercise on the size and scale of the Third Sector, including an assessment of the potential of community and voluntary organisations to make the transition to the social enterprise model. The Northern Ireland Co-operative Forum has been surveyed as part of this exercise and their experience will feed into the final report expected by December 2012. The report will be used to help shape future policy developments across relevant Executive departments.

Bed and Breakfasts

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 13939/11-15, for her assessment of the decrease in the number of views of Bed and Breakfasts listed on the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's website.

(AQW 14964/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Northern Ireland Tourist Board's consumer website discovernorthernireland.com plays an important role in assisting visitors with sourcing tourist information at the planning stage of their trip and also in destination. Over the past five years the total number of visitors using the site has grown.

With changes in consumer purchasing preferences, more visitors are now searching for and booking tourist accommodation via commercial booking channels. Over the past five years the number of page views for tourist accommodation categories on discovernorthernireland.com has decreased.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board offers all B&Bs operators in Northern Ireland the option to promote their properties for free on discovernorthernireland.com. But this is only one of the many commercial channels available to accommodation providers to promote their offering online. Therefore there are an unknown number of views and bookings on other websites which B&B operators use.

NITB actively supports and encourages all tourist accommodation providers to ensure their properties are online and bookable and that they make best use of any commercial booking channels available to them.

European Commissioner Günther Oettinger

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the advice of the European Commissioner Günther Oettinger to the Oireachtas on unconventional gas development.

(AQW 14994/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Officials in my Department continue to consider the full range of evidence and advice which is emerging around the topic of unconventional gas development.

InvestNI

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what information is held by InvestNI on the supply chain companies of businesses it supports.

(AQW 15032/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In the normal course of its monitoring, Invest NI would not hold a detailed record of a company's supply chain as this information is deemed to be commercially sensitive and subject to regular change as suppliers are retendered and replaced by other companies.

However, in monitoring the companies it supports, Invest NI executives regularly review information on both cost of sales as well as destination of sales. This allows Invest NI to see to what extent a company purchases goods and services from the local market as well as the degree of its reliance on sales to other Northern Ireland companies.

In practice, individual Invest NI Executives will have a good working knowledge of the key suppliers to the larger, more strategic companies and in cases where a decision in one company could potentially impact on local companies in the supply chain, Invest NI will work with all clients affected to assess the impact and mitigate the effects as far as possible.

Job Losses at FG Wilson

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why she has not yet been able to outline the potential impact of the recent job losses at FG Wilson on local suppliers; and when she will be in such a position.

(AQW 15033/11-15)

Mrs Foster: F G Wilson continually monitors actual and forecast customer demand. This information is refreshed monthly and shared with suppliers. It would not be appropriate for me to comment on the specific numbers or their potential impact on the company's supply chain as these are commercially sensitive both to F G Wilson and the companies involved. What I can confirm is that F G Wilson has kept, and continues to keep, in regular contact with those suppliers most affected by the recent announcement. I can also confirm that Invest NI is working closely with its customers who are most affected by this decision.

InvestNI

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why InvestNI do not have information readily available and accessible on the supply chain companies of businesses it supports; and what action is being taken to rectify this situation.

(AQW 15034/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Information on the supply chain that companies use is commercially sensitive and is not normally held by Invest NI.

However, particularly in respect of larger, more strategic companies, individual Invest NI executives will normally have a good working knowledge of these companies including their key suppliers and customers. Indeed, in many cases, Invest NI will facilitate specific supply chain initiatives involving both the entity concerned and its direct supply chain to maximise the efficiency and competitiveness of the entire Northern Ireland supply offering.

Furthermore, in cases where a decision in one company could potentially impact on local companies in the supply chain, Invest NI will work with all clients affected to assess the impact and mitigate the effects as far as possible.

It is not proposed that more formal supply chain information is sought from companies in the normal course of events.

Touring Services for Cruise Ship Passengers

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many coach operators from (i) Northern Ireland and (ii) the Republic of Ireland, have provided touring services for cruise ship passengers, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15035/11-15)

Mrs Foster: All cruise ship operators use ground handling companies to assist them during their stay when in Northern Ireland. Touring itineraries with coach operators are contracted directly by the cruise line companies via their ground handlers.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) does not liaise directly with cruise ship operators or ground handlers. This relationship is managed by the Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau (BVCB).

Touring Services for Cruise Ship Passengers

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the itineraries of the touring services provided by coach operators (i) from Northern Ireland and (ii) the Republic of Ireland, to cruise ship passengers, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15036/11-15)

Mrs Foster: All cruise ship operators use ground handling companies to assist them during their stay when in Northern Ireland. Touring itineraries with coach operators are contracted directly by the cruise line companies via their ground handlers.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) does not liaise directly with cruise ship operators or ground handlers. This relationship is managed by the Belfast Visitor & Convention Bureau (BVCB).

Companies in Administration

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what work is being done by her Department and InvestNI to support the creation of workers co-operatives and worker buy outs of companies in administration.

(AQW 15055/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI can, in cases where appropriate proposals are brought forward, consider supporting the buy-out of companies in administration, whether by workers co-operatives, management teams or other groups, providing such proposals demonstrate commercial viability and comply with the relevant guidelines. However, in recent years no such proposals have been submitted to Invest NI for its consideration.

Reduced Level of Air Passenger Duty

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what work her Department is taking to reap the benefits from a reduced level of Air Passenger Duty.

(AQW 15057/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The process to complete the devolution of direct long Air Passenger Duty (APD) is well underway and an Air Passenger Duty (Setting of Rate) Bill is currently progressing through the Northern Ireland Assembly. This Bill will follow through on a Programme for Government commitment to eliminate APD on direct long haul flights which operate from Northern Ireland.

Devolving direct long haul APD, and reducing it to zero, will send a positive message to long haul airlines that Northern Ireland can be a viable option for their business. My Department, through Tourism Ireland is in dialogue with relevant airlines, and Belfast International Airport, on an ongoing basis to identify and develop opportunities for potential new routes to long haul destinations, and also the potential to re-instate routes to previously served destinations such as Canada.

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 13992/11-15, to detail the value of the contract awarded to Whiterock Capital Partners for managing the Growth Loan Fund.

(AQW 15072/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The value of the contract awarded to Whiterock Capital Partners for managing the Growth Loan Fund was £6,740,588.

Child Trust Fund Payments

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 14352/11-15, whether she intends to negotiate with the Department for Work and Pensions or the Financial Services Authority about the ability of Credit Unions to act as agents for Child Trust Fund accounts.

(AQW 15135/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I have no plans to negotiate with the Department for Work and Pensions or the Financial Services Authority.

Following the transfer of regulatory responsibility for Northern Ireland credit unions from my Department to the Financial Services Authority in March 2012, any credit union wishing to act as an agent for Child Trust Fund accounts may apply to HM Revenue and Custom for approval.

Credit Unions: Agents for Child Trust Fund Accounts

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has held any negotiations with the Department for Work and Pensions or the Financial Services Authority about the ability of Credit Unions to act as agents for Child Trust Fund accounts.

(AQW 15138/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department has not held any negotiations with the Department for Work and Pensions or the Financial Services Authority about the ability of Credit Unions to act as agents for Child Trust Fund accounts.

Jobs at Forth and Foyle

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the 22 full-time jobs at Forth and Foyle based in Maydown in Derry and Ballylumford in Larne.

(AQW 15203/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The company has advised Invest NI of their intention to cease trading at the end of October with the unfortunate loss of 22 jobs. 10 of the employees have been working on a rolling service contract at Ballylumford Power station with a further 8 operating out of the company's office in Londonderry. In addition 4 people operating from the company's Grangemouth office in Scotland will also be affected.

Discussions are ongoing between Invest NI and the company.

Meetings with Caterpillar/FG Wilson

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 14393/11-15, to detail the dates on which the telephone calls and meetings took place.

(AQW 15240/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I wrote to the CEO of Caterpillar Inc on 11th September 2012 and received a reply on 12th September 2012. The reply confirmed the company's plan to continue to manufacture large gensets in Northern Ireland.

I had two telephone calls with the Head of Caterpillar's global Electric Power Division on 20th July & 10th September 2012. This was followed by a face-to-face meeting (along with Invest NI's Chief Executive) in the US on 23rd September 2012.

My team in Invest NI had two telephone calls on 5th September & 11th September with senior officials in the US as well as eleven face-to-face meetings with senior management in Northern Ireland and from the wider Caterpillar organization.

The dates of these meetings were as follows:

- 24th April;

- 21st May;
- 23rd May (two separate meetings were held on this date)
- 29th June;
- 18th July;
- 7th August;
- 24th August;
- 11th September and;
- 25th September 2012 (two separate meetings were held on this date)

Lease of the Sea-Bed to the Crown Estate

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what is the expected revenue from the lease of the sea-bed to the Crown Estate for the recently announced wind farm and tidal energy projects.

(AQW 15453/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The expected revenue from the projects when they are operational is a commercial matter for The Crown Estate and my Department is not privy to such information.

Department of the Environment

Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to detail (i) whether his Department has an established and agreed method of measuring the greenhouse gas emissions from hydraulic fracturing and to outline how his Department plans to assess the impact of the development of shale gas on greenhouse gas emissions; and (ii) whether an agreed method of measuring greenhouse gasses will be required before hydraulic fracturing is allowed to proceed.

(AQW 11109/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): (i) In response to the challenge presented by the prospect of hydraulic fracturing being introduced into Northern Ireland my Department is supplementing its knowledge of the process through reviewing and engaging with emerging research and liaising with counterparts in other Environment Agencies in Britain, Ireland and the US and through the various working groups established at an EU level.

I visited the United States in March this year, as have officials from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. We received briefings from the US EPA highlighting the work they are doing and plan to do, particularly their research on the potential impacts of shale gas extraction on drinking water supplies and potential technological and regulatory controls on gas emissions. By establishing and maintaining these sorts of relationships we can ensure that on an ongoing basis we can benefit from the work of the US EPA in this area.

My Department has not yet established an agreed method of measuring the greenhouse gas emissions from hydraulic fracturing or a means of assessing the impact of shale gas on greenhouse gas emission. That work is in progress. It is part of a wider exercise being undertaken by my Department in terms of drafting an environmental regulatory framework for dealing with applications associated with hydraulic fracturing. However the specific suite of regulations that will be applied will not be finalised until the details of each application, the location and proposed working practices are known.

- (ii) No decisions have been taken by my Department in relation to permitting hydraulic fracturing. I have made it clear that I will uphold the most rigorous environmental impact assessment and any application will be robustly assessed in the context of best advice, research and legal

requirements. I can confirm that a complete environmental regulatory framework, including a regime in relation to greenhouse gas emissions, will be established before any decisions are taken.

Rose Energy Proposals

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has held any recent discussions with the Ulster Farmers' Union in relation to the progress of the Rose Energy proposals.

(AQW 13985/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The applications are now in the final stage of consideration and I expect a report and a recommendation to be forwarded to me shortly. I have had and will continue to have a wide range of conversations with interested parties on this matter.

Consultations with UNESCO on the Bushmills Dunes Golf Resort Planning Application

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment to list the dates and means of all consultations held with UNESCO on the Bushmills Dunes Golf Resort planning application.

(AQW 14332/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Your question refers to an issue which inter alia is before the High Court by way of judicial review. That case is listed for hearing on 27 November for 4 days. The Member will appreciate that I am therefore constrained in what I can say, save that I am satisfied and content with the decision taken and the process that was followed leading to the decision.

Gold Mining at Cavanacaw near Omagh

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of the Environment whether any investigation has been launched into the failings of his Department in respect of the planning regulations, and absence of sufficient assessment prior to commencement of the works of the gold mining at Cavanacaw near Omagh; and when the findings of any investigation will be made public.

(AQW 14476/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department fully accepts the findings and criticisms contained in the Ombudsman's report and I have instructed officials to take all appropriate action to ensure lessons are learned.

I consider the Ombudsman's Report to be exhaustive, the response is clear, and I do not identify how a further investigation will add to understanding what transpired, beyond what is already known.

As I have stated in response to other Assembly Questions I consider the appropriate action to be:

- Urgently review the staff resources available to the Enforcement Team within Strategic Projects Division and to make greater use of Area Office Enforcement Staff to carry out initial site visits in relation to complaints received;
- Move to a pro-active regime where in terms of specialist applications such as mineral extraction compliance with planning conditions is monitored to identify any breaches at an early stage, this will include engaging with applicants and the relevant industry bodies where appropriate;
- Ensure all staff has access to the most up to date technology to monitor sites – for example Strategic Planning Division Compliance Teams are now able to access real time high quality aerial photographs to deliver accurate mapping and analysis of topography, boundaries, levels which is ideal for monitoring quarries and landfill sites.
- Immediately review all current and recently approved minerals applications as well as a range of enforcement cases (minerals and unauthorised waste) to ensure compliance with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations;
- Organise refresher training for staff on the requirements of the new Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations;

- Provide updated guidance to staff on the processing of Enforcement Cases.

Highway Code in Irish

Mr Swann asked the Minister of the Environment how many requests his Department received for the Highway Code in Irish, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 14629/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In the last five year period, the Department has received one request for an Irish language version of the Highway Code. This request was made in September 2010 by Fobairt Feirste, an Irish Language Development Agency. In my view, this was a request from an organisation that captures and conveys the wider view of the Irish language speaking community.

In determining whether to provide a publication, including the Highway Code, in an alternative language the Department considers a range of factors including the size of the resident population, the number of requests for a specific version and whether schools deliver the core curriculum through a particular medium.

Fobairt Feirste's approach to the Department was made on behalf of a second level Irish medium school, Coláiste Feirste, following its decision to introduce the GCSE Motor Vehicle and Road User Studies (MVRUS) to the curriculum - a subject which the Department has helped to develop and actively supports through its Road Safety Education Service.

The overall aim of the MVRUS GCSE is to provide students with an early opportunity to become better informed and more responsible road users – better prepared for driver training and testing. This translation will be a particular support to the pupils as the Highway Code is an integral part of the MVRUS syllabus and pupils are assessed on many aspects of it.

The development of an Irish language version of the Code is also relevant to the promotion of road safety more generally. For example, it could also be used as a learning resource for students choosing to study the Irish language both at GCSE and A level. According to 2011 examination figures provided by CCEA, a total of 1854 candidates in Northern Ireland sat and obtained a grade in GCSE Irish, with a further 328 students obtaining a grade at A-level. From these figures it is estimated that some 4,400 young people are studying the Irish language in schools throughout Northern Ireland during Years 11 to 14 (approx. age 14 to 18 years). Many other pupils will also be introduced to the subject at an earlier stage in their education measuring tens of thousands.

The Irish translation of the Code was officially launched at Coláiste Feirste on Monday 24 September. It joins a list of five alternative languages available online including Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese and Russian.

The provision of the on-line Irish translation cost £6,760 excluding VAT. In line with audit requirements, the proposal was subject to a Business Case that examined all monetary and non-monetary costs, benefits and risks.

The Department for Transport prepares an assessment each year of the values for preventing road casualties. For indicative purposes, the cost of preventing one slight road traffic injury, based on 2010 data, is £14,410.

I am fully satisfied that producing an online Irish language translation of the Highway Code will make a positive contribution to road safety. If it prevents just one person from incurring a slight road traffic injury, it will have more than repaid on the investment.

Highway Code in Irish

Mr Swann asked the Minister of the Environment how much it costs to produce the Highway Code in Irish.

(AQW 14630/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In the last five year period, the Department has received one request for an Irish language version of the Highway Code. This request was made in September 2010 by Fobairt Feirste, an Irish Language Development Agency. In my view, this was a request from an organisation that captures and conveys the wider view of the Irish language speaking community.

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Planning Application for a Further Dwelling within an Existing Development

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment, in respect of a planning application for a further dwelling within an existing development, whether it is a material consideration that the private sewer serving the development has never been adopted and is not up to adoption standards.

(AQW 14653/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Currently, under the Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, a developer can choose or choose not to submit an application to NIW stating an intention for future adoption by NIW. That is, the developer enters into an agreement with NIW to have the sewers adopted after completion of the development. A monetary bond is lodged by the developer and NIW then has a duty to inspect the works as they progress on site.

Homeowners, businesses and developers can apply to NIW to have the sewerage system adopted retrospectively. NIW may refuse to adopt the sewerage system if it believes it has not been correctly constructed and maintained.

Where an application is received for a further dwelling in an existing development DOE Planning will consult with NIW, if there is no capacity the developer must demonstrate how it is proposed to deal with waste water and sewage. The outcome of the application will be dependent on the individual circumstances.

Planning permission will be granted where it is demonstrated that waste water and sewage can be adequately dealt with. This may involve an interim solution such as a private treatment works to address sewage disposal, however homeowners with unadopted sewers and associated pumping stations are responsible for the maintenance and any associated costs.

Planning permission may be granted with a negative condition stating that the house should not be occupied until works are complete to adequately address sewage disposal.

If the waste water and sewage cannot be dealt with adequately, or this issue cannot be addressed by use of a negative condition this will result in refusal of planning permission.

Impact on Listed Buildings and their Surroundings from Road Resurfacing Work

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the impact on listed buildings and their surroundings from road resurfacing work undertaken by the Department for Regional Development, such as that planned for Rugby Road in South Belfast; and what plans he has to develop a new policy, or strengthen existing planning policy, to protect floorscape and street furniture where they contribute to the character of an area.

(AQW 14867/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department's current policy for the protection of listed buildings is contained within Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning Archaeology and the Built Heritage.

Once a building is listed, Article 44 of the Planning (NI) Order provides that consent is required for its demolition and for any works of alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. This is referred to as "listed building consent" and it is a criminal offence to carry out such works without consent.

Policy BH 11 of PPS6 'Development affecting the Setting of a Listed Building' states that the Department will not normally permit development which would adversely affect the setting of a listed building.

Although the resurfacing work proposed by Roads Service may not require the express consent of the Department, NIEA does not consider that these works will detract from the setting of the listed buildings along Rugby Road. I have asked NIEA to further consider this assessment.

I am very aware of the concern of residents however and, upon being advised of the proposal by Roads Service, I spoke with the relevant Roads official and I also contacted the Roads Minister. Minister Kennedy has written to inform me that he has requested Roads Service to postpone the proposed scheme in Rugby Road until consultation with the local community and their public representatives has been carried out.

I believe that the proper outcome is the one requested by residents and I hope this will prevail.

In relation to current policy and the protection of street features, the Department has designated as Conservation Areas or Areas of Townscape Character a number of areas which it has assessed as exhibiting a distinct character based on their historic built form or layout. Rugby Road is one of many such areas that have been designated in draft BMAP as an Area of Townscape Character.

Policy for the control of development within Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Character (ATC) is set out in Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning Archaeology and the Built Heritage and the Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 6: Areas of Townscape Character.

In addition to PPS 6, the Department has published Supplementary Planning Guidance for individual Conservation Areas and has set out a brief analysis of the important characteristics of each ATC in draft BMAP.

The Department is therefore supportive of the retention and preservation of areas and streetscape which display considerable character or heritage. In light of this case, I have asked for further advice on if any development of policy is needed.

QUANGOs

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of QUANGOs linked to his Department (i) at 8 May 2007; and (ii) at the date of this question; and how many people served on the QUANGOs on these respective dates.

(AQW 14870/11-15)

Mr Attwood: At 8 May 2007, The Department for the Environment was responsible for the following public bodies:

- The Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC);
- The Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (LGSC);
- The Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside (CNCC);
- The Historic Buildings Council (HBC); and
- The Historic Monuments Council (HMC).

At 28 September 2012, this position has not changed.

The number of members serving on each of the bodies at 8 May 2007, and at 28 September 2012 is detailed in the table below.

| Public Body | Number of Members at 8 May 2007 | Number of members at 28 September 2012 |
|--------------------|--|---|
| NILGOSC | 11 (Chair & 10 members) | 13 (Chair & 12 members) |
| LGSC | 15 (Chair & 14 members) | 6 (Chair and 5 members) |
| CNCC | 19 (Chair, Deputy Chair & 17 members) | 14 (Chair, Deputy Chair and 12 members) |
| HBC | 17 (Chair & 16 members) | 18 (Chair and 17 members) |
| HMC | 15 (Chair & 14 members) | 15 (Chair and 14 members) |
| Total | 77 | 66 |

I have commenced a review of the future of the LGSC and there may be an argument for a future merge of the HBC and HMC.

Mileage Declarations

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment whether private car buyers can verify mileage declarations by requesting details of the readings taken when vehicles are inspected during MOT tests.

(AQW 14888/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The MOT test is a road safety check. It is a snapshot of the condition of the vehicle at the time of the test, and is not designed to validate or legitimise mileage records. However, mileage readings are captured from vehicles' odometers by vehicle examiners during tests, and these can be provided by the Driver & Vehicle Agency on request.

Mileage Declarations

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment whether private car buyers can verify a mileage declaration by seeking details of the readings provided by the vehicle owner when the car is taxed. **(AQW 14889/11-15)**

Mr Attwood: Vehicle mileage may be provided to the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) on a voluntary basis, on relicensing forms and the forms used to notify changes of keeper. The recorded mileage does not appear on the registration certificate (V5C) that is issued to the new keeper, as the Agency is not able to check or verify this information.

Mileage is captured during the annual roadworthiness test, from when a vehicle reaches the appropriate testable age, and this information is updated on the vehicle register.

DVA supplies information on the registration of vehicles to a number of commercial companies for consumer protection and anti-fraud purposes. The information supplied by DVA may be added to by companies with details from the police. Information may also be obtained from finance or insurance companies, which offer a vehicle checking service to the public.

The current registered keeper of a vehicle may request information about the history of their vehicle and a member of the public wishing to confirm vehicle information, including mileage, may submit an enquiry to DVA through the fee paying enquiry service.

Assembly Legislation

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what legislation his Department plans to introduce during the remainder of the current Assembly mandate. **(AQW 14895/11-15)**

Mr Attwood: The details of the 9 Bills that I propose to introduce to the Assembly during the remainder of the current Assembly mandate are contained in the attached table. The introduction of a Bill is subject to Executive agreement. Potentially prioritisation may arise. Consequently, the timelines should be treated as indicative, particularly for the later Bills, where public consultation is not yet completed.

I have also included details of the Marine Bill which I introduced to the Assembly in February 2012 and which has recently completed Committee consideration stage.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT PROPOSED BILLS BETWEEN APRIL 2012 AND MARCH 2015

| No | Bill | Purpose |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1. | Marine Bill | To introduce a new system of Marine Planning, improved Marine Nature Conservation and further streamlining of Marine Licensing. Introduced: 21 February 2012 Royal Assent: early 2013 |
| 2. | Planning Bill | To bring forward a number of the planning reforms contained in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and apply them to the Department in advance of the transfer of powers to district councils. Introduction: autumn 2012 Royal Assent: mid 2013 |

| No | Bill | Purpose |
|-----|--|---|
| 3. | National Park Bill | To allow for the identification, designation and management of national parks. The Minister is currently conducting a series of future meetings in relation to this proposal. |
| 4. | Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill | To provide for the reorganisation of local government; new governance arrangements for councils; a new ethical standards regime; the introduction of community planning powers and the power of well-being; and an updated service delivery and performance improvement regime. Introduction: November/December 2012 Royal Assent: autumn 2013 |
| 5. | Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill No 1 | To lower the limits on blood alcohol levels for motorists and introduce other measures to tackle drink driving; amend the learner and novice driver regimes; and cover matters regarding the wearing of helmets when using quadricycles on public roads. Introduction: December 2012 Royal Assent: late 2013. |
| 6. | Carrier Bags Bill | To allow the carrier bag levy to be extended to a broader range of carrier bags. Introduction: January 2013 Royal Assent: January 2014 |
| 7. | The Climate Change Bill | To introduce statutory targets for greenhouse gas emissions in Northern Ireland. Introduction: May 2014 Royal Assent: January 2015 |
| 8. | The Environmental Better Regulation Bill | To reduce the environmental regulatory burden on business and enhance protection of the environment. Introduction: January 2014 Royal Assent: May 2015 |
| 9. | Buses (Licensing of Operators) Bill | To overhaul the bus licensing regime. Introduction: during 2013: Royal Assent: during 2014. |
| 10. | Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill No 2 | To introduce mutual recognition of penalty points for motoring offences between Northern Ireland and Ireland. This Bill may also be used to introduce new anti-drug driving laws. Introduction: during 2013: Royal Assent: during 2014 |

Haulage Companies: Rises in Testing Fees

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of the Environment whether he is aware of the concerns of local haulage companies in relation to the rises in testing fees which come into effect on 1 October 2012; and to outline the (i) process of consultation; and (ii) rationale behind these rises.

(AQW 14898/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am aware of the concerns of goods vehicle operators around the increases in compliance fees, which are collected at the same time as HGV test fees. I am concerned to ensure that any fees levied by my Department are required and are kept to the minimum level necessary. I recognise that economic circumstances are very difficult and therefore I personally interrogated the requirement for the increase in fees before approving them.

The increased compliance fees relate to the implementation of the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 2010. The increases are due to the increased assurance activity that will take place to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Act. The need for greater regulation of the goods vehicle

industry has been called for by the industry itself for some years, and was a factor in the development of the Act. The industry has strongly supported these measures as important to achieving a fairer and more competitive market position, improving road safety, reducing the environmental impacts of goods vehicles and tackling organised crime. The overall test and compliance fee is still substantially below those charged in Britain and Ireland, and the new compliance fee is less than £1 per week for a tractor unit, and less than 50p per week for a trailer. In addition, the implementation of the Goods Vehicles Act included the removal of Access NI requirements (and fees) and of the Road Freight Vehicle Fee of £60 per vehicle per year.

The fees related to the Act were consulted on between 5 December 2011 and 3 February 2012. There were 17 responses to the consultation, of which 14 were substantive. Of those responses, 10 supported the proposed fees. Those that did not, asked for a phasing in of the fees, or said that the increased charges could not be justified because the service levels in Northern Ireland were below those in Britain.

In its response, the Department indicated that the compliance activity for goods vehicles in Northern Ireland had increased in recent years, and that further enforcement officers would be deployed following the commencement of the Goods Vehicles Act, with those additional staff funded through the compliance fees. The Department also noted that the Driver & Vehicle Agency published compliance information in its annual report.

The Environment Committee of the Assembly noted the synopsis of response to the public consultation in February 2012, and subsequently approved the SL1 and the Fees Order introducing the fees.

Councils: Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment to list the councils that employ staff, at management level, on a part-time basis.

(AQW 14899/11-15)

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

| Council | Does the Council have management level staff employed on a part-time basis |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Antrim Borough Council | Yes |
| Ards Borough Council | No |
| Armagh City & District Council | Yes |
| Ballymena Borough Council | No |
| Ballymoney Borough Council | No |
| Banbridge District Council | Yes |
| Belfast City Council | Yes |
| Carrickfergus Borough Council | No |
| Castlereagh Borough Council | No |
| Coleraine Borough Council | No |
| Cookstown District Council | Yes |
| Craigavon Borough Council | Yes |
| Derry City Council | No |
| Down District Council | No |

| Council | Does the Council have management level staff employed on a part-time basis |
|--|---|
| Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council | Yes |
| Fermanagh District Council | No |
| Larne Borough Council | Yes |
| Limavady Borough Council | No |
| Lisburn City Council | Yes |
| Magherafelt District Council | Yes |
| Moyle District Council | No |
| Newry & Mourne District Council | Yes |
| Newtownabbey Borough Council | Yes |
| North Down Borough Council | Yes |
| Omagh District Council | Yes |
| Strabane District Council | No |

Fixed Penalty Notices for Litter Offences

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of the Environment how many fixed penalty notices for litter offences have been issued in each council area, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 14951/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department requests information on fixed penalty notices issued by district councils after the end of each financial year. Information on the number of fixed penalty notices issued in the district of each district council in each of the last three financial years in respect of the offence of leaving litter is set out in the following table.

| Council | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Antrim BC | 26 | 23 | 30 |
| Ards BC | 6 | 7 | 12 |
| Armagh City & DC | 14 | 34 | 14 |
| Ballymena BC | 42 | 73 | 30 |
| Ballymoney BC | 18 | 6 | 4 |
| Banbridge DC | 22 | 11 | 12 |
| Belfast CC | 1286 | 1995 | 1534 |
| Carrickfergus BC | 26 | 16 | 19 |
| Castlereagh BC | - | 38 | 26 |
| Coleraine BC | 42 | 53 | 16 |
| Cookstown DC | 15 | 13 | 12 |
| Craigavon BC | 1105 | 1038 | 1046 |
| Derry CC | 19 | 56 | 41 |

| Council | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Down DC | 65 | 51 | 60 |
| Dungannon & South Tyrone BC | 0 | 14 | 1 |
| Fermanagh DC | 71 | 16 | 8 |
| Larne BC | 76 | 73 | 23 |
| Limavady BC | 5 | 6 | 4 |
| Lisburn CC | 28 | 80 | 42 |
| Magherafelt DC | 50 | 39 | 40 |
| Moyle DC | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| Newry & Mourne DC | 60 | 167 | 89 |
| Newtownabbey BC | 118 | 48 | 150 |
| North Down BC | 22 | 8 | 4 |
| Omagh DC | 27 | 35 | 24 |
| Strabane DC | - | 23 | 22 |
| Totals | 3149 | 3930 | 3268 |

I am writing to all CE's of Councils, enclosing this information, stating the importance of a litter strategy and asking why their Council figure is as it is.

Reform of Local Government

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the preparedness of the 26 Councils for the Reform of Local Government.

(AQW 14967/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Since the latter part of last year, I have continued to push hard on local government reform matters and the core objective of creating 11 new councils from the existing 26.

Despite the inherited inertia, the complexity and scale of the task and the need to involve and balance multiple interests, momentum is gathering and progress is being made, with local government working towards an improving state of preparedness.

I have established a number of structures to drive forward the implementation of the local government reform programme. These include a Regional Transition Committee to provide political leadership and insight; a Regional Transition Operational Board to provide operational input and support the Regional Transition Committee and a number of Task & Finish Working Groups.

Implementation and convergence at the local level is led by 11 Voluntary Transition Committees, which are made up of a number of elected members from each of the constituent councils. The Chairs of these 11 Committees and the NILGA Office Bearers come together at regional level on the Regional Transition Committee, which I chair. Lately, I have decided to establish a Political Reference Group to include representation from both central and local government for the purposes of inputting to the local government reform programme. I am finalising the nominations to that group with the seven political parties represented in both the Assembly and in local government.

A high level programme plan has been drawn up to identify what work needs to be done and by when. Council Transition Committees will be expected to translate the relevant tasks into local implementation plans and take these forward at a cluster level.

This will be a bigger test of Council preparedness and willingness to take reform forward at a greater pace over the next thirty months.

I am heartened that progress is and will be made within these clusters, a few Councils still appear reticent to fully move reform forward.

I have made it clear that the point of no return has been passed, reform will happen, the rate payers must see the full benefit of reform and all must measure up to the challenge.

I have now given a commitment to work towards the early establishment of Statutory Transition Committees as soon as possible next year. This is another example of measures to drive reform forward. Councils - all - must work with me in this task.

Preferred Bidders for Arc21, Southern Waste Management Partnership and North West Region Waste Management Group

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment whether any preferred bidders for (i) Arc21; (ii) Southern Waste Management Partnership; and (iii) West Region Waste Management Group have been identified; and for his assessment of there being only one company left in the running for each project before preferred bidder status has been awarded.

(AQW 15191/11-15)

Mr Attwood: We are at a key phase in the Strategic Waste Infrastructure Programme. I have already advised the Assembly by written statement on 15 October that SWaMP2008 has decided to terminate its procurement of a long-term residual waste treatment contract following a legal challenge to the bid consortium.

As regards the other two Waste Management Groups, NWRWMG has finalised its Appointment Business Case and has submitted it to the Department and DFP for approval. Once approved, this will allow the NWRWMG to consider appointing a Preferred Bidder.

Arc21 continues in dialogue with its remaining bidder with a particular focus on the development of the technical solution, draft environmental statement and it advised the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board in June of this year that it expected to appoint a Preferred Bidder in February 2013. This figure has subsequently slipped by approximately 10 months..

In relation to the issue of there being only one bidder left in each of the procurements, a single bidder situation does arise in PPP/PFI projects, and HM Treasury has devised specific guidance to deal with this eventuality by developing single bidder protocols, developing shadow bid models and market testing and bench marking the supply chain and costs generally. The Waste Management Groups are following that guidance rigorously, and are required in their business cases to demonstrate how they have secured best value in a single bidder situation. My Department or the Waste Management Groups will not enter into any contract which cannot demonstrate that it represents best value for a Waste Management Group's constituent councils.

Online Highway Code in Irish

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of the Environment what is the cost of the project to provide an online Highway Code in Irish; and how many people he expects to use this service.

(AQW 15192/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The provision of the on-line Irish translation cost £6,760 excluding VAT. In line with audit requirements, the proposal was subject to a Business Case that examined all monetary and non-monetary costs, benefits and risks.

In determining whether to provide a publication, including the Highway Code, in an alternative language the Department considers a range of factors including the size of the resident population, the number of requests for a specific version and whether schools deliver the core curriculum through a particular medium.

The Department for Transport prepares an assessment each year of the values for preventing road casualties. For indicative purposes, the cost of preventing one slight road traffic injury, based on 2010 data, is £14,410 – that is, more than twice the cost of translating the Highway Code into Irish.

In September 2011, the Department received a request for an Irish language version of the Highway Code from Fobairt Feirste, an Irish Language Development Agency. This approach was made on behalf of a second level Irish medium school, Coláiste Feirste, following its decision to introduce the GCSE Motor Vehicle and Road User Studies (MVRUS) to the curriculum - a subject which the Department has helped to develop and actively supports through its Road Safety Education Service.

The overall aim of the MVRUS GCSE is to provide students with an early opportunity to become better informed and more responsible road users – better prepared for driver training and testing. This translation will be a particular support to the pupils at Coláiste Feirste as the Highway Code is an integral part of the MVRUS syllabus and pupils are assessed on many aspects of it.

The development of an Irish language version of the Code is also relevant to the promotion of road safety more generally. For example, it could also be used as a learning resource for students choosing to study the Irish language both at GCSE and A level. According to 2011 examination figures provided by CCEA, a total of 1854 candidates in Northern Ireland sat and obtained a grade in GCSE Irish, with a further 328 students obtaining a grade at A-level. From these figures we can estimate that some 4,400 young people are studying the Irish language in schools throughout Northern Ireland during Years 11 to 14 (approx. age 14 to 18 years). Many other pupils will also be introduced to the subject at an earlier stage in their education.

The Road Safety Strategy to 2020 highlights that consideration will be given to how best to communicate the Highway Code to all road users in Northern Ireland. The availability of an Irish translation of the Code will therefore support this commitment by promoting the Code amongst all road users in Northern Ireland who speak Irish as a first or preferred language. Figures from the 2001 Census would indicate a potential target audience of 102,784 i.e. the number of respondents who indicated that they can at least read Irish.

The Irish translation of the Code was officially launched on Monday 24 September 2012 and joins a list of five alternative languages available online including Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese and Russian. None are available to buy in hard copy.

I am satisfied that producing an online Irish language translation of the Highway Code will make a positive contribution to road safety. If it prevents just one person from incurring a slight road traffic injury, it will have more than repaid on the investment made to increase public awareness of the rules of the road.

MOT Exemptions

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment (i) whether he would consider making veteran or vintage cars exempt from MOT, similar to the system that operates in the Irish Republic; and (ii) what action he intends to take to encourage such car owners to use their vehicles on public roads.

(AQW 15195/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I have answered questions very similar to this on a number of occasions over recent months, most recently in September 2012 (AQWs 13794/11-15 and 13795/11-15), and the response remains the same, as detailed below.

The Department has consulted on possible exemption of certain categories of historic vehicles from MOT testing and the Environment Committee, at its meeting on 22 March 2012, considered the synopsis of responses to the Department's consultation. The responses indicated that there is broad support for exemption of pre-1960 vehicles from periodic testing.

The Committee was content with the Department's proposed way forward, which was to develop policy on the basis of the consultation responses that would make use of the exemption in Roadworthiness Directive 2009/40/EC concerning the periodic testing of pre-1960 vehicles. This would align with the

British Government's current proposals which would, from November 2012, exempt pre-1960 vehicles from MOT testing.

With regard to Ireland, I understand that pre-1980 cars are exempt from the National Car Test (NCT) unless used as public service vehicles (limos, wedding cars etc) which require NCT if they are to be granted a PSV licence.

There have been significant European Commission (EC) policy developments since our consultation. On 13 July 2012, the EC published a 'Roadworthiness Package' that, amongst other things, addresses periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles, therein making changes to the rules that apply to historic vehicles. The proposals are expected to be introduced no earlier than August 2014.

If implemented as currently drafted, the proposals will narrow the parameters within which the Department can provide for exemptions to historic vehicles, as the definition of an historical vehicle is more prescriptively described.

The Department's policy intentions remain the same; that is to make exempt pre-1960 vehicles from the MOT regime, but we have to be mindful of the changing legislative context, to ensure that any changes we make are not made redundant by incoming EC Regulations.

I expect to be in a position to provide further clarification on the Department's position in the coming weeks.

I have no plans to "encourage" owners of veteran or vintage car owners to use their vehicles on public roads. Such motorists are free to use their vehicles as they wish, provided of course they do so in compliance with vehicle approval, licensing and testing requirements for road use.

Fixed Penalty Notices: Littering

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment how many fixed penalty notices for littering were issued in each district council area in 2012.

(AQW 15262/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department requests information on fixed penalty notices issued by district councils after the end of each financial year. Information on the number of fixed penalty notices issued in the district of each district council in the 2011/12 financial year in respect of the offence of leaving litter is set out in the following table.

| Council | 2011/12 |
|------------------|----------------|
| Antrim BC | 30 |
| Ards BC | 12 |
| Armagh City & DC | 14 |
| Ballymena BC | 30 |
| Ballymoney BC | 4 |
| Banbridge DC | 12 |
| Belfast CC | 1534 |
| Carrickfergus BC | 19 |
| Castlereagh BC | 26 |
| Coleraine BC | 16 |
| Cookstown DC | 12 |
| Craigavon BC | 1046 |

| Council | 2011/12 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Derry CC | 41 |
| Down DC | 60 |
| Dungannon & South Tyrone BC | 1 |
| Fermanagh DC | 8 |
| Larne BC | 23 |
| Limavady BC | 4 |
| Lisburn CC | 42 |
| Magherafelt DC | 40 |
| Moyle DC | 5 |
| Newry & Mourne DC | 89 |
| Newtownabbey BC | 150 |
| North Down BC | 4 |
| Omagh DC | 24 |
| Strabane DC | 22 |
| Total | 3268 |

I have asked for further information on this matter given the wildly differential figures.

Cost of Removing Waste from Raveagh Road, Eskra

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of the Environment (i) to detail the cost of removing domestic, industrial and commercial waste from lands at Raveagh Road, Eskra; (ii) who meets the cost of this work; (iii) what action his Department is taking to pursue those responsible for the illegal dumping of the waste; and (iv) for his assessment of the impact on the local environment.

(AQW 15310/11-15)

Mr Attwood:

- (i) The full cost of the works will only be known after the work is completed and this aspect of the project is managed by Department of Finance and Personnel Central Procurement Directorate on behalf of Department of the Environment (DoE). However, based on experience with the other waste repatriation sites, it is estimated the cost of the work to DOE will be in the region of £40,000.
- (ii) Based on an agreement between the two governments, the cost of waste removal is shared on the following basis: 80% of the cost will be met by the Republic of Ireland and 20% by Northern Ireland. The Republic of Ireland bears the full costs of waste disposal.
- (iii) The Northern Ireland Environment Agency's Environmental Crime Unit has taken, and continues to take, action against a defendant in relation to the Raveagh Road site. Having pleaded guilty in March 2007 to eight waste and water offences in respect of this illegal dumping, Mr William Jordan is currently the subject of confiscation proceedings, being taken forward by the Serious Organised Crime Agency, under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, which aim to deprive him of the unlawfully earned proceeds from this action.
- (iv) During the Repatriation project, the works are undertaken at each site in a manner to minimise any impact on the local environment. Extensive sampling is carried out before, during and after completion of the works to ensure no further environmental damage. A site specific report is

produced which records the monitoring results and demonstrates that the waste contamination has been removed from the environment.

Single Use Carrier Bag Tax

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of the anticipated revenue that will be collected in the first year of the single use carrier bag tax; and on what data is this figure based.

(AQW 15458/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The revenue estimates for the proceeds of the Carrier Bag Levy are based on an analysis of experience in other jurisdictions that have already introduced similar charging arrangements. This analysis included; Ireland; Washington DC; Hong Kong; Victoria (Australia); and the chain of IKEA stores in the United States.

The change in consumer behaviour was found to be relatively consistent across the examples considered, with a charge of just a few pence producing reductions in bag consumption of at least 84%.

Using the 11 data sets (7 years of data from Ireland and single year data from the other 4 jurisdictions) and adjusting for initial levels of bag consumption, a revenue model was constructed for Northern Ireland - allowing the amount of revenue to be estimated for any given levy amount.

The model was further modified to take account of VAT deductions (which will apply in circumstances where the retailer adds their own additional charge for each bag).

While the amount of revenue collected through the Carrier Bag Levy will ultimately depend on how consumers adapt their behaviour, the latest estimate of revenue collection for the first year of the levy is £2.32m

Single Use of Plastic Carrier Bags

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment what percentage of a decrease in the single use of plastic carrier bages he anticipates after one year of the imposition of the carrier bag tax.

(AQW 15459/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Based on empirical evidence from other jurisdictions that have already introduced charging for carrier bags, it is anticipated that the consumption of single use plastic carrier bags will be reduced by at least 80% in the first year following the introduction of the Carrier Bag Levy.

Single Use Carrier Bag Tax

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of the anticipated revenue that will be collected in the second year of the single use carrier bag tax; and on what data is this figure based.

(AQW 15460/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The revenue estimates for the proceeds of the Carrier Bag Levy are based on an analysis of experience in other jurisdictions that have already introduced similar charging arrangements. This analysis included; Ireland; Washington DC; Hong Kong; Victoria (Australia); and the chain of IKEA stores in the United States.

The change in consumer behaviour was found to be relatively consistent across the examples considered, with a charge of just a few pence producing reductions in bag consumption of at least 84%.

Using the 11 data sets (7 years of data from Ireland and single year data from the other 4 jurisdictions) and adjusting for initial levels of bag consumption, a revenue model was constructed for Northern Ireland – allowing the amount of revenue to be estimated for any given levy amount.

The model was further modified to take account of VAT deductions (which will apply in circumstances where the retailer adds their own additional charge for each bag) and the later inclusion of low cost reusable carrier bags.

While the amount of revenue collected through the Carrier Bag Levy will ultimately depend on how consumers adapt their behaviour, the latest estimate of revenue collection for the second year of the levy is £4.62m.

Single Use Carrier Bag Tax

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment what monitoring will be conducted to ensure that there is no fraud by retailers in their returns on the single use carrier bag tax.

(AQW 15461/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Single Use Carrier Bags Charge Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 confer enforcement powers on the Carrier Bag Levy Team to question the seller or an employee of a seller and to require the production of documents or information if they have reasonable belief that there has been a failure to comply with a requirement of the regulations. The Department intends to use these powers as and when necessary to ensure consistent and equitable compliance with the regulations.

The Department will monitor bag usage returns and overall levels of compliance and intends to investigate alleged breaches of the regulations through a structured programme of visits to premises of sellers throughout Northern Ireland. Monitoring quarterly bag usage returns from sellers will also be a fundamental part of the Carrier Bag Levy Team operations.

Single Use Carrier Bag Tax

Mr Ross asked the Minister of the Environment how much he will be spending on advertising and public awareness campaigns on the single use carrier bag tax.

(AQW 15462/11-15)

Mr Attwood: A budget of £20,000 has been made available for advertising and to promote public awareness. Downloadable materials will be available online from December 2012, providing retailers with a range of information documents for display in store. A customer focused campaign will be launched in January 2013 and will provide the public with key information regarding the introduction of the Carrier Bag Levy on 8 April 2013. There will also be a "Bring a Bag" week in Eco Schools in March 2013.

Arc21 and the North West Regional Waste Management Group

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the current position of (i) Arc21 and (ii) the North West Regional Waste Management Group, including their ability to fulfill their waste treatment contract.

(AQW 15569/11-15)

Mr Attwood: As the Member 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's current position:

arc21 is in the latter stages of dialogue with its remaining bidder and is working through a range of procurement issues. It advised the Waste Infrastructure Programme Board in June of this year that it expected to appoint a Preferred Bidder in February 2013. This figure has subsequently slipped by approximately six months.

The North West Regional Waste Management Group has finalised its Appointment Business Case and has submitted it for approval. Approved, this will allow the NWRWMG to consider appointing a Preferred Bidder. NWRWMG expects to reach financial close in March 2013.

I have made it a priority that this procurement exercise progresses and measures up to the requirements of affordability, deliverability, issues of the public purse, compliance with our EU commitments and developing to right approach in our circumstances. I will firmly hold to this position.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Firms which Shed Jobs in Northern Ireland to Relocate Elsewhere

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, for each of the last five years, to detail (i) how many firms have shed jobs to relocate them outside Northern Ireland; and (ii) how many jobs have been lost in this way.

(AQW 14903/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency collects information on businesses proposing to make 20 or more employees redundant in line with the Employments Rights (Northern Ireland Order) 1996 (amended 8 October 2006). Businesses are required to provide a reason for redundancies, which includes the “transfer of work to another establishment”. However, there is no requirement for businesses to indicate where the work is being transferred to and it is therefore not possible to provide the information requested.

For information, the number of businesses citing the reason for proposed redundancies (of 20 or more employees) as the “transfer of work to another establishment” in each of the last 5 years, the number of such redundancies and the total number of businesses with redundancies and reported redundancies (>20 employees) is provided in the table overleaf. Please note that these figures may include a transfer of work to another establishment in Northern Ireland.

| Year | Redundancies due to ‘Transfer of work to another establishment’ | | Total redundancies | |
|-------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | Number of firms | Number of confirmed redundancies | Number of firms | Number of confirmed redundancies |
| 2008 | 7 | 1,127 | 57 | 2,782 |
| 2009 | 10 | 857 | 86 | 4,596 |
| 2010 | 9 | 133 | 73 | 2,096 |
| 2011 | 7 | 311 | 65 | 1,808 |
| 2012* | 5 | 97 | 43 | 1,630 |

*to 31/08/12

Rating Debt

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the level of rating debt that was written off, in each district, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 14959/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The levels of rating debt that were written off in each of the last three years (comparable information is not available prior to 2009/2010) in each district council area are set out in the attached table.

The figures for 2011/2012 are unpublished as LPS is awaiting the final outcome of the audit from the Northern Ireland Audit Office, and therefore the information should be treated as provisional.

Debt written-off may be recovered in subsequent years, generally as the result of the receipt of dividends, from claims lodged by LPS against the outstanding debt associated with bankrupt ratepayers.

| District Council | Debt Written Off (£000s) | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2011/2012 (Prov.) | 2010/2011 | 2009/2010 |
| Antrim | £590 | £252 | £227 |
| Ards | £707 | £287 | £352 |
| Armagh | £385 | £388 | £124 |
| Ballymena | £709 | £276 | £280 |
| Ballymoney | £128 | £85 | £88 |
| Banbridge | £322 | £219 | £194 |
| Belfast | £7,186 | £6,532 | £3,718 |
| Carrickfergus | £407 | £154 | £117 |
| Castlereagh | £657 | £231 | £131 |
| Coleraine | £429 | £329 | £246 |
| Cookstown | £145 | £198 | £123 |
| Craigavon | £1,141 | £731 | £364 |
| Derry | £1,745 | £977 | £783 |
| Down | £592 | £616 | £176 |
| Dungannon & South Tyrone | £224 | £392 | £175 |
| Fermanagh | £719 | £263 | £218 |
| Larne | £240 | £76 | £178 |
| Limavady | £225 | £216 | £107 |
| Lisburn | £1,331 | £781 | £850 |
| Magherafelt | £227 | £93 | £109 |
| Moyle | £65 | £44 | £42 |
| Newry & Mourne | £1,377 | £875 | £467 |
| Newtownabbey | £687 | £323 | £314 |
| North Down | £1,079 | £394 | £568 |
| Omagh | £212 | £298 | £126 |
| Strabane | £289 | £193 | £148 |
| Totals | £21,818 | £15,222 | £10,224 |

* Figures may not add due to roundings

Proposed Changes to Air Passenger Duty Rates

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many jobs are projected to be created as a result of proposed changes to Air Passenger Duty rates.

(AQW 14984/11-15)

Mr Wilson: It is not possible to determine how many jobs will be created as a result of the devolution of direct long haul Air Passenger Duty (APD). However, without devolution Northern Ireland would

have lost the United Airlines service which operates between Belfast and Newark, the only direct link between Northern Ireland and the US.

This link provides a vital and strategic access point for indigenous companies seeking to trade with North America. It also provides a very important gateway for inward investors seeking to establish or expand business operations in Northern Ireland. Invest NI Foreign Direct Investment clients, including the New York Stock Exchange, have stated that their presence here was only possible on the basis that direct air access to the Eastern Seaboard capital markets was readily available.

The Programme for Government commitment to complete the devolution of direct long haul APD, and to reduce it to zero, will send a positive message to long haul airlines that Northern Ireland can be a viable option for their business. Increasing Northern Ireland's connectivity to long haul destinations will result in economic benefits in terms of improved business linkages and increased inbound tourism.

Peace III Programme

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether there is an underspend in any elements of the PEACE III Programme that is available for redistribution; if so, by what criteria and process will this funding be reallocated; and to whom the surplus funds will be distributed.

(AQW 15016/11-15)

Mr Wilson: It is not anticipated that there will be an underspend within the PEACE III Programme.

In order to ensure that full commitment of the programme's budget is maintained until the end of the programming period, it may be necessary to reallocate funding between programme themes. Any such proposals would require the agreement of the relevant accountable government departments and the Programme Monitoring Committee. Reallocation across programme priorities would also require the approval of the European Commission.

To date, the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), PEACE III Managing Authority, has not made any such proposals.

Positive Relations Programme in PEACE III

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether there is an underspend in the Positive Relations Programme in PEACE III; and, if so, to what extent and how will any surplus funds be distributed.

(AQW 15017/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The budget for Theme 1.1, Building Positive Relations at the Local Level, of the PEACE III Programme has been fully committed. An underspend is not anticipated.

Cost of Event Held in the Grounds of the Stormont Estate on Wednesday 27 June 2012

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the cost to his Department of the event held in the grounds of the Stormont Estate on Wednesday 27 June 2012.

(AQW 15044/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department of Finance and Personnel incurred costs of £ 60,217.82 in relation to the event.

Cost of Event Held in the Grounds of the Stormont Estate on Saturday 29 September 2012

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the cost to his Department of the event held in the grounds of the Stormont Estate on Saturday 29 September 2012.

(AQW 15045/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department of Finance and Personnel incurred costs of approximately £1,500 in relation to the event.

Single Online Application Portal

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he would investigate the potential of establishing a single online application portal where organisations could apply for the various streams of Government funding available; and for his assessment of the benefits of such a portal.

(AQW 15049/11-15)

Mr Wilson: I can confirm that I have asked the Senior Responsible Owner for NI Direct to consider this request and to provide an assessment of the viability of such an approach and the likely benefits. Indeed the idea of a generic online grants application facility had already been identified by the NI Direct Programme. Under the Programme for Government commitment to improving online access to Government information NI Direct are currently investigating the potential for an online form to be used for applications under the OFMDFM administered Social Investment Fund and it is hoped that this solution could then be used as the basis for other similar types of grant or funding applications. This exemplar pilot should be available by the end of March 2013 and I will update the member at that time of the viability of having a single online solution or if multiple solutions would be required but based on reusing elements of the pilot solution to reduce the development timescales.

Empty Premises Rate Relief Scheme

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the success of the Empty Premises Rate Relief scheme in attracting new occupants to empty premises since it came into effect on 1 April 2012.

(AQW 15087/11-15)

Mr Wilson: To date there have been 32 successful applications to the new scheme with total relief awarded to date of £77,636.

As you have stated the one year rates concession was introduced in April 2012. The aim of the policy was to get long term empty shops and other retail premises back into business and to help rejuvenate town centres. Over recent months I have personally visited a number of businesses who have benefitted from the new scheme and have been impressed by the impact it is having in giving businesses a helpful start and also in arresting the decline in some of our traditional shopping areas.

Also, a couple of weeks ago the Scottish Government announced that they were going to follow suit and adopt a similar scheme there. So, this Assembly is leading the way in adopting policies that help rather than inhibit business growth.

Staff: Criminal Charges Outstanding

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether any staff within his Department have criminal charges outstanding; and what is his Department's position regarding their employment whilst court proceedings are pending.

(AQW 15187/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department is not aware of having any staff with criminal charges outstanding.

Public Private Partnership and Private Finance Initiative Projects

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline all Public Private Partnership and Private Finance Initiative projects that have been entered into since May 2007, broken down by (i) cost; (ii) Department; and (iii) duration.

(AQW 15206/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Responsibility for the overview of PPP / PFI projects rests with Strategic Investment Unit in the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. However the information requested is collected and collated by HM Treasury and is published on its website. The information is available for download as an Excel spreadsheet. The website address is:

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/infrastructure_data_pfi.htm

Houses of Multiple Occupancy

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether his Department is aware of the negative impact that the rising numbers of houses of multiple occupancy (HMO) have had upon the capital value of non-HMO properties within certain areas, such as Stranmillis, and that many of these properties are still subject to higher rates despite the reduction in value.

(AQW 15216/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department has no direct say in planning policy matters which is a matter for the Environment Minister however this issue was brought to the attention of the head of Rating Policy within my Department when he attended a meeting of the Stranmillis Residents Association in May 2011.

At that meeting he explained that this was a matter to be taken into account at the next general domestic revaluation and was not something that could be reflected in the current assessments; nor can partial revaluations occur.

However, it is worth noting that although house prices throughout NI have declined substantially in recent years, for a variety of reasons, a general revaluation would not necessarily lead to reduced rates bills for Stranmillis residents.

Latest evidence show that values have on the whole fallen back to January 2005 levels, which is the common valuation date adopted for the current valuation list. If a revaluation of all properties were to take place now and we found that all values had decreased below the 2005 levels that were set, as the Executive and Councils still need the same amount of money out of the system, the rate in the pound would have to increase.

Where values have fallen and the relativity of those values has altered (in terms of type, location etc), then some ratepayers would pay less after a revaluation, some more and others the same – but overall the same level of revenue would be raised.

Properties for which the value has reduced in percentage terms by more than the average since 1 January 2005, would have a lower rates liability. Properties for which the value has reduced by less than the average, or indeed increased, would have an increased rates liability.

The Executive has currently no plans to carry out a general domestic revaluation during the spending review period and lifetime of this Assembly. Furthermore, carrying one out would be difficult at the moment, as the evidence required to establish the values is not sufficiently reliable, given the low volume of sales and the continued volatility in the housing market. However, my Department monitors the housing market through the authoritative Northern Ireland Residential Property Price Index produced by LPS. If house price relativities change substantially and the housing market recovers (in terms of being sufficiently stable and active to provide a reliable evidence base) the matter can be reconsidered by the Assembly in due course.

Social Clauses

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the (i) minimum requirement; and (ii) definition of a social clause.

(AQW 15225/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There are two ways that social considerations can be incorporated into contracts. These are as the 'subject matter' of the contract i.e. that they are about the product, service or the construction work to be procured, and/or when linked to the performance of the contract.

It is for Departments to determine what social considerations they intend to include in contracts. These social considerations are then incorporated into the contract in the form of clauses (social clauses) in either the contract specification or as part of the contract performance requirements.

Social Clauses

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what organisations have corresponded with his Department in regard to the promotion of social clauses.

(AQW 15229/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Department of Finance and Personnel, mostly through Central Procurement Directorate (CPD), has corresponded with a wide range of organisations. Correspondence covers a number of issues relevant to procurement including the promotion of social clauses.

These organisations include the EU Commission, Cabinet Office and the devolved administrations in Wales and Scotland, Northern Ireland Departments and Centres of Procurement Expertise. In addition CPD corresponds with a number of representative business and professional organisations. This can be either individually or regularly through the Construction Industry Forum for Northern Ireland (CIFNI) and the Business Industry Forum for Northern Ireland (BIFNI). A list of the membership of each forum is attached for information.

CIFNI Members

- Central Procurement Directorate
- Roads Service
- NI Water
- Health Estates
- NI Housing Executive
- Translink
- Invest NI
- Department for Social Development, Urban Re-generation
- Department for Social Development, Social Housing
- Strategic Investment Board
- Construction Industry Group
 - Specialist subcontractors College
 - Contractors College
 - Suppliers College
 - Professional College
- Quarry Products Association NI
- Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians
- Federation of Master Builders

BIFNI Members

- Central Procurement Directorate
- NI Housing Executive

- Translink
- Sales Institute of Ireland, Northern Branch
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Construction Employer's Federation
- Chartered Accountants Ireland - Ulster Society
- Management Consultancies Association
- Law Society of Northern Ireland
- Strategic Investment Board
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
- Strategic Investment Board
- Business in the Community NI
- NI Council for Voluntary Action
- Education & Library Board
- NI Water
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Institute of Directors
- Institute of Business Consulting
- Institute of Practitioners in Advertising (IPA)
- Momentum
- Confederation of British Industry - NI
- InvestNI
- Business Services Organisation Procurement and Logistics Services

External Contracts

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what is the value threshold for external contracts to be subject to competitive tender; and under what circumstances this requirement could be waived.

(AQW 15253/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Procurement Guidance Note 04/12 –'Procurement Control Limits and Basis for Contract Awards' states that all contracts above £5,000 must go to competitive tender. For spend below £5,000 Departments must carry out a price check to ensure value for money.

The Procurement Guidance Note 03/11 'Award of Contracts without a Competition' provides guidance and sets out the circumstances and procedures to be followed when awarding contracts without a competition.

These Procurement Guidance Notes are available on CPD's website www.dfpni.gov.uk/cpd.

External Contracts

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what guidance is provided to Departments on the requirements for contracts to be subject to competitive tender; and to detail the requirements for business cases to be updated to account for the passage of time.

(AQW 15254/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Procurement Guidance Note (PGN) 04/12 – ‘Procurement Control Limits and Basis for Contract Awards’ sets out the minimum requirements for competitive tendering for all bodies covered by Northern Ireland Procurement Policy. The circumstances and procedures to be followed when awarding contracts without a competition are set out in PGN 03/11 ‘Award of Contracts without a Competition’. These guidance notes are available on CPD’s website www.dfpni.gov.uk/cpd.

My Department has also provided guidance to departments detailing the requirements for business cases to be completed or updated. This guidance can be found on the Department’s website at: <http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/index/finance/afmd/afmd-key-guidance/afmd-fds/fddfp0312.pdf>.

Annual Net Migration out of Northern Ireland by Foreign Nationals

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how annual net migration out of Northern Ireland by foreign nationals is quantified; and for his assessment of the reliability of these figures. **(AQW 15300/11-15)**

Mr Wilson: Net migration is defined as migration into Northern Ireland less migration out of Northern Ireland. This includes movement of people to and from Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

In Northern Ireland estimates of migration are made with reference to the country the person lived in before coming to Northern Ireland or moved to from Northern Ireland, not their nationality. Therefore, an estimate of net migration of foreign nationals is not made.

Estimates of migration flows are modelled using the data sources outlined in the attached table.

| Place of Origin / Destination | Into Northern Ireland | Out of Northern Ireland |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Great Britain | Transfer of GP registrations to Northern Ireland from Great Britain (HSC Business Services Organisation) | Transfer of GP registrations to Great Britain from Northern Ireland (GB Health Authorities) |
| Republic of Ireland | New registrations with a family doctor, previous country of residence Republic of Ireland (HSC Business Services Organisation) | Central Statistics Office Ireland (CSO) survey estimate of migration into Republic of Ireland from people previously resident in Northern Ireland |
| Rest of the World | New registrations with a family doctor, previous place of residence Rest of the World (HSC Business Services Organisation) | De-registrations with family doctor due to person now living in the Rest of the World (HSC Business Services Organisation) |

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency produce annual migration estimates, alongside an annual report detailing migration evidence from other sources. These include the Worker Registration Scheme, the Points Based or former Work Permit system, National Insurance Number registrations to nonUK nationals, the School Census, Higher Education enrolments and Government household surveys. Comparisons of these sources, with the annual migration estimates show significant coherence and thus reliability in the Northern Ireland level migration estimates.

The latest migration estimates, relating to the period mid-2010 to mid-2011, show that 21,700 persons arrived to live in Northern Ireland, whilst 24,900 persons left Northern Ireland to live elsewhere. This resulted in a net migration loss of 3,200 people in the Northern Ireland population.

Changes to the Welfare System

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an estimate of the amount of money that will be lost to the Northern Ireland economy as a result of the changes to the welfare system.

(AQW 15364/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Latest estimates indicate that overall spending on social security benefits will continue to increase after welfare reform has been implemented, however the rate of the increase will be lower.

Northern Ireland will continue to be able to draw down its actual social security spending needs with any fluctuations met directly from Westminster outside of the funds managed by the Northern Ireland Executive.

Under the Statement of Funding Policy UK ministers could adjust the Block grant were Northern Ireland ministers to decide to change social security policy. The level of the adjustment and the financial consequences would be a matter for discussion.

If the Welfare Reform Bill (Northern Ireland 2012) was not implemented there would be major negative financial consequences. Estimates are in the region of £207m for the current spending review and around £1.2billion in the next; the annual costs could reach up to £400million a year in 2018-19.

Measures such as Universal Credit, designed to enable customers to keep more as they move into work or increase their working hours, will bring an estimated £110million per year once fully implemented into Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland would have to meet higher IT and administration costs to deliver services to around 600,000 social security customers and would not get the significant cost advantages from using the same systems as GB and administering the same benefits.

Not implementing welfare reform would directly impact the money available to the Northern Ireland Executive for spending on key services such as health and education having a significant impact on our economy in difficult financial times.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Safety of GM Food

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what consideration she has given to the research by Gilles-Eric Séralini which has raised concern about the safety of GM food; and (ii) whether she has any plans to introduce legislation to ensure that food production remains GM free.

(AQW 14993/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):

- (i) The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the UK Government Department that has responsibility for the safety of genetically modified (GM) food and feed and has advised me regarding the publication by Seralini et al (2012) in relation to the safety of the GM maize variety NK603.

Any new evidence on the safety of approved GM materials needs to be carefully evaluated in order to identify any implications for consumers of the end products and Professor Seralini's recent publication on the safety of GM maize NK603 and the herbicide glyphosate has attracted significant attention.

Particular emphasis has been placed on the higher number of tumours that occurred in animals that ate the GM maize, compared with controls that ate a different, non-GM maize variety. However, the number of rats in each group is too small to determine whether there are genuine differences between groups. The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the body responsible for carrying out the safety assessment for GMOs, is reviewing the Seralini et al. (2012) paper. In its initial statement EFSA advised that the study as reported cannot be used in the safety assessment of GM maize NK603 and

therefore, EFSA does not see a need to reopen the existing safety evaluation of GM maize NK603. The FSA agrees with this conclusion.

EFSA is contacting the authors of the paper to obtain further information about their work and to review the results that were not included in the published paper.

The GM maize variety NK603 was approved in the EU for food and feed use in 2004, following a rigorous safety assessment. As with all GMOs, food products that contain GM material derived from GM maize NK603 must be labelled as such, to allow consumers to decide whether they consume such products.

- (ii) The GM Food and Feed Regulation allows for the authorisation and marketing of GM food and feed in the European Union (EU), including the UK. Once authorised GM foods can be freely marketed, providing that such products are labelled as containing or consisting of GM material. The fact that the UK food supply remains relatively GM free is mainly due to the policies of food retailers.

The role of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) is strictly limited to the enforcement of European law governing the importing of animal feeding stuffs and seed certification. DARD implements EU regulations which require labelling of all feed products derived from genetically modified material. Approval of GM seed is at European Union level and decisions are not made locally.

The Department of the Environment has responsibility for policy and legislation relating to the deliberate release of GM material into the environment, including the growing of GM crops. There are no GM crops grown in Northern Ireland, and the Department has no plans to legislate further on GM matters.

Biologics Treatment for Psoriasis Patients

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to his Department's commissioning plan, why patients diagnosed with psoriasis must wait 39 weeks for biologics treatment while other National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence approved specialist therapies have a waiting time of three months.

(AQW 15021/11-15)

Mr Poots: The allocation of funding for biologic drugs is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board, as service commissioner, taking into account local circumstances, the strategic objectives established for the HSC and demands and pressures generally for access to a wide range of specialist drugs.

The Health and Social Care Board/Public Health Agency Commissioning Plan for 2012/13 indicates that the areas for investment this year will be:

- Biologics service for rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis to achieve a maximum waiting time of 3 months, in line with my Department's 2012 Commissioning Plan Direction target to reduce the waiting time from 9 months to 3 months by September 2012;
- Biologics service for inflammatory bowel disease; and
- Biologics service for the treatment of psoriasis to maintain a maximum waiting time of 39 weeks.

The current total budget for biologics for psoriasis is £3.6m. At the end of August 2012, 295 people were receiving biologic treatment for severe plaque psoriasis with 110 people waiting to commence treatment.

Psoriasis Treatments

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking, in the short-term, to fund psoriasis treatments.

(AQW 15022/11-15)

Mr Poots: Most people with psoriasis can be treated by their GP. A patient's GP may refer them to a dermatologist if their symptoms are particularly severe or do not respond well to previous treatments.

There are a wide variety of treatments available for psoriasis including topical therapies, phototherapy and systemic non-biological therapies. It is assumed however that this question relates to systemic biological therapies such as anti-TNF drugs.

The Health and Social Care Board has allocated additional funding to Trusts in 2012/13 to ensure that a maximum waiting time of 39 weeks for biologics treatment for psoriasis is achieved and maintained. The total budget for biologics for psoriasis including the 2012/13 allocation is £3.6m.

Health Service Dental Prices

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to explain the rationale behind the different Health Service dental prices incurred by patients in Northern Ireland compared to residents in England.

(AQW 15051/11-15)

Mr Poots: Northern Ireland operates under a very different health service dental contract to England and therefore operates a different patient charging policy. A new dental contract was introduced in England and Wales in 2006. Under this new contract, English and Welsh patients are charged a fee dependant on which one of three broad treatment bands they fall into. Patients in Northern Ireland (and Scotland) pay a fee based on each individual treatment item they have carried out, as set out in the Statement of Dental Remuneration, which is published annually. England and Wales operated the same patient charging system as Northern Ireland and Scotland prior to the introduction of the new dental contract in 2006.

My Department has been working with the British Dental Association and Health and Social Care Board to develop a new dental contract for Northern Ireland. This will include a new system for patient charges.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Budgets

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money has been surrendered from the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service budgets in each of the last five financial years.

(AQW 15061/11-15)

Mr Poots: The amount of money surrendered from the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service's DEL Other Resource Budgets in each of the last 3 financial years is shown in the table below. Comparable information for 2007/08 and 2008/09 can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

| Financial Year | Easements declared by NIFRS (1) £m | Retracted by DHSSPS £m | Total Amount Surrendered £m |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| 2011/12 | 3.4 | 3.0 (2) | 6.4 |
| 2010/11 | 3.2 | - | 3.2 |
| 2009/10 | - | 1.0 (3) | 1.0 |

Notes:

- 1 Declared by NIFRS as part of routine budgetary management process.
- 2 Retracted in August 2011 in light of NIFRS projected expenditure profile.
- 3 Retracted as part of a wider review across all ALBs to assist in meeting Swine Flu financial pressures.

Bone Protection Treatments

Ms Brown asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of bone protection treatments and their effectiveness as a preventative measure against fractures.

(AQW 15065/11-15)

Mr Poots: Osteoporosis is a chronic condition which is caused when more bone cells are lost than are replaced, causing bones to become thin and weak. If not prevented or treated, the disease can cause bone fracture

“The Prevention and Management of Fragility Fractures in Northern Ireland” report was written in 2009 by a group including representatives from the Health and Social Services Boards, Trusts and the DHSSPS. It included a summary of the evidence base for improving bone health and management of fragility fractures. Good progress has been made by the Board and the Public Health Agency in taking forward the recommendations of the report.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has produced Technology Appraisals 160 and 161 on the effective prescribing of osteoporosis drugs for primary and secondary prevention of bone fractures and my Department has endorsed these.

Short-Stay Unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 14438/11-15, and given the recent problems in our Accident and Emergency departments and the success of the short stay unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital, to explain the rationale for moving short stay from the Accident and Emergency department into the main hospital, including the clinical evidence that was used to make this decision; and whether this is happening in other Accident and Emergency departments.

(AQW 15073/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust that although the future location of the short stay unit at the Royal Victoria Hospital is not in the footprint of the Critical Care Building it is adjacent to the emergency department. The rationale for its proximity to the Emergency Department is that patients in the short stay unit do not require to be in an Emergency Department facility, however as it is the Emergency Department consultants who are in charge of their care, it is appropriate that the unit is located close to the Emergency Department.

Short stay units in or attached to emergency departments may provide observation, assessment and diagnosis and/or short term management. Not all hospitals have such units; where they do, these can be in or attached to emergency departments. Decisions on whether to have a short stay ward and its geographical location within a hospital are a matter for individual Health and Social Care Trusts.

Parent and Family Consultation on the UK Safe and Sustainable Review of Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the Parent and Family consultation on the UK Safe and Sustainable Review of Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services facilitated multiple consultations with different groups over a 2 year period in England and Wales, but allowed only one session of 1 hour for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 15092/11-15)

Mr Poots: Following concerns expressed regarding the long term sustainability of the Paediatric Cardiac Surgical Service (PCCS) in Belfast I announced on 29 March 2012 that the HSC Board would carry out a review of PCCS in NI. In doing so, the Board commissioned an Expert Panel from England to carry out an independent review of the service in Belfast using standards that were used to assess centres elsewhere in the UK.

As part of the review the Expert Panel met directly and separately with two patient groups. In addition, patient representatives and families of children with congenital cardiac problems have been part of

the working group established by the HSC Board and PHA to develop proposals for the future provision of this service for Northern Ireland. A consultation document was issued on 25th September and throughout the consultation process the HSCB and PHA will carry out a full and open consultation with patients, families and their representatives.

UK Safe and Sustainable Report on Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the findings of the UK Safe and Sustainable Report on Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services were based upon an agenda and criteria specifically created to address services in England and Wales, as opposed to using new criteria specifically suited to Northern Ireland.

(AQW 15093/11-15)

Mr Poots: Standards used by the Safe and Sustainable Review were developed by a multi professional group of experts which received views and contributions from an extensive range of professional and lay organisations and included parents and patients. It is important that our children receive the same standard of care as that provided to children elsewhere in the UK – indeed it would not be acceptable for our children to receive a lesser service.

I announced on 25 September 2012 the commencement of a 12 week period of consultation on a draft service specification and standards for the future commissioning of this service in Northern Ireland, as well as a number of options for the delivery of this service in the future. The consultation will run until 21st December 2012, following which I will take a decision on the future provision of this service for Northern Ireland.

Safe and Sustainable Review of Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the consultation document that sets out the criteria for the Safe and Sustainable Review of Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services in England and Wales states that air travel has not been considered as a viable option in England and Wales, as it cannot always be relied upon, yet this is the only option available for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 15095/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is my intention to ensure that the very best quality care is made available to the Northern Ireland population, taking account of the potential transport issues. In that context the consultation document that I announced on 25 September 2012 sets out a range of options on the future service model of paediatric cardiac surgery. Consultation on this will continue until 21 December 2012 and I invite you to contribute to that process and to help shape the future of cardiac care for children in Northern Ireland.

I have also asked the Health and Social Care Board to carry out a robust analysis of the current transport arrangements for children, including those with congenital heart disease, to determine the best way to deliver these services. I will wish to see the outcome of this analysis before I take a final decision on the future model for Paediatric Cardiac Surgery and Interventional Cardiology in Northern Ireland.

Regional Fertility Centre

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which regulatory body is responsible for (i) the Health Service treatment; and (ii) private treatment provided at the Regional Fertility Centre at the Royal Group of Hospitals.

(AQW 15167/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), is a statutory body, created in 1991 under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990). Its primary remit is to license and monitor UK clinics (both public and private) that offer infertility services, and all UK-based research into human embryos. It also regulates the storage of eggs, sperm and embryos.

The treatment of private patients is outside the remit of my Department, specific queries relating to private practice should be referred directly to the provider of the treatment, in this case, the Regional Fertility Centre.

Regional Fertility Centre

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many private patients have been treated at the Regional Fertility Centre in each of the last three years; and how much money the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has generated as a result.

(AQW 15169/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), is a statutory body, created in 1991 under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990). Its primary remit is to license and monitor UK clinics (both public and private) that offer infertility services, and all UK-based research into human embryos. It also regulates the storage of eggs, sperm and embryos.

The treatment of private patients is outside the remit of my Department, specific queries relating to private practice should be referred directly to the provider of the treatment, in this case, the Regional Fertility Centre.

Regional Fertility Centre

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many Health Service patients have availed of private treatment at the Regional Fertility Centre in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15170/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), is a statutory body, created in 1991 under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990). Its primary remit is to license and monitor UK clinics (both public and private) that offer infertility services, and all UK-based research into human embryos. It also regulates the storage of eggs, sperm and embryos.

The treatment of private patients is outside the remit of my Department, specific queries relating to private practice should be referred directly to the provider of the treatment, in this case, the Regional Fertility Centre.

Regional Fertility Centre

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many private treatment fertility procedures have been carried out at the Regional Fertility Centre in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15171/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), is a statutory body, created in 1991 under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990). Its primary remit is to license and monitor UK clinics (both public and private) that offer infertility services, and all UK-based research into human embryos. It also regulates the storage of eggs, sperm and embryos.

The treatment of private patients is outside the remit of my Department, specific queries relating to private practice should be referred directly to the provider of the treatment, in this case, the Regional Fertility Centre.

Individual Funding Requests

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how long requests for cancer drugs in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust take under Individual Funding Requests; and what proportion of these requests were granted in the last twelve months.

(AQW 15197/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) has advised that its Internal Scrutiny Committee (ISC) for Oncology and Haematology meets every week to review Individual Funding Requests (IFR) and forwards those it supports to the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) IFR Panel for consideration. The HSCB has advised that all individual funding requests, including those for cancer treatments, are responded to within one week of the Panel's weekly meeting.

The IFR Panel approved 93% of IFRs received in relation to cancer treatments within the last 12 months.

Regional Fertility Centre

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in respect of the staff working at the Regional Fertility Centre how many (i) consultants; (ii) doctors; (iii) embryologists; and (iv) nurses perform private procedures or services in the Centre.

(AQW 15231/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), is a statutory body, created in 1991 under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act (1990). Its primary remit is to license and monitor UK clinics (both public and private) that offer infertility services, and all UK-based research into human embryos. It also regulates the storage of eggs, sperm and embryos.

The treatment of private patients is outside the remit of my Department, specific queries relating to private practice should be referred directly to the provider of the treatment, in this case, the Regional Fertility Centre.

Asylum Seekers

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many asylum seekers, who claim to be unaccompanied minors, have been referred to Social Services, in the last three years; (ii) how many of these minors subsequently disappeared; and (iii) and what assurances he can give that this will no longer happen and be exploited by people involved in human trafficking.

(AQW 15255/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is not available for the time period requested, however information is available for specific periods as detailed in the table below:

| Period | Number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers / Unaccompanied Minors | Number Disappeared |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| 1 January 2009 – 31 December 2009 | 2 classified specifically as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children | 0 |
| 1 January 2010 – 31 December 2010 | 2 classified specifically as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children | 0 |
| 1 January 2011 – 31 May 2011 | 3 classified specifically as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children | 1 |
| 1 June 2011 – 30 June 2012 | 5 classified specifically as Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children | 3 |

My Department has sought assurances from the Health and Social Care Board that the risk of any child, including an asylum-seeking child, going missing from care is being effectively managed.

In February 2011 my Department and the PSNI issued guidance in relation to working with children who are or suspected of having been victims of Human Trafficking. The guidance establishes procedures for dealing with trafficked children and takes account of the requirements of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Health and Dental Studies

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any health and dental studies that were carried out before, during and after the fluoridation of water.

(AQW 15313/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department has not undertaken any public health or dental studies before, during or after the fluoridation of water in Northern Ireland.

Cost of Food per Hospital per Day

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the cost of food per hospital per day in each Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 15326/11-15)

Mr Poots: The data is not currently available centrally nor in the form requested. However, the action plan accompanying the recently issued "Strategic Framework for the Delivery of Health & Social Care Catering Services" includes a plan to collect more accurate, more detailed management information on catering costs.

Cancelled Consultant Clinics or Procedures

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how many consultant clinics or procedures within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust have been cancelled in the last twelve months, broken down by clinic or procedure; (ii) how many patients were affected; and (iii) for what reason was the clinic or procedure cancelled.

(AQW 15342/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information on cancellations is collected on an appointment, not clinic or procedure, basis. The number of outpatient appointments cancelled by the Belfast HSC Trust during 2011/12 was 81,611 (Source: QOAR).

(i) & (iii) As such, information on the number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled during 11/12, as well as the reasons, is shown in the table below.

| Reason for cancellation | Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by Belfast HSC Trust (01/04/2011 – 31/03/2012) |
|--|--|
| Consultant not available | 17,686 |
| Medical staff not available | 1,040 |
| Patient treated elsewhere | 537 |
| Consultant cancelled appointment | 1,575 |
| Appointment brought forward | 1,618 |
| Appointment put back | 15,188 |
| Cancelled following validation/audit | 444 |
| Administrative error by hospital/GP | 572 |
| Hospital transport not available | 81 |
| Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method | 4,153 |
| No reason or incorrect reason recorded | 38,717 |
| Total | 81,611 |

Details of cancellations by specialty, if required, are available online in the Northern Ireland Hospital Statistics: Outpatient Activity Statistics 2011/12, available at: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/ni_hospital_statistics_-_outpatient_activity_2011_12.pdf

(ii) This information is not available; information is collected on an appointment and not patient basis.

Ambulance Service: Recruitment Drive

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Ambulance Service is due to begin a new recruitment drive; and how many positions will be available.

(AQW 15358/11-15)

Mr Poots: Recruitment is a matter for individual health trusts. The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service has advised me that it is presently in the process of recruiting for the following:

Qualified Paramedics

The closing date for receipt of applications was Friday 5 October 2012. The Trust plans to recruit for 8 permanent vacancies, 25 temporary vacancies and its 0 Hours Contract (i.e. Bank Staff). Shortlisting is presently ongoing.

RRV Paramedics

These vacancies will be advertised internally on Monday 15 October 2012, with a closing date for receipt of applications as Monday 29 October 2012. The Trust plans to recruit for up to 28 permanent vacancies.

Businesses Service Transformation Programme Band 6 and Band 4

There are 2 temporary vacancies (1 for each Band), which will be advertised internally in the first instance. The Trust plans to advertise these vacancies by the end of October 2012.

Department of Justice

High Court Judgements

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice to list all outstanding High Court judgements, indicating in each case the date the court hearing concluded and the identity of the presiding judge.

(AQW 14288/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): The table below lists the outstanding reserved High Court judgments as of 19 September 2012.

| Judgment | Judge | Hearing Date | Date For Delivery |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Hanna v Sarcon McGarrity v Sarcon | Mr Justice Deeny | 11.5.12 | 15.10.12 |
| Lincoln Centre v NIHE NIHE v Lincoln Centre | | 28.6.12 | 8.10.12 |
| Brendan Kelly & Anr Lawrence McCrudden | Mr Justice Gillen | 10.9.12 | To be fixed |
| | | 10.9.12 | To be fixed |

| Judgment | Judge | Hearing Date | Date For Delivery |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| JR 59 v Chief Constable | Mr Justice Treacy | 16.12.11 | 4.10.12 |
| JR 55 v NI Commissioner for Complaints | | 10.1.12 | To be fixed |
| Artur Bransent v UK Border Agency | | 30.1.12 | 28.9.12 |
| Gerard Pollock v PSNI | | 9.2.12 | 28.9.12 |
| JR 64 v Western HSST | | 16.2.12 | 4.10.12 |
| James Martin v Police Ombudsman | | 21.2.12 | 26.10.12 |
| John Duggan v DHSSPS | | 24.2.12 | 26.10.12 |
| In re Joseph Fitzpatrick In re Terence Sheils | | 18.4.12 | 9.11.12 |
| In re Tullynaskeagh Farms Ltd | | 24.4.12 | 16.11.12 |
| Donnelly v Roe Angling Association | | 9.5.12 | To be fixed |
| JMCA v BHSCT | | 30.5.12 | 28.9.12 |
| British Medical Association NI v DHSS | | 8.6.12 | 9.11.12 |
| Patricia O'Hara v Belfast International Airport | | 12.6.12 | 9.11.12 |
| Denise Brewster v NI Local Government Superannuation Committee | | 21.6.12 | 9.11.12 |
| Elizeu Melo Da Silva & Ors v Immigration and Asylum Chamber (Upper Tribunal) | | 22.6.12 | 9.11.12 |

Brendan Lillis

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the dates of any representations that Amnesty International has made to his Department in relation to Brendan Lillis.

(AQW 14835/11-15)

Mr Ford: Northern Ireland Prison Service has no record of any representations from Amnesty International on behalf of Mr Brendan Lillis.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Staff Training

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) on what date the Northern Ireland Prison Service first delivered training for (a) Supporting Prisoners At Risk; (b) Applied Suicide Intervention Skills; and (c) Mental Health First Aid; and (ii) whether all healthcare and discipline staff are fully trained.

(AQW 14838/11-15)

Mr Ford: Supporting Prisoners at Risk training first commenced in May 2009. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills training commenced in June 2007 and the delivery of Mental Health First Aid began in May 2009.

To date training has been delivered to 600 NIPS operational staff concentrating on staff who work and engage directly with prisoners.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has advised that all South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust staff are fully trained to mandatory level and specialist training is provided as and when required. Mental Health First Aid training is not a mandatory requirement and Prison Healthcare staff have not been trained in this. However, the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has ensured that all prison healthcare staff have received the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training.

Convictions for Speeding

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of convictions for speeding which had been caught by speed cameras on the (i) A1; and (ii) A2 in each of the last three years.

(AQW 14855/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no information in the convictions datasets on the location of the offence and therefore I cannot identify convictions for speeding occurring specifically on the A1 or the A2.

Further information in relation to the operation of the cameras and levels of detections (as opposed to convictions) may be obtained by contacting PSNI directly.

Prisoners Trained by the Samaritans in the Peer Support Listeners Scheme

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many prisoners (i) have been trained by the Samaritans in the peer support Listeners Scheme; and (ii) have utilised these skills, broken down by each facility.

(AQW 14910/11-15)

Mr Ford: 38 of the 42 prisoners in Maghaberry who completed the Samaritans' Listener training course joined the Listeners Scheme. Approximately 60 prisoners in Magilligan have completed the Samaritans' Listener training course and all those who completed the course went on to work as a Listener. In Hydebank Wood, two male inmates and seven female inmates completed the Samaritans' Listener training course and all inmates trained joined the Listener Scheme.

Separating Agricultural Crime Figures from Rural Crime Figures

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Justice what progress has been made with the PSNI in separating agricultural crime figures from rural crime figures.

(AQW 14940/11-15)

Mr Ford: Crime figures are a matter for the Chief Constable, who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Governors Facing Internal Investigations

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 13948/11-15, how many governors are currently (i) under investigation; and (ii) suspended whilst under or pending investigation, broken down by grade.

(AQW 14942/11-15)

Mr Ford: There are no staff at Governor grade currently under investigation, or suspended from duty.

Legal Aid to Challenge Parades Commission Ruling

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost, or estimated cost, of the Legal Aid provided to the Carrick Hill resident for the High Court challenge to the Parades Commission ruling held on Friday 28 September 2012, broken down by (i) solicitors/law firm; and (ii) counsel.

(AQW 14945/11-15)

Mr Ford: Under Article 24 of the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 I am precluded from discussing the details of individual applications for civil legal aid. However, all applications for civil legal aid are subject to the statutory means and merits tests and are considered on the basis of the facts submitted in support of the individual application.

Court Estate Inspections on Designated Smoking Areas

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the dates of any audits or inspections that have been carried out by the Courts Estate to ensure that there is no smoking at facilities, with the exception of designated areas; and (ii) whether he can offer an assurance that a zero tolerance policy is being enforced.

(AQW 14948/11-15)

Mr Ford: From 1 January 2005 there has been a ban on smoking in all Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) premises including courthouses.

No specific audits or inspections have been carried out by the NICTS. However, any instances of non-compliance are dealt with at each building by security staff, who, when necessary, advise Court users of the NICTS smoking policy. Security staff raise any concerns about non-compliance with local management.

Supporting Prisoners at Risk

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) why the Prisoner at Risk process was replaced by Supporting Prisoners at Risk; and (ii) on what date the Northern Ireland Prison Service (a) made this decision; and (b) implemented the change.

(AQW 14954/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Prisoner at Risk process was replaced by the Supporting Prisoners at Risk process in response to issues highlighted in a number of scrutiny reports and as a result of lessons learned through the introduction of new procedures in England & Wales. The decision to replace the Prisoner at Risk process was part of the Safer Custody Strategy Project, which was approved on 13 November 2008.

A pilot of the Supporting Prisoners at Risk process was implemented in Ash House of Hydebank Wood Prison on 11 June 2009 and extended to the Young Offenders' Centre on 17 August 2009. Full implementation was rolled out in Maghaberry and Magilligan on 1 December 2009.

Legislation Surrounding Assisted Suicide

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice whether he intends to seek clarity on, or make changes to the legislation surrounding assisted suicide.

(AQW 14995/11-15)

Mr Ford: In February 2010 the Public Prosecution Service published its guidance document “Policy on Prosecuting the Offence of Assisted Suicide”. The guidance included factors to be considered in the evidential test in the decision to prosecute or otherwise. The document is available at: <http://www.ppsni.gov.uk/Prosecution-Policy-and-Guidance-5084.html>

In terms of legislative change more generally, as Minister of Justice I have responsibilities around the creation and implementation of the criminal law. However, policy issues and legislation around assisted suicide cross Departmental interests and any potential change in the law would be a matter for the Executive and indeed the Assembly as a whole to consider. Any change would also require widespread public consultation. At this stage there are no proposals for legislative change.

Staff: Criminal Charges Outstanding

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether any staff within his Department have criminal charges outstanding; and what is his Department’s position regarding their employment whilst court proceedings are pending.

(AQW 15002/11-15)

Mr Ford: Employment whilst court proceedings are pending is governed by the NICS Staff Handbook which states “the person exercising formal disciplinary powers may, if the circumstances warrant it, pursue formal disciplinary action without waiting on the outcome of any police investigation and disposal of any resulting criminal proceedings”. Careful consideration is given to appropriate action on a case by case basis.

As there are less than five members of staff within the Department of Justice who have criminal charges outstanding the actual number has been withheld. This is to protect the identity of the individuals concerned as disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice on what grounds was Legal Aid refused to a north Belfast resident who wished to challenge a Parades Commission ruling on a Twelfth of July parade in Ardoyne.

(AQW 15003/11-15)

Mr Ford: Under Article 24 of the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 I am precluded from discussing the details of individual applications for civil legal aid. However, all applications for civil legal aid are subject to the statutory means and merits tests and are considered on the basis of the facts submitted in support of the individual application.

Legal Aid

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how much has been paid in Legal Aid in the case of 12/090450; and what is the estimated final cost once the trial has concluded.

(AQW 15004/11-15)

Mr Ford: To date no bills have been submitted in this case.

It is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the final cost at this early stage of the proceedings.

Body Scanning Equipment

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Justice for how long his Department will trial the body scanning equipment at Magilligan and Hydebank Prisons before determining its suitability for introduction in Maghaberry Prison.

(AQW 15005/11-15)

Mr Ford: Two Millimetre Wave Scanners have been leased to facilitate a three month evaluation to take place. The first scanner has been installed in Magilligan Prison and has been operational from 26

September. The second scanner will be operational in Hydebank Wood Young Offender Centre later this month.

Both systems will be evaluated against the Northern Ireland Prison Service's existing search procedures over a three month period.

NIPS has also commenced the process to seek approval for the use of Transmission X-ray Scanners in prisons in Northern Ireland under the Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004. NIPS is aiming to have its application completed by the end of October.

Until such times as the evaluation of this technology has been completed it is not possible to provide an assessment of its suitability for use in the prison environment or a timescale for its introduction to Maghaberry prison.

Convictions for Animal Cruelty

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice why the figures for the number of convictions for animal cruelty are only available until 2009.

(AQW 15054/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Statistics and Research Branch encountered technical difficulties in translating files from legacy systems and producing sentencing data beyond 2006. An alternative source for convictions data was identified for consequent years.

Data on convictions for 2007 and 2008 have been available for answering Assembly Questions since October 2011 and 2009 data since September 2012.

Work is currently progressing to provide data from 2010 onwards. The immediate priority is to clear the backlog but, once this is done, our aim is that conviction and prosecution data will be processed, fully validated and be made available within six months after the year end.

Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme for NI Prison Service Staff

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme for NI Prison Service staff who were in receipt of Letter 3.

(AQW 15058/11-15)

Mr Ford: A total of 544 members of staff applied for the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme. Of these, 159 staff have been released to date and a further 139 in receipt of "Letter two" have been told that they will be allowed to leave when it is operationally possible for them to do so. Staff in receipt of "Letter three" have been advised that their application remains under consideration.

Supporting Prisoners at Risk

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice suicides and suicides within prisons has reduced since the introduction of the Supporting Prisoners at Risk process.

(AQW 15082/11-15)

Mr Ford: The number of attempted suicides recorded in each prison establishment has increased since the introduction of the Supporting Prisoners at Risk (SPAR) process. In 2009 there were 15 recorded incidents of attempted suicide across all three establishments. Following the introduction of the SPAR process, and improved record keeping, there were 69 recorded incidents of attempted suicide in 2010, 77 incidents recorded in 2011 and to date, 75 recorded incidents of attempted suicides in 2012. However, this increase may be indicative of the improved recording and reporting systems introduced following the introduction of the new SPAR process, and does not necessarily reflect an increase in the actual number of attempted suicides.

The last death in Northern Ireland Prisons which was confirmed as suicide occurred in 2007. Since 2007 there has been a number of suspected self-inflicted deaths in custody which have yet to be determined by a Coroner's verdict.

Benefit Appeal Tribunals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 14273/11-15, whether this matter was raised by respondents to the public consultation on Access to Justice; and whether the provision for legal aid for benefits appeals falls into the category of human rights legislation.

(AQW 15083/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Access to Justice Review report, published in September 2011, recommended that publicly funded representation should not be made available in all social security appeal cases but that contracts or grants for advice and assistance in welfare matters should include provision for enhanced advice and advocacy services in such cases. The public consultation drew one response in this field. The respondent strongly opposed making legal aid available only for advice and assistance in preparation for cases and not for representation at the tribunals.

Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights provides a right to a fair trial. This would include a right to a fair trial in a Benefit Appeals Tribunal. If, in a highly exceptional case, an appellant in a benefits appeal believed that his Article 6 rights would be breached if he did not have legal aid for his appeal, he could apply to the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission for exceptional grant funding and, if requested by the Commission to do so, I could authorise such funding if I was satisfied that it was necessary to comply with the appellant's ECHR Article 6 rights.

Northern Ireland Prison Service's Outline Estate Strategy

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Justice, since the publication of the Northern Ireland Prison Service's Outline Estate Strategy, how many prisoners have been moved from HMP Magilligan to another detainment facility in Northern Ireland.

(AQW 15088/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since the publication of the Outline Estate Strategy nine prisoners have been transferred from Magilligan Prison to Maghaberry Prison for operational reasons. However none of these transfers have been as a direct consequence of the Estate Strategy.

The strategy is still subject to public consultation and I have made clear that no decision will be taken on any element of the strategy until the responses to the consultation have been properly considered and evaluated.

Northern Ireland Prison Service's Outline Estate Strategy

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Justice, since the publication of the Northern Ireland Prison Service's Outline Estate Strategy, how many staff working at HMP Magilligan have been informed that their place of work will change.

(AQW 15089/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that no member of staff has been informed that their place of work will change since the publication of the Outline Estate Strategy.

The strategy is currently subject to public consultation and, in light of the significant public interest in the strategy, the Northern Ireland Prison Service is continuing to host a series of consultation workshops, public meetings and staff meetings during October.

The consultation process has raised a number of important issues which must be carefully thought through. The final strategy must be informed by what is best for Northern Ireland in terms of reducing offending and public protection. That is why no decision will be taken on any element of the strategy - including the future of Magilligan - until after the consultation has ended and all views have been considered.

Magilligan Prison: Body Scanners

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice what criteria were used in establishing Magilligan Prison as the base for the use of body scanners for a trial period.

(AQW 15104/11-15)

Mr Ford: Two Millimetre Wave Scanners have been leased to facilitate a three month evaluation to determine their suitability within the prison environment. As this technology has not previously been tested within prisons, it is not appropriate to run a pilot on category 'A' high risk prisoners.

It was therefore decided to test the technology in the two lower security prisons before taking a decision with regard to the effectiveness of the equipment. The first of the two pilots has commenced at Magilligan and the second is due to commence at Hydebank Wood this month.

Evaluation of the Body Scanner Pilot

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice when he expects the evaluation of the body scanner pilot in Magilligan and Hydebank Wood Prisons to be completed.

(AQW 15140/11-15)

Mr Ford: The first of the two pilots has commenced at Magilligan and the second is due to commence at Hydebank Wood this month. It is expected that both pilots will run for a period of three months and that the evaluation process will be completed in the New Year.

Body Scanner Pilots

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice what milestones his Department has set to determine which of the body scanner pilots will be permanently used within the prisons estate.

(AQW 15143/11-15)

Mr Ford: As I have previously announced the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is committed to the evaluation of two types of full body imaging scanners - Millimetre Wave and Transmission X-Ray scanners.

Millimetre Wave Scanner

Two separate Millimetre Wave Scanner pilots, each lasting three months, will be undertaken. The first, in Magilligan Prison, commenced in September and the second, at Hydebank Wood, is scheduled to commence this month.

Transmission X-ray Scanner

There is currently no lawful authority to use Transmission X-ray equipment in UK prisons. In order to get that authority, a justification application must be made in accordance with the Justification of Practices using Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004.

The preparation of the NIPS aspect of the Justification Application is at an advanced stage and is due to be completed before the end of the month. However, statute requires that before a pilot can commence, the Northern Ireland Prison Service must not only receive formal approval for the use of such technology but, in advance of this approval, must also consult with specified agencies and bodies in Northern Ireland and within the rest of the United Kingdom in order to identify the likely benefits and/or detriments involved in the use of transmission x-ray technology for non-medical reasons.

The evaluation process

Full body imaging technology is currently untested in a prison environment. Each of the pilot schemes will need to be evaluated before any decision can be taken on the type of search technology which may be introduced. Full body searching will continue until the evaluation of the pilot schemes is complete.

The evaluation process will test whether advances in technology can lessen the need for full body searches in favour of effective and less intrusive methods, consistent with the Prison Review Team recommendation 8.

The evaluation process will also consider the operational application of the equipment within a prison environment, including how it performs alongside existing detection methods; the ability to detect drugs, weapons and other items that could be used to effect an escape or have the potential to be injurious to others; and sustainability in terms of running costs, ease of use and reliability.

Although it is very early in the process, NIPS officials expect that evaluation of the Millimetre Wave Scanners should be completed early in 2013.

Body Scanner Pilots

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice, following the completion of the body scanner pilots within prisons and when his Department has selected the technology to replace strip-searching, whether the technology will be rolled out throughout the entire prison estate.

(AQW 15146/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is committed to evaluating two types of full body imaging scanners - Millimetre Wave and Transmission X-Ray scanners.

Two separate Millimetre Wave pilots will be conducted. The first, in Magilligan Prison, commenced in September and the second, at Hydebank Wood, is scheduled to commence later this month.

The objective of the three-month pilots will be to determine whether the technology can lessen the need for full body searches in favour of effective and less intrusive methods, consistent with the PRT recommendation 8, in order to develop a multi-layered approach to searching and prison security.

It remains my desire to deploy less intrusive search methods where possible, without impacting on safety and security within our prisons. It is too soon to make an assessment as to which, if any, of the technologies available should be introduced to any of the prisons within the prison estate.

Department's Budget

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice what is his Department's current budget for this financial year.

(AQW 15149/11-15)

Mr Ford: Details of the Department of Justice (DOJ) budget allocation for 2012-13 are published in the Department's 2012-13 Main Estimate.

Included in the Estimate is a total resource budget of £1,498,360k, of which £311,247k is Annually Managed Expenditure (AME), and a net capital budget of £64,537k.

The DOJ's Main Estimate is included within the Northern Ireland Estimates 2012-13, a copy of which is available via the following link:

<http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/main-estimates-2012-13.pdf>

Body Scanner Trial

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice when the outcome of the full body scanner trial period currently under way at Magilligan Prison will be published.

(AQW 15202/11-15)

Mr Ford: As I have previously announced the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is committed to the evaluation of two types of full body imaging scanners - Millimetre Wave and Transmission X-Ray scanners. This is in keeping with Recommendation 8 of the Prison Review Team's Report.

The piloting of Millimetre Wave technology has already commenced and is due to last for three months. The Magilligan pilot started on 26 September and a similar pilot using a scanner from a different supplier is due to commence on 20 October 2012 in Hydebank Wood.

The objective of the evaluation process will be to test whether advances in technology can lessen the need for full body searches in favour of effective and less intrusive methods, consistent with the Prison Review Team Recommendation 8.

The evaluation will also consider the operational application of this type of equipment within a prison environment including how it performs alongside existing detection methods; its ability to detect drugs, weapons and other items that could be used to affect an escape or have the potential to be injurious to others; and sustainability in terms of running costs, ease of use and reliability.

Although it is very early in the evaluation process NIPS officials expect that it will be completed in early 2013, at which time I will consider which of its findings it would be appropriate to publish, taking account of security considerations.

Magilligan Prison

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Justice for an estimate of the acreage that would be required for a replacement of Magilligan Prison, as contained in the review of the Prison Service estate.

(AQW 15288/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below lists the outstanding reserved High Court judgments as of 19 September 2012.

| Judgment | Judge | Hearing Date | Date For Delivery |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Hanna v Sarcon McGarrity v Sarcon | Mr Justice Deeny | 11.5.12 | 15.10.12 |
| Lincoln Centre v NIHE NIHE v Lincoln Centre | | 28.6.12 | 8.10.12 |
| Brendan Kelly & Anr Lawrence McCrudden | Mr Justice Gillen | 10.9.12 | To be fixed |
| | | 10.9.12 | To be fixed |

| Judgment | Judge | Hearing Date | Date For Delivery |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| JR 59 v Chief Constable | Mr Justice Treacy | 16.12.11 | 4.10.12 |
| JR 55 v NI Commissioner for Complaints | | 10.1.12 | To be fixed |
| Artur Bransent v UK Border Agency | | 30.1.12 | 28.9.12 |
| Gerard Pollock v PSNI | | 9.2.12 | 28.9.12 |
| JR 64 v Western HSST | | 16.2.12 | 4.10.12 |
| James Martin v Police Ombudsman | | 21.2.12 | 26.10.12 |
| John Duggan v DHSSPS | | 24.2.12 | 26.10.12 |
| In re Joseph Fitzpatrick In re Terence Sheils | | 18.4.12 | 9.11.12 |
| In re Tullynaskeagh Farms Ltd | | 24.4.12 | 16.11.12 |
| Donnelly v Roe Angling Association | | 9.5.12 | To be fixed |
| JMCA v BHSCT | | 30.5.12 | 28.9.12 |
| British Medical Association NI v DHSS | | 8.6.12 | 9.11.12 |
| Patricia O'Hara v Belfast International Airport | | 12.6.12 | 9.11.12 |
| Denise Brewster v NI Local Government Superannuation Committee | | 21.6.12 | 9.11.12 |
| Elizeu Melo Da Silva & Ors v Immigration and Asylum Chamber (Upper Tribunal) | | 22.6.12 | 9.11.12 |

Anonymity Orders in Criminal Cases

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, in light of the historic and international commitment of the judicial process to open justice and the importance of this to public confidence, to outline the reasons for the increase in anonymity orders in criminal cases, prohibiting the naming of defendants, from one in 2010 to fourteen to date this year.

(AQW 15304/11-15)

Mr Ford: The decision to impose reporting restrictions is a judicial matter based on the statutory provisions and facts of individual cases. It is not something upon which I can comment.

Applications for Clearance from Access NI

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice what steps have been taken to ensure that there is no unnecessary duplication or delays in applications for clearance from Access NI in cases where the individual has recently received clearance.

(AQW 15323/11-15)

Mr Ford: Under current legislation all applications received by AccessNI must be treated separately without reference to any previous application. Section 113B of Part V of the Police Act 1997 requires relevant police forces to provide information which, in the chief officer's opinion, might be relevant to the position applied for and which ought to be disclosed. This means that relevant police forces must treat each application separately and consider the position applied for. In addition, Disclosure Certificates are a 'snap shot' of a person's criminal history at the time they are

processed and police forces may have new information to consider on receipt of a subsequent application. It is for organisations requiring a Certificate, however, to decide if they will accept a dated Certificate or will seek a new one on each occasion. That is not a matter for AccessNI. The organisations, of course, have to consider the risk to safeguarding.

That situation will change. In spring 2011 I commissioned Sunita Mason to conduct a review of the Criminal Records Regime in Northern Ireland. In Part 1 of her report Mrs Mason recommended the implementation of portable checks. I accepted the recommendation and officials are working to find a way of delivering such a solution, subject to technical viability and a costed and approved Business Case. Delivering a portable Disclosure solution requires significant adjustments to AccessNI's already complex IT infrastructure. It also requires primary legislation. Given those challenges we are unlikely to have the new service before spring 2014. AccessNI customers are being kept informed of developments.

With regard to turnaround times, AccessNI publishes its targets, and performance against those targets, on its website. The organisation is alive to the desire of employers to receive their disclosure checks as quickly as possible. The target time for Enhanced checks is 90% in 28 days. In the first 7 months of 2012 AccessNI processed almost 61,000 Enhanced disclosure applications, of which 93% were completed within the 28 day target; with an average turnaround time of 20 days.

Apprentices Employed Through Departmental Contracts

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Justice how many apprentices have been employed through departmental contracts in this financial year; and what percentage this number represents of the total posts allocated.

(AQW 15335/11-15)

Mr Ford: All Department of Justice contracts over £10,000 are awarded through our Centre of Procurement Excellence (COPE), Central Procurement Directorate, DFP

Due to their nature supplies and services contracts generally only include "work placements" and therefore the question of apprentices does not arise.

For construction contracts the agreed social clause requirement is that 5% of the contractor's workforce and that of first tier subcontractors, with 20 or more employees, must be employed on formally recognised paid apprenticeships.

Construction contract requirements for apprenticeships are thus normally managed as a compliance issue rather than collation by numbers of apprentices recruited.

Convictions for Offences Related to Stalking

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of convictions for offences related to stalking in each of the last three years.

(AQW 15346/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no specific offence of stalking in Northern Ireland law however three related offences may be prosecuted under the Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (“the Order”). The table below details the number of convictions for harassment; breach of an injunction prohibiting harassment; and causing another to fear violence under the Order for 2007 – 2009 (the latest year for which figures are currently available). Prosecutions for harassment are not limited solely to what may be known as stalking but cover any course of conduct which amounts to knowingly harassing another person.

NUMBER OF CONVICTIONS FOR HARASSMENT OFFENCES, 2007 – 2009

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 |
|---|------|------|------|
| Harassment | 53 | 46 | 80 |
| Breach of injunction prohibiting harassment | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Causing another to fear violence | 2 | 2 | 1 |

Data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Marie Stopes Clinic

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how the Marie Stopes Clinic will be monitored by criminal justice agencies to ensure that it complies with abortion laws.

(AQW 15579/11-15)

Mr Ford: The first obligation to comply with the law on abortion in Northern Ireland rests with the Marie Stopes organisation and the individuals concerned. As I understand it the future regulation and monitoring of the operation of the proposed clinic will be a matter for the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority under the authority of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The Minister of Health is currently considering how that might be achieved. If there is evidence of a crime having been committed the police and independent prosecuting authorities will investigate and prosecute as appropriate.

Department for Regional Development

Wrongful Parking in Disabled Bays

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will amend legislation to make wrongful parking in disabled bays a criminal offence.

(AQW 14746/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): My Department’s Roads Service has advised that parking a vehicle in a designated disabled person’s parking space, without clearly displaying a valid Blue Badge, is a decriminalised parking contravention, for which a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) may be issued by a Traffic Attendant.

I should advise that decriminalised parking enforcement is provided by my Department’s Roads Service, through its contract with NSL Services Group and the charge for a PCN is £90, with a 50% discount applied if the charge is paid within 14 days.

It is considered that public awareness in this area will continue to develop as enforcement continues to be provided and PCNs are issued, where contraventions are detected. Therefore, my Department has no plans, at present, to revert to making wrongful parking in disabled bays a criminal offence.

For your information, the feasibility of decriminalised parking enforcement was first evaluated in July 2002, by the current First Minister when he was Minister for Regional Development.

Roads in the Beechfield and Ashfield Estates, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to resurface the roads in the Beechfield and Ashfield Estates, Donaghadee.

(AQW 14757/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it has no current plans to carry out resurfacing in the Beechfield and Ashfield Estates in Donaghadee. These estates have not been resurfaced since they were built sometime in the mid sixties.

I can advise that roads would generally have a design life of approximately 25 years. However, this is not absolute, as the life of the road is affected by various factors including the volume and type of traffic.

Recent Flooding at Shane's Road, Killyleagh

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister for Regional Development what action his Department is taking to alleviate the problems caused by recent flooding at Shane's Road, Killyleagh, and to outline the plans in place to ensure that future flooding is avoided.

(AQW 14796/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that due to the topography of the surrounding land along Shane's Road, where, at some locations, the fields adjacent to the road are at a higher level, there is no means of draining the area, other than by using soakaways. Recently, as heavy and persistent rain fell onto already saturated ground, these soakaways were of very limited value. Roads Service officials further advise that they are aware of an incident where they believe an outlet pipe, into a field, was deliberately blocked.

Roads Service has recently cleaned gully tops and opened outlets, and enlisted the use of a specialist contractor to jet the drainage pipes along the road. Officials have also identified a number of locations along the road for drainage works, which are envisaged to be completed during the current financial year. This work will involve the renewing and extension of existing soakaways.

In addition, I have been informed by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the flooding at Shanes Road was not related to its sewerage infrastructure.

Residents in Areas at Risk of Flooding: Home Insurance

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the discussions he has had, or will have, with the insurance industry on behalf of residents in areas at risk of flooding, who are now disadvantaged in obtaining home insurance policies.

(AQW 14810/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As Minister for Regional Development I have no responsibility for private home insurance and have therefore had no discussions with the insurance industry on behalf of residents.

I have been advised by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development that a Statement of Principles (SoP), which aims to ensure that flood insurance remains as affordable and widely available as possible, was agreed between the Executive and the Association of British Insurers (ABI), representing the insurance industry, in July 2009. The agreement commits insurers to continue to provide flood insurance on the condition that the Executive effectively manages the risk of flooding. As the current SoP expires in June 2013, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development is planning to meet with a representative of the ABI towards the end of this month in order to identify a replacement, thereby ensuring continuation of availability and affordability of flood insurance.

The Minister for Social Development has advised me, in relation to social housing, that the Housing Executive has advised that buildings insurance is not a matter for their tenants. A "Your Rights and Responsibilities" booklet advises that the Housing Executive is responsible for the structure of a tenant's home. However, the Housing Executive strongly recommends that tenants arrange for insurance of the contents of their home so that they will be protected against accidental damage, loss

or theft; they advise tenants that they can arrange house contents insurance through any bank, building society or insurance agent. As the uptake of home insurance is low the Housing Executive routinely runs publicity campaigns on the benefits of home insurance. In addition their annual Housing News publication for tenants regularly features an article on the need to have home contents insurance.

New Bangor Grammar School Site, Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what safety measures, in relation to the new Bangor Grammar School site, Bangor, his Department intends to put in place.

(AQW 14913/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: A comprehensive range of safety measures, such as a new PUFFIN road crossing and Safe Routes to School signage, have been incorporated into the design of the new Bangor Grammar School, therefore, my Department's Roads Service has advised that it currently has no plans to carry out any further works at the site.

Residents Only Parking Schemes for the Coleraine Area

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development whether any residents only parking schemes for the Coleraine area are under consideration.

(AQW 14938/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that it is currently considering a request from a resident of Adelaide Avenue, Coleraine to introduce a 'residents only parking' at this location. Initial parking surveys have been completed and Roads Service intends to carry out more detailed surveys in the near future, following which further analysis will be carried out. Officials will advise the resident and Member of the outcome and any proposals that are deemed appropriate.

Footpath Resurfacing Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new footpath resurfacing schemes are planned for the Ballyholme and Groomsport areas of Bangor in each of the next three years.

(AQW 14975/11-15)

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.drndi.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.

Street Lighting Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new street lighting schemes are planned for the Ballyholme and Groomsport areas of Bangor in each of the next three years.

(AQW 14976/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 14975/11-15.

Pay and Display Car Parks: Staff

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development whether staff, whose duties include ensuring that vehicles in pay and display car parks display a valid ticket, follow guidelines or are allowed to apply discretion.

(AQW 14981/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that Traffic Attendants are expected to issue Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles detected as being parked in contravention of parking restrictions. In performing their duties, Traffic Attendants should apply the appropriate operational procedures that have been developed for the various types of contraventions, and should not exercise their discretion to ensure that drivers are treated equitably and consistently across Northern Ireland.

I would advise the Member that a parking enforcement awareness campaign will commence prior to the commencement of my Department's new parking enforcement and car park management contract with NSL Ltd, which is scheduled for 30 October 2012.

This campaign will include the distribution of information leaflets to drivers to remind them of the importance of parking restrictions and the benefits of effective parking enforcement. The leaflet will include a number of 'Dos and Don'ts' for drivers, advising them of where they should and should not park.

In addition, the Department will also be publishing a parking enforcement protocol to provide the public with detailed information on the various parking contraventions that can be enforced by traffic attendant.

Maintenance and Operation of Traffic Lights

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Regional Development what agency is responsible for the maintenance and operation of traffic lights.

(AQW 14997/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise that my Department's Roads Service is responsible for the maintenance and operation of traffic lights.

Bomb Scares on the Rail Network

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what was the financial cost to Translink over the last two years of postponed or reduced services as a result of bomb scares on the rail network.

(AQW 15024/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink advise that the financial cost of postponed or reduced services as a result of bomb scares on the rail network in the last two years is as set out in the table below. Costs for the current financial year to date are also included for information.

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| 2012/13 (year to date) | £12,658 |
| 2011/12 | £8,730 |
| 2010/11 | £37,188 |

I would also point out that it is not possible to capture the important, and potentially much more substantial, indirect costs of these events arising from loss of passenger confidence in service reliability and subsequent loss of revenue to Translink.

Departmental Budget

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what is his current departmental budget.

(AQW 15025/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The following table details my Department's budget up to, and including, the 2014-15 financial year. The 2012-13 figures include June Monitoring adjustments.

| | 2012-13 | | | 2013-14 | | | 2014-15 | | |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Resource | Capital | Total | Resource | Capital | Total | Resource | Capital | Total |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Total | 503,613 | 392,585 | 896,198 | 460,195 | 451,879 | 912,074 | 453,822 | 417,759 | 871,581 |

Street Lighting Schemes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new street lighting schemes are planned for the Abbey area of Bangor over the next three years.

(AQW 15026/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 14975/11-15.

New Footpath Schemes for the Abbey area of Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what new footpath schemes are planned for the Abbey area of Bangor over the next three years.

(AQW 15027/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer the Member to my answer to his Assembly Question AQW 14975/11-15.

Unadopted Roads in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the unadopted roads in the North Down constituency that are in receipt of a preliminary certificate of adoption that was issued more than twelve months ago; and why a final certificate has not been issued in each case.

(AQW 15068/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the roads which remain unadopted in the North Down constituency, for which a preliminary certificate of adoption was issued more than 12 months ago, and the reasons why a final certificate has not been issued, are detailed in the table below:

| Development Site | Reason Certificate Not Issued |
|--------------------------|---|
| Woodvale Gardens, Bangor | A number of minor road defects are to be addressed by the developer prior to final roads adoption. |
| Victoria Drive, Bangor | A number of minor road defects are to be addressed by the Roads Service Measured Term Contractor prior to final roads adoption. |
| Rathgill Parade, Bangor | NI Water final adoption certificate is required before adoption of the street can occur. |
| Moss Road, Millisle | Awaiting clearance from statutory bodies. |

Road and Water Surety Bonds in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development, for each of the last five years, what enforcement action has been taken in relation to road and water surety bonds in the North Down constituency; and what was the outcome of the action taken.

(AQW 15069/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service takes the lead in the administration of Departmental bonds, which provide security for road and sewer installations within developments. Northern Ireland

Water (NIW) works in close conjunction with Roads Service and provides input into the enforcement procedures. Any necessary Enforcement Notices are issued by Roads Service.

Details of the enforcement action taken, in relation to road and water surety bonds within the North Down constituency in the last five years, are set out in the table below:

| Year | Development Site | Enforcement action taken |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 2012 | Clifton Park Manor, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 05/04/12. Issues surrounding the street lighting apparatus and sewers (NIW) have to be resolved prior to adoption. |
| 2012 | Seapark, Holywood | Article 11 notice served on 30/03/12. The developer has responded by completing surfacing works to the street, however, a lands issue remains to be resolved in relation to the sewers (NIW) prior to adoption |
| 2012 | The Meadow, Brackenridge, Donaghadee | Article 11 notice served adoption imminent. |
| 2012 | Carnmoon, Donaghadee | Article 11 notice served 1/5/12. Work has commenced, however, issues surrounding the street lighting apparatus and sewers (NIW) have to be resolved prior to adoption. |
| 2012 | Seahill, Donaghadee | Article 11 notice served on 8/8/12. About to appoint contractor to carryout pre-adoption repairs. |
| 2012 | East Street, Donaghadee | Article 11 notice served on 3/9/12. The developer has decided to complete the pre-adoption repairs himself. |
| 2012 | Manor Farm, Donaghadee | Article 11notice served 5/10/12. NIW issues still have to be addressed. |
| 2011 | Ballyrolly, Millisle | Article 11 notice served 4/1/12. NIW adoption certificate is awaited. |
| 2011 | Rockhill, Donaghadee | Article 11 notice served, now adopted. |
| 2010 | Gibson's Green, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 02/06/10. Roads Service carried out pre-adoption repairs using its Measured Term Contractor to allow adoption on 17/10/11. |
| 2010 | Willowbrook Park, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 02/06/10. Roads Service carried out pre-adoption repairs using its Measured Term Contractor to allow adoption on 17/10/11. |
| 2009 | Victoria Drive, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 06/10/09. Pre-adoption repairs to be completed by the Roads Service Measured Term Contractor in November 2012, with adoption to follow. |
| 2009 | Balmoral Square, Bangor | Article 11 notices served on 25/08/09 and 24/09/09. Roads Service carried out pre-adoption repairs using its Measured Term Contractor to allow adoption on 05/10/11. |
| 2009 | Crawfordsburn Close, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 31/03/09. The developer responded to the Article 11 notice and completed the outstanding works to allow adoption on 17/05/11. |
| 2008 | The Crescent, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 18/08/08. The developer responded to the Article 11 notice and completed the outstanding works to allow adoption on 30/10/09. |

| Year | Development Site | Enforcement action taken |
|------|----------------------|--|
| 2008 | Primacy Road, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 11/06/08. The developer responded to the Article 11 notice and completed the outstanding works to the footway to allow adoption on 15/06/09. |
| 2008 | Ashley Drive, Bangor | Article 11 notice served on 19/05/08. The developer responded to the Article 11 notice and completed the outstanding works to allow adoption on 15/06/09. |

Roads in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to list the roads in the North Down constituency for which a preliminary certificate of adoption has been issued in each of the last twelve months.

(AQW 15070/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that those roads, within the North Down constituency, which have received a preliminary certificate of adoption in each of the last twelve months, are detailed in the table below:

| Month | Road Names |
|---------------|---|
| October 2011 | Main Street Conlig (widened footway); Ballycrochan Avenue, Bangor; Ashfield Manor, Bangor |
| November 2011 | Balloo Link, Balloo Retail Park, Bangor; Uprichard Court, Bangor; Uprichard Gardens, Bangor |
| December 2011 | Shaftesbury Road, Bangor |
| March 2012 | Bridge Road, Helen's Bay |
| June 2012 | Rosstown Meadows, Bangor |
| August 2012 | Stonebridge Row, Conlig; Ballycrochan Park, Bangor |

Unadopted Roads in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the unadopted roads in the North Down constituency for which a preliminary certificate of adoption was issued more than twelve months ago, what steps have been, and will be taken, to resolve any outstanding issues.

(AQW 15071/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that, in relation to the following unadopted roads in the North Down constituency, for which a preliminary certificate of adoption was issued more than 12 months ago, the steps that have been and will be taken to resolve any outstanding issues, are detailed in the table below:

| Development Site | Steps Taken to Resolve Outstanding Issues |
|--------------------------|---|
| Woodvale Gardens, Bangor | A joint site inspection with the developer and Roads Service shall be arranged in the coming weeks to identify a number of minor defects to be addressed prior to final roads adoption. Adoption will follow upon completion of any remedial action required. |
| Victoria Drive, Bangor | An Article 11 Enforcement Notice has been served on the developer. Pre-adoption repairs are to be completed by the Roads Service Measured Term Contractor in November 2012, with adoption to follow. |
| Rathgill Parade, Bangor | Roads Service awaits the NI Water final adoption certificate that will permit final adoption of the development roads. Adoption will proceed immediately after. |

NI Railways

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many passengers have used NI Railways over the last three years.

(AQW 15074/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink report on the number of passenger journeys recorded as opposed to the number of passengers, and have advised me that the number of passenger journeys made on NI Railways over the last three years are as follows:

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 2009-2010 | 10.0 Million |
| 2010-2011 | 10.4 Million |
| 2011-2012 | 10.7 Million |

For future reference please note that this is publicly available information which is published within Translink's Annual Report and Accounts each year, and is available in the assembly library.

Translink

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many passengers have used Translink over the last three years.

(AQW 15075/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer you to the answer given in AQW 11422/11-15

Translink report on the number of passenger journeys recorded as opposed to the number of passengers, and have advised me that the number of passenger journeys made on Translink over the last three years are as follows;

| Year | Translink Total (Millions) |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| 2009 -2010 | 78.2 |
| 2010 -2011 | 77.0 |
| 2011 -2012 | 77.3 |

(Figures are rounded to one decimal place)

This is publicly available information which is published within Translink's Annual Report and Accounts each year, and is available in the assembly library. The target for Translink is 77 million passenger journeys per annum.

Train Journeys

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many train journeys there have been in the last three years.

(AQW 15076/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would refer you to the answer in AQW 15074/11-15.

Translink have also provided the following statistics based on the number of train services operated (by financial year):

| Year | Total number of services |
|---------|--------------------------|
| 2009-10 | 110,040 |
| 2010-11 | 110,262 |
| 2011-12 | 109,867 |

In referring to train services Translink have provided the following definitions:

Trains to Belfast

A train operating from its point of origin to its terminal point in Belfast or to its turnaround point at GVS/Central is considered a single service.

Trains from Belfast

A train operating from its point of origin in Belfast or from its point of turnaround at GVS/Central to its point of destination outside of Belfast is considered a single service.

Portrush-Coleraine Branch Service

All trains operating between Coleraine and Portrush and Portrush-Coleraine are considered single service.

Railway Stations

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many railway stations there are.

(AQW 15077/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink advise that it's rail network comprises 22 stations which are staffed, and 32 halts.

Unfinished Housing Developments

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the health and safety risks to residents who live in unfinished housing developments, whether he has any plans to install street lamps and paint appropriate road markings in these developments.

(AQW 15086/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As I am sure the Member will appreciate, it is important to recognise that developers are primarily responsible for the health and safety risks associated with new housing development roads, including street lighting and road markings, until such time as the roads are completed and adopted into the public road network. Therefore, my Department's Roads Service has no plans to assume these responsibilities on behalf of developers.

However where roads, including street lighting and road markings, are not finished within a reasonable time, Roads Service officials will negotiate with the developer, or other responsible parties, to have the work completed. If the developer will not, or cannot, complete the necessary work, officials will take enforcement action under Article 11 of the Private Streets (NI) Order 1980, and call on the bond monies to pay for the works needed to bring the roads up to adoption standards.

I should also advise that in cases where urgent repairs in a private street are required to prevent or remove danger to persons or vehicles, my Department may, on giving at least 48 hours notice to the responsible person, carry out such urgent repairs under Article 22 of the Private Streets (NI) Order 1980.

Customer Service at Ballymena Railway Station

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the level of customer service at Ballymena Railway Station as a result of Translink's staff cuts which, in the last week in September, resulted in one member of staff having to cope with ticket sales, information provision, cleaning, operational duties and having to take verbal abuse from disgruntled customers.

(AQW 15147/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: This is an operational matter for Translink who advise that the majority of the NI Railways stations and halts are unstaffed and passenger ticketing and passenger information is provided by on-train Conductors alongside static information at stations/halts. At busier stations such as Ballymena, passenger information and passenger ticketing is provided by station staff. It is not uncommon for stations such as Ballymena to have only one member of staff on duty at certain times of the day to deal with the essential customer service and operational duties.

Regrettably from time to time staff do have to deal with more difficult customers and they are trained how to deal with such situations. Translink do not condone any form of abuse against any of their staff at any time and where sufficient evidence exists they will initiate prosecution.

Grievance Procedure Cases Against NI Water

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development, for each of the last five years, to detail how many (i) grievance procedure cases have been taken against NI Water; and (ii) whistleblowing complaints have been made against NI Water.

(AQW 15148/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the number of internal grievance and whistleblowing complaints over the last 5 years is as detailed in the table below:

| Year | Grievance Cases | Whistleblowing |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2007/08 | 20 | 2 |
| 2008/09 | 16 | 2 |
| 2009/10 | 28 | 4 |
| 2010/11 | 17 | 7 |
| 2011/12 | 12 | 8 |
| Total | 93 | 23 |

Grit Boxes in the North Down Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of grit boxes, including the locations, in the North Down area.

(AQW 15150/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Firstly, I would advise the Member that my Department's Roads Service provides salt bins and grit piles, but not grit boxes.

Roads Service currently provides 181 salt bins within the North Down Borough Council area, at the following locations:

HOLYWOOD: 52 BINS

- Cultra Slip Road Belfast bound to Folk Museum
- East Link S/L 2
- West Link S/L 8
- Abbey Ring S/L 34
- Abbey Ring S/L 12
- Abbots Wood near junction Demesne Road
- Strathearn Court at S/L No. 1
- Cedar Grove opposite S/L No.4
- Firmount Crescent @ No.15
- Firmount Crescent @ No.81
- The Green at S/L No.1
- Inver Park opposite S/L No.4
- Demense Park at No.15 at wall
- Demense Avenue at No.15
- Spencer Street opp No.55 @ jct with Hillview Place
- Elizabeth Road opp S/L No.3
- Croft Park @ S/L 9
- Ardmore Road at S/L No.6
- Ardmore Heights opposite No.9 at S/L No.6
- Ardmore Road No.39 (past No. 39) near radius
- Glenview Road No.7
- Glenview Avenue opposite S/L No.3
- Ardmore Park at No.3
- Brook Street at Clinic
- Windsor Avenue at No.12
- Victoria Road at end of grass verge
- The Esplanade, RHS to rear of bridge
- Tudor Oaks No 3 at wall
- Old Quay Court No.4
- Kintyre Avenue at S/L No.5
- Princess Gardens at S/L No.16
- Princess Park opposite No.9 on corner
- Princess Gardens jct of Lochinver Ave opp 109 @ green box
- Torgrange at No.10 near S/L
- Invergourie Road at Stathleven Park name plate
- Entrance to The Coaches, Brown's Brae
- The Spires at S/L No 3
- Woodcroft Park outside No 3
- Seafront Road jct with Circular Rd @ S/L No.6
- Station Road, Craigavad No.4
- Carlston Avenue No.1/Whinney Hill
- Old Seahill Road jct Seahill Drive at white wall
- Martello Park No.10
- Martello Park No 28
- Rhanbuoy Park S/L10
- Larch Hill No.1 (half way up hill)
- Larch Hill Ave No.5 junction with Larch Hill Drive
- Ballygrainey Road No.3 (at wall near A2)
- Dalchoolin at No 19
- Cultra Avenue opposite No.41
- Tarawood at S/L No.1
- Carney Hill near junction A2

HELEN'S BAY: 2 BINS

- Quarry Court past S/L No.3
- Grey Point at S/L No.3

CRAWFORDSBURN: 6 BINS

- Ballymullen Road opposite No.40
- Ballymullen Road at No.6
- Meadow Way (junction near Ballymullan Road)
- Burnside Park at No.2 (at wall/Meadow Way)
- Meadow Park North No 11 at mini pillar
- Carolsteen Park at No.1A junction Bridge Road

BANGOR:113 BINS

- Killaire Avenue opposite S/L No.8 (at fence)
- Ailsa Park at S/L No.3
- Ravelstone Avenue junction Killaire Park (at wall)
- Killaire Avenue at No 5

- Station Rd opposite S/L No.15 (on grass) below No.68 on waste ground
- Station View at S/L No.1
- Wandsworth Park junction Wandsworth Road
- Lyndhurst Avenue opposite No.2
- Sharman Rise opp no.10
- Killeen Avenue near S/L No.9
- Jubilee Drive near S/L No.15
- Viceroy's Wood at entrance 1/2 way up hill
- Springhill Heights No.10
- Farm Grove junction Springhill Avenue
- Bryansford Meadow opp S/L No.3
- Ballyquinton Gardens side of No.18 at BT pole
- Kilclief Gardens at S/L No.474
- Craigboy Mews at telegraph pole
- Balligan Gardens at S/L No.403
- Birch Park junction Birch Drive
- Clandeboye Way at S/L No.1
- Monea Way at S/L No.11 at wall
- Rostrevor Way at No.12
- Clandeboye Way near SL No 10
- Rostrevor Drive opposite name plate
- Enterprise Road opp S/L No.2
- Moyne Road, Conlig, junction Vermont Avenue at S/L No.5
- Bangor Road, Conlig, at top of Green Road
- Meadowvale opposite No.15
- Meadowvale Park at S/L No.2
- Beechfield junction Main Street, Conlig
- Beechfield Avenue @ S/L No.18
- Tower Road/Main Street, Conlig
- Forrest Hill/Main Street, Conlig
- Forrest Hill, Conlig at S/L 10 at side of No. 74
- Westmorland Crescent side of No.2 (on grass)
- Westmorland Crescent at S/L No.8
- Harehills Drive junction Westmorland Crescent
- Silverstream Crescent at No.61 (in laneway)
- Silverstream Road at S/L 9
- Silverstream Drive at No.18 (at wall)
- Silverstream Avenue at No 31
- Manor Park/Manor Avenue
- Hillcrest Walk outside No 9
- Bangor Police Station/Castle Park Avenue
- King Street at sign no. 4
- Tennyson Avenue at S/L No.1
- Princetown Road at Junction of Seacourt Lane
- Lorelei opp S/L 1 @ garage
- Ranfurly Avenue S/L 15
- Princetown Road opp S/L 9
- Knockmore Park S/L 12
- Manse Road @ Ent to No.12
- Railwayview Street No.54
- Windsor Gardens at No.2-4
- Rugby Avenue opposite No.60
- Donard Avenue No.44 (upper side of BT pole)
- Donard Avenue No.25
- Maryville Park opposite No.22
- Bryansglen West No.7 (lower side of S/L)
- Bryansglen Avenue No.21
- Grange Avenue No.5
- Bryansburn Gardens @ No.10 in corner
- Downshire Road upper side of Maxwell Road at S/L No.14
- Downshire Road lower side of Maxwell Road at S/L 15
- Clelland Park South at No.12
- Alexandra Gardens SL 6
- Church Avenue junction Church Drive at wall
- Abbey Park No.49/51
- Balloo Crescent opp Howells
- Ballyree Gardens opp No 9 near steps
- Willowbrook Rise at side of No 1 @ wall
- Willowbrook Park @ No.62
- Cranley Road opposite No.4

- Cranley Grove S/L No. 4
- Cranley Grove SL No 9
- Cranley Hill No.2
- Cranley Ave opp S/L No.1
- Irvine Park outside No 38
- Hanover Chase at wide footpath beside No 7 Hanover Court
- Regency Square @ s/l 2
- Beaumont Drive outside No.26
- Ravenswood opp No 10
- Kinwood Road @ No.2 Jct with Albany Road
- Marlo Cres @ S/L No.2
- Fernbank Park opp S/L 3
- Knightsbridge Court at entrance to NIE substation
- Fairfield Road at wall of No.60
- Fairfield Road opposite No.103 on verge
- Dellmont Drive at S/L 4 outside No 10
- Sunningdale Park No.7
- Glenanne Park opp Sunningdale Court between hedges
- Stanley Road opposite No.9
- Seaforth Road opposite S/L No.3
- Grove Park junction Bellevue
- Baylands Fourth Avenue at No.4
- Beverly Hills junction Beverly Drive at white wall
- Beverly Gardens junction Beverly Drive opposite No.34
- Conniston Drive beside S/L No.2
- Ambleside Road opp S/L at No.10
- Chippendale Vale junction Chippendale Park
- Ardmillan Park S/L 4
- Thornleigh Gardens S/L 6
- Windmill Lane at S/L No.1
- Portview/Ballymacconnell Road
- Towerview at S/L No.4
- Ivyhill Crescent at S/L No. 2
- Ballymacormick Park at name plate
- Ballymacormick Cres at S/L1
- Towerview Crescent opposite No.101 @ S/L No.20
- Towerview Crescent at side wall of No 125
- Towerview Avenue outside No 14
- Sherwood Road opp No.22 at green box

GROOMSPORT: 8 BINS

- The Hill opp No.5
- The Brae junction Ard-Na-Ree
- Springwell Drive beside S/L No.3
- Springwell Drive junction The Brae opposite No.7 P/C 4643
- Springwell Crescent No.58 at BT pole
- Springwell Crescent opposite S/L 4 at rose bed
- The Brae (at wall opposite Hillfoot)
- Glenganagh Park at S/L 3

Criteria for a Street to Qualify for a Grit Box

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the criteria for a street to qualify for a grit box.

(AQW 15151/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: For the purposes of this response, it has been assumed that your question refers to a salt bin.

My Department's Roads Service commits significant resources to maintaining approximately 4,800 salt bins that are provided on public roads.

Salt bins may be provided for use by the public, on a self-help basis, on roads or streets which do not qualify for inclusion in the gritting schedule, provided that the necessary criteria are met. There is no limit placed on the number of salt bins which may be provided, although they will not normally be

provided within 100m of another bin. However, new bins will not be provided, unless requested by a member of the public who also agrees to spread the salt provided.

Roads Service will consider the provision of a salt bin when the following criteria are met:

- the location in question must be on the publically maintained road network;
- the gradient of the road in question must be over 5%;
- no reasonable alternative route shall be available; and
- the subject road attains a minimum overall score, derived using a specific formula, where points are awarded depending on road geometry, residential usage, community welfare and commercial usage.

Salt bins can also be provided to schools that are regularly affected by severe wintry weather.

Where salt bins are provided, they are inspected regularly and refilled, as necessary, during the winter months and made available for use from November to March inclusive. Where necessary, they may be removed during the summer months to prevent vandalism or theft.

Car Parking Charges for Town Centre Businesses

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he has any plans to waiver car parking charges for town centre businesses over the Christmas period.

(AQW 15152/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that my Department intends to make an announcement on pre-Christmas arrangements in the near future.

Park and Ride Services

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what measures are in place to promote Park and Ride services.

(AQW 15153/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service works, in conjunction with other parts of my Department, to develop and build park and ride facilities.

In addition Translink's website has a link to a Park & Ride information site (www.translink.co.uk/en/Services/Other-Translink-Services/Park-Ride/). The site opens with an interactive geographical map with a search facility for the various locations.

You may also be interested to know that I will be making an announcement in the near future in relation to additional Park & Ride services for Belfast leading up to Christmas.

NI Water's Review of Water Meters

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 14577/11-15, to detail (i) the total amount of the original 2647 bills issued; and (ii) the total amount of the bills after all adjustments and reclassifications were made.

(AQW 15158/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that (i) the total amount of the 2,647 bills issued was around £5.4 million and (ii) the total amount of the bills following adjustments and reclassifications was £2.9 million (including new bills).

Roads and Sewers Adopted in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the roads and sewers that have been adopted in the North Down constituency in each of the last 12 months.

(AQW 15166/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the roads and sewers that have been adopted by my Department's Roads Service and Northern Ireland Water (NIW), in each of the last twelve months, are detailed in the table below:

| Month | Roads | Sewers |
|----------------|---|--|
| October 2011 | Balmoral Square, Bangor. Wilbrook Park, Bangor. Gibson Green, Bangor. | |
| November 2011 | Stonebridge Square, Conlig. Stonebridge Park, Conlig. Stonebridge Avenue, Conglig (part Adopted). Stonebridge Cottages, Conlig. Stonebridge Gardens, Conlig. Stonebridge Lane, Conlig. Stonebridge Green, Conlig. | Cornmill Phase 1, Moss Road, Millisle. RockHill, Warren Road, Donaghadee. |
| December 2011 | Woodcroft Lane, Holywood. Rockhill, Warren Road, Donaghadee | |
| February 2012 | Dellmount Crescent, Bangor. | |
| March 2012 | | Rathgill Avenue, Phase 1, Bangor. |
| April 2012 | | Green Gables, Conlig. |
| May 2012 | | Stonebridge Avenue, Conlig. |
| June 2012 | Rathgill Avenue, Bangor. | Riverwood, Donaghadee Road, Bangor. |
| July 2012 | Edgewater, Millisle Road, Donaghadee. | |
| August 2012 | | Upritchard Court, Bloomfield Rd South, Bangor. |
| September 2012 | | Thalassa, Downshire Lane, Bangor. Seahill, Donaghadee. |

Complaints Against Translink

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development, for each of the last five years, to detail (i) how many grievance cases have been taken; and (ii) how many whistleblowing complaints have been made, against Translink.

(AQW 15212/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink advise that in the last five years the total number of (i) grievance cases and (ii) whistleblowing complaints are as detailed in the table below.

| Year | Grievance Cases | Whistleblowing Complaints |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 2008 | 23 | 3 |
| 2009 | 47 | 1 |
| 2010 | 33 | 6 |
| 2011 | 51 | 0 |
| 2012 | 14 (To date) | 1 |
| Total | 168 | 11 |

Speed Limits

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development what criteria it uses to assess whether speed limits in an urban area should be (i) 30 mph; or (ii) 20 mph.

(AQW 15218/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that my Department has legislative powers for setting or changing speed limits on the public road network and has established key policies and procedures for doing so in consultation with PSNI and others.

My Department's Roads Service has advised that current legislation dictates that, where there is a system of street lighting present on a public road, the speed limit automatically defaults to 30 mph. This can only be changed by the passing of a Traffic Regulation Order and the amended speed limits are clearly signed at the start of the lit area and at regular intervals within it. The Roads Service Speed Management policy states that 30 mph should normally be the default speed limit for urban areas.

Officials further advise that Roads Service has been installing 20 mph zones for a number of years. These contain self enforcing engineering measures, such as road humps, and have played a significant role in greatly reducing serious and fatal collisions in residential areas. Most social housing areas have been treated and Roads Service continues to install further traffic calming measures on roads, where vulnerable road users are present.

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020 contains action measures that encourage further roll out of these zones. There is also a commitment to pilot the implementation of 20 mph speed limits that will not have any additional engineering measures installed. However, implementation has been delayed due to enforcement and resource issues. Roads Service's speed management strategy also gives encouragement to local traffic managers to further extend 20 mph zones, where they are considered necessary.

Proposed Craigantlet Road Scheme

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the objectives of the proposed Craigantlet Road Scheme, project no. N1004/400679.

(AQW 15221/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the objectives of the proposed Craigantlet Road scheme are to:

- (i) improve road safety; and
- (ii) relieve the current traffic progression difficulties experienced during peak periods.

Through-Route as an Option in Craigantlet

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the rationale behind the decision to withdraw the through-route as an option in Craigantlet, under project no. 400521.

(AQW 15223/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the through-route option was withdrawn due to the potential environmental impact, and it was also anticipated that traffic using the Dunlady Road would have experienced considerable delays during the construction phase.

Traffic Lights Options for the Craigtantlet Area

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the outcome of the appraisal for traffic lights options for the Craigtantlet area.

(AQW 15224/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that this option was considered for the Craigtantlet area but was ruled out at an early stage in the assessment process. Although costing significantly less than the current proposal, the installation of traffic signals at junctions on rural roads, which carry high speed traffic and have limited geometric standards, is not considered an appropriate solution to traffic problems.

Proposed Roundabout Scheme for Craigtantlet

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the queue lengths and travel times associated with the Dunlady Road during peak traffic flows as detailed in the vissim model of the proposed roundabout scheme for Craigtantlet, project no. N1004/400679.

(AQW 15227/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the queue lengths and travel times associated with the Dunlady Road during peak traffic flows, as detailed in the vissim model for the proposed layout, are as detailed in the table below:

JOURNEY TIMES (SECONDS)

| | AM | PM |
|----------------------------------|--------|-------|
| Dunlady Road - Craigtantlet Road | 125.06 | 95.72 |
| Dunlady Road - Ballymiscaw Road | 84.34 | 84.82 |

QUEUE LENGTH (METRES)

| | AM | | PM | |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | Average | Maximum | Average | Maximum |
| Dunlady Road | 1 | 44 | 0 | 20 |

Staff Charged with Criminal Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether any departmental staff have been charged with criminal offences; and (ii) what is his Department's position regarding staff employment whilst court proceedings are pending.

(AQW 15285/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is aware of one member of its staff who is currently charged with a criminal offence.

Offences leading to court proceedings may range from relatively minor driving offences to those involving more serious charges such as theft or assault. Where staff face such proceedings, the Department considers on a case by case basis, depending on the seriousness of the criminal charge, and obtains any necessary legal advice. Issues addressed by the Department include the appropriateness (or otherwise) of the officer's continued attendance at work and the timing of any

internal disciplinary action. Suspension from duty is considered where, in the Department's opinion, this would be a necessary precaution in the public interest pending the outcome of a criminal investigation.

Translink Executives

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are any plans to change the car allowances given to executives within Translink.

(AQW 15289/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: It is the Board of Translink, and not the Department, who have responsibility for setting the Terms and Conditions for its executives, including decisions relating to the provision of cars, which would be considered and agreed as part of the overall remuneration package. The Department can, and does, challenge the provision of any discretionary benefits such as bonuses but has to take account of contractual / legal constraints.

Translink has advised me that car / car allowances are part of Executives' terms and conditions of employment, as offered to and accepted by individual Executives. Translink argue that benchmarking against other similar transport organisations shows this to be an appropriate part of a package.

Phase Two of the Millennium Way, Lurgan Project

Mr Moutray asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to complete phase two of the Millennium Way, Lurgan project, given that the project has been on-going for many years.

(AQW 15298/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise the Member that the position in relation to this matter remains as I indicated during the Adjournment Debate on 7 February 2012 on the completion of Millennium Way. At that time, I confirmed that I fully understood the potential benefits that an extension of Millennium Way from Malcolm Road to Gilford Road could provide, including relieving peak hour traffic congestion on the road network in that part of Lurgan. In addition, this improvement would also enhance the attractiveness of Millennium Way as a through-traffic route generally.

However, you will be aware that the resources currently available for road improvements are focused on the strategic road network, primarily on the A5, A8 and A2 projects, and are committed up to 2014-15. Therefore, funding for other road improvements beyond this timeframe will be dependent on future budget settlements. Given the present economic climate, future funding may not be sufficient to deliver schemes contained in the current Strategic Road Improvement Programme, within the timescale envisaged in the Department's Investment Delivery Plan for Roads. The same also applies to schemes, such as the extension of Millennium Way from Malcolm Road to Gilford Road, that do not form part of the strategic road network.

I can assure the Member that I remain committed to identifying, within the prevailing financial constraints and competing demands, the funds required to progress this scheme as quickly as possible. In this respect, I can confirm that my Department's Roads Service, having obtained Planning Approval for the scheme, continues to develop this proposal in preparation for progressing it through the Vesting Order, should the necessary resources become available.

Disposal of Old Train Sets

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail any plans for the disposal of old train sets, including the tendering process.

(AQW 15314/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The disposal of old train sets is subject to a tendering process and Translink advises that tendering procedures have already been implemented for the majority of old train sets. Contracts for the disposal of these have been let.

In addition Translink is reviewing potential business cases which may facilitate the disposal of a number of old train units to heritage railway organisations/registered transport museums.

Oil Spillages on Roads

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Regional Development, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) the number of oil spillages on roads; (ii) the number and value of the claims made as a result; and (iii) the number and value of successful claims.

(AQW 15315/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the information requested for the first part of your question is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

However, in the table below, it has provided information on the number of claims made as a result of oil spills on the road and of these, the number which have been successful for the past three financial years:

| Year | Number of Claims Received | Number of Successful Claims | Total Compensation Paid |
|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2009/10 | 38 | 1 | £963.64 |
| 2010/11 | 37 | 1 | £6937.52 |
| 2011/12 | 28 | Nil | Nil |
| Total | 103 | 2 | £7901.16 |

I am also advised that the total value of the claims received is not known, as Roads Service Claims Unit only assesses the value of a claim, if it intends to make an offer of compensation.

Potholes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development how many potholes have been repaired in each of the last two years.

(AQW 15371/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service does not maintain figures solely in relation to numbers of potholes either recorded or repaired. However, figures for the total number of surface defects repaired, during the last two financial years, are detailed in the table below:

| | April 2010 – March 2011 | April 2011 – March 2012 |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Number of defects repaired ¹ | 228,557 | 225,019 |

1 Total number of repaired surface defects (including potholes) comprises of those defects located on the carriageway, hard shoulder and lay-bys.

People Employed by the Roads Service

Mr Gardiner asked the Minister for Regional Development, for each of the last five years, to detail (i) the number of people employed by the Roads Service; and (ii) their aggregated salaries.

(AQW 15388/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The following information is included in the Roads Service Annual Report and Accounts for the years in question.

| Year | Average Number of Persons Employed | Wages and Salaries (including Pension Costs and Social Security Payments) £000 |
|---------|------------------------------------|---|
| 2007/08 | 2,188 | 64,207 |
| 2008/09 | 2,152 | 64,958 |
| 2009/10 | 2,103 | 66,554 |
| 2010/11 | 2,021 | 64,008 |
| 2011/12 | 1,969 | 65,147 |

Department for Social Development

Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland Website

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development why departmental staff are unable to access the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland website from their office computers.

(AQW 14833/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): In the interests of protecting Departments against misuse of the internet, IT Assist, who provide IT services for the NICS, use a web security solution called Websense that automatically blocks certain categories of internet sites. Websense as a private organisation own and retain the software and associated rights of their web security solution, and the NICS, through IT Assist, simply purchase the use of this facility. The Websense categorisation setting had placed the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland website in a blocked category for all NICS Departments, and therefore blocked those using the IT Assist network to access the site.

Whilst a block was applied to the IT Assist network, approximately 85% of staff within my Department access the intranet through the Department of Works and Pensions network and access to the Grand Lodge of Ireland website was not blocked to these staff. Certain Departmental officials who avail of the internet via IT Assist required access to this particular site as part of their normal duties and individual permission for these staff was granted under a bespoke rule.

Websense recently recategorised the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland website; however, a bespoke rule which allowed access to approved staff had already been applied. The Websense recategorisation did not remove the block for some NICS Departments because of a technical error, as they, including DSD, had already applied the bespoke rule to allow access to certain departmental officials.

The Department has now taken action to rectify this technical error, and all staff have access to the Grand Lodge of Ireland website in the same way as they have access to other unblocked websites.

Panel Members of Benefits Appeal Tribunals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been paid to panel members of Benefits Appeal Tribunals in each of the last four years, broken down by (i) legally qualified members; (ii) medically qualified members; and (iii) disability aware members.

(AQW 14837/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The total amounts paid to Legally Qualified Members (LQM), Medically Qualified Members (MQM) and members with experience in disability (DEM), including fees, travel and expenses in the past 4 financial years are set out in the table.

| | 2008-09 | 2009-2010 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|-----|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
| LQM | £1,036,423 | £1,075,013 | £1,241,602 | £1,401,052 |
| MQM | £673,977 | £704,687 | £899,462 | £978,398 |
| DEM | £333,777 | £313,012 | £271,050 | £266,905 |

Single Dwelling Accommodation through Housing Associations

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what plans his Department has to create single dwelling accommodation through Housing Associations.

(AQW 14841/11-15)

Mr McCausland: When First4Skills announced their closure Deloitte were appointed as Administrator for the Company. My Department has been working closely with the Administrator to ensure an effective resolution to the situation and this will include consideration, in conjunction with Central Procurement Directorate and the Departmental Solicitors Office, of the complex issues associated with any proposals related to the training contract.

Failure to Pay Child Maintenance

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many cases there have been of failure to pay child maintenance, over the last twelve months.

(AQW 14842/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Over the past 12 months the number of non paying child maintenance cases has reduced from approximately 4,000 in August 2011 to 3,600 in August 2012. The current figure of non paying cases represents about 10% of the total case load.

There is a continued focus on getting more cases paying.

Housing Executive Households Experiencing Fuel Poverty

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive households are currently experiencing fuel poverty.

(AQW 14844/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive advises that 48,961 Housing Executive households, representing 57% of its stock, were experiencing fuel poverty according to its 2009 House Condition Survey. A person is said to be in fuel poverty where they need to spend 10% or more of their income on energy costs.

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.

Pay-as-You-Go Home Heating Oil Scheme

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the pay-as-you-go home heating oil scheme.

(AQW 14884/11-15)

Mr McCausland: A Pay as You Go for Oil pilot was launched in February 2012 and the results have been extremely positive. I am very keen for this technology to be rolled out and my officials have been having on-going discussions with both Kingspan Renewables and Carillion Energy Services. I have asked officials to progress this important initiative as quickly as possible as I believe the installation of Pay as You Go for Oil systems would significantly help households who struggle to pay for a fill of oil.

Housing Executive Window Replacement Scheme

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Social Development whether he would consider allowing casement windows to be used in the Housing Executive window replacement scheme.

(AQW 14885/11-15)

Mr McCausland: From 2010 the Housing Executive has been fitting flush casement style windows in their ground floor properties and this remains the preferred option now for their low and medium rise stock.

Social Housing New Builds in the Rural Areas of Upper Bann

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of social housing new builds in the rural areas of Upper Bann, including timescales for the work.

(AQW 14934/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The number of completed social housing new builds in the rural areas of Upper Bann constituency, including timescales for the work are as follows:-

- 24 units at Woodside Park, Loughbrickland - November 2011
- one unit at Hillside, Gilford - March 2011
- 14 units at Derrymacash due to complete in October 2012.

The Social Housing Development Programme currently includes the following two schemes for 2013/14:-

- Bayview, Derrymore – four units
- Hillside Park, Gilford – one unit

Vacant Domestic Properties in Ballysally, Coleraine

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development how many vacant domestic properties there are in Ballysally, Coleraine, which could become units of accommodation for people on the waiting list.

(AQW 14949/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department does not hold the information relating to all vacant domestic properties in Ballysally, Coleraine. However, in relation to social housing in the area the Housing Executive currently has ten vacant dwellings in Ballysally, of which nine are currently on offer to applicants on the social housing waiting list for imminent occupation. The other dwelling is undergoing repairs and will be allocated to a housing applicant on completion of the required works.

In relation to Housing Associations, SHAC currently own 25 dwellings in Ballysally, of which 19 are vacant awaiting refurbishment on a phased basis. The first phase of improvements to ten of the properties is due to commence in early 2013. SHAC are hopeful that the completion of this first phase of works will generate further demand for housing in the area and therefore allow for the implementation of the second phase of redevelopment to the remaining properties.

The reasons houses are left empty are complex and range from the individual who for some reason is unable or unwilling to do anything to bring the house back into use, to houses being situated in areas where people do not want to live. Therefore, a variety of approaches need to be developed if such empty properties are to be brought back into use. A draft Empty Homes Strategy including an Action Plan is currently being developed. In the coming months the finalised Action Plan will be put in place to ensure that empty homes throughout Northern Ireland are properly targeted and over time brought back into use.

Work Undertaken by Northern Ireland Housing Executive Contractors in Woodland House, Newtownabbey

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the standard of work undertaken by Northern Ireland Housing Executive contractors in Woodland House, Newtownabbey,

where ducting for the digital upgrade was taped to the ceiling of flats instead of being fixed with screws; and whether there will be a resulting extra cost to NIHE for the required rectification.

(AQW 14956/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The work referred to at Woodland House, Newtownabbey is still underway. This work is necessary to convert the analogue television signal to digital for the digital switchover. The cables are attached with tape on a temporary basis before being permanently screw fixed in place before the scheme is complete.

In some areas of Woodland House cables are hanging loosely from ceiling level owing to a temporary fixing methodology being employed prior to the final more secure fixing. The contractor has been asked to ensure that this temporary fixing does not cause any health and safety risks and to follow up with the final fixings as quickly as possible. There will be no extra cost to the Housing Executive as the temporary fixing of the cables is part of the installation process.

Medical Notes Required at Disability Living Allowance Appeals Tribunals

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Social Development to outline his plans for limiting the fees charged by doctors for the provision of medical notes that are required at Disability Living Allowance appeals tribunals; and whether, and what, penalties will be imposed on doctors who fail to provide the notes.

(AQW 14960/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Appeals Service currently makes no payment for the provision of a patient's medical records. General practitioners however, can claim a fee of £10 for completion of an accompanying short medical report form that outlines the past and current complaint, any clinical findings and any ongoing treatment. If the general practitioner determines it is necessary to provide a more detailed medical report, the fee per patient rises to £17.

There is no legal requirement to complete the forms, so there can be no question of imposing penalties on those who may fail to provide them. The Appeals Service paid a total of £18,614 in fees for provision of medical information (GP and consultant reports) for all benefits from April 2011 to March 2012.

Disability Living Allowance Appeal Tribunals

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Social Development, for each of the last three years, to detail (i) the number of scheduled Disability Living Allowance appeal tribunals that were postponed due to the absence of medical notes; and (ii) the additional costs incurred as a result of the deferrals.

(AQW 14961/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The number of Disability Living Allowance cases adjourned on the hearing date due to the absence of General Practitioner notes in each of the last 3 years is set out in the table. The additional costs incurred as a result of these adjournments is not collated.

| Year | No. of DLA cases adjourned |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2009-10 | 848 |
| 2010-11 | 754 |
| 2011-12 | 708 |

Disability Living Allowance Appeal Tribunals

Mr Dallat asked the Minister for Social Development to detail for each of the last three years (i) the number of Disability Living Allowance appeal tribunals held; (ii) the number of appeals upheld at tribunal; and (iii) the number dismissed.

(AQW 14962/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format sought. The Legally Qualified Member of the tribunal records whether the decision made on appeal is more advantageous than the original ruling. This may include decisions to increase the allowance or that a new award should be made. A less advantageous decision by the tribunal may be to reduce the allowance or to retain it in accordance with the decision under appeal. The following table details the total number of DLA appeals in each of the last 3 years where a final decision was reached (ie. adjourned hearings are excluded) and shows the breakdown between more or less advantageous decisions.

| Year | No. of DLA appeals where final decision reached | No. of appeals allowed (= more advantageous) | No. of appeals disallowed (= less advantageous) |
|---------|---|--|---|
| 2009-10 | 5,147 | 1,836 | 3,311 |
| 2010-11 | 4,607 | 1,651 | 2,956 |
| 2011-12 | 3,826 | 1,511 | 2,315 |

Staff: Criminal Charges Outstanding

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development whether any staff within his Department have criminal charges outstanding; and what is his Department's position regarding their employment whilst court proceedings are pending.

(AQW 15001/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Two members of staff in the Department for Social Development currently have criminal charges outstanding. In such cases the Department, in line with the provisions of the NICS Disciplinary Procedures policy, decides whether the member of staff should be suspended from duty if that course is a necessary precaution in the public interest pending the outcome of criminal or disciplinary investigations or proceedings and no alternative course, such as transfer to other duties, is appropriate. In making such a decision, the Department always takes legal advice.

Mobility and Wheelchair Bungalows in the North Down Constituency

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of (i) mobility; and (ii) wheelchair bungalows in the North Down constituency; and whether there are any plans to increase the current stock.

(AQW 15067/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely record separately the number of bungalows for mobility use and wheelchair use. However, the Housing Executive currently has a total of 267 mobility/wheelchair bungalows within its Bangor District Office area. Housing Associations have two mobility bungalows and 61 wheelchair bungalows in the North Down constituency.

Not all bungalows within Social Housing Development Programme schemes are wheelchair/mobility bungalows, unless that is required by the client. With regard to plans to increase the current stock, neither the Housing Executive nor the Housing Associations have plans at present to increase current stock.

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.

Single Dwelling Housing Stock

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of single dwelling stock available within (i) the Northern Ireland Housing Executive; and (ii) Housing Associations.

(AQW 15097/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below details the number of one bedroom dwellings currently available within the Housing Executive stock.

| District Office | Property |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Antrim | 375 |
| Armagh | 239 |
| Ballycastle | 109 |
| Ballymena | 375 |
| Ballymoney | 83 |
| Banbridge | 278 |
| Bangor | 502 |
| Carrickfergus | 347 |
| Castlereagh | 682 |
| Coleraine | 310 |
| Collon Terrace | 201 |
| Cookstown | 42 |
| Downpatrick | 326 |
| Dungannon | 199 |
| East Belfast | 309 |
| Fermanagh | 130 |
| Larne | 280 |
| Limavady | 172 |
| Lisburn Antrim Street | 662 |
| Lisburn Dairy Farm | 207 |
| Lurgan Brownlow | 407 |
| Magherafelt | 32 |
| Newry | 495 |
| Newtownabbey 1 | 412 |
| Newtownabbey 2 | 475 |
| Newtownards | 473 |
| North Belfast | 533 |
| Omagh | 180 |
| Portadown | 311 |
| Shankill | 238 |
| South Belfast | 347 |
| Strabane | 112 |

| District Office | Property |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Waterloo Place | 365 |
| Waterside | 176 |
| West Belfast | 536 |
| Total one bedroom properties | 10,920 |

Housing Associations advise that there are 7,817 single dwelling units across their sector.

Residents Wishing to Transfer to Smaller Properties

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of requests that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive has had from residents wishing to transfer to smaller properties in the past six months; and the number of these requests that were successfully completed.

(AQW 15098/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not record the number of tenants who applied for a move to a smaller home. However, they have confirmed that in the last six months from April to September 2012 they received 4,351 applications for a transfer. During this period 1,564 transfer applications were rehoused. It should be noted that these tenants may have been on the waiting list longer than six months.

Reversible Windows

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development whether there is an extra cost in fitting reversible windows, rather than casement windows, to Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties.

(AQW 15100/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Following a detailed cost appraisal, the Housing Executive advise that storm proof casement windows reflect a saving of £1.46 over a fully reversible window. This is applied across a typical Housing Executive dwelling containing on average seven windows. However, while this may not effect any significant saving on paper, it will accommodate a wider supply base in the windows manufacture market. This in turn will generate more competition and create the possibility of greater savings as part of the planned Window Procurement, operative from early 2013.

The new window installation protocol is also already reflecting savings due to the non-requirement to pay redecoration grants with initial estimated savings of £15m.

Housing Waiting List

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development to provide the numbers on the annual housing waiting list in each district council area since 1992.

(AQW 15106/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as prior to the year 2000 the statistics are not available by District Council area. However, table 1 below details the overall number of people on the waiting list for the years from 1992/93 through to 2000/01. Table 2 below details the number of people on the waiting list from 2001/02 through to 2011/12 broken down by District Council area.

TABLE 1 – WAITING LIST

| Year | Total Waiting List |
|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1992/93 | 23,568 |
| 1993/94 | 22,962 |
| 1994/95 | 23,355 |
| 1995/96 | 23,349 |
| 1996/97 | 23,756 |
| 1997/98 | 22,691 |
| 1998/99 | 23,193 |
| 1999/00 | 23,084 |
| 2000/01 | 22,054 |

TABLE 2 – WAITING LIST

| District Council | 2001/02 | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Antrim | 574 | 631 | 709 | 737 | 792 | 979 | 1,038 | 991 | 972 | 977 | 852 |
| Ards | 1,008 | 1,080 | 1,174 | 1,194 | 1,276 | 1,525 | 1,671 | 1,682 | 1,706 | 1,811 | 1,486 |
| Armagh | 479 | 531 | 559 | 584 | 659 | 828 | 841 | 797 | 760 | 802 | 708 |
| Ballymena | 974 | 964 | 1,032 | 1,082 | 1,254 | 1,411 | 1,622 | 1,530 | 1,420 | 1,520 | 1,256 |
| Ballymoney | 263 | 266 | 286 | 327 | 392 | 477 | 539 | 497 | 439 | 496 | 390 |
| Banbridge | 367 | 324 | 410 | 421 | 508 | 674 | 695 | 698 | 665 | 677 | 479 |
| Belfast | 7,550 | 7,268 | 7,439 | 7,908 | 8,220 | 9,070 | 9,936 | 10,017 | 9,941 | 10,178 | 8,773 |
| Carrickfergus | 848 | 842 | 839 | 849 | 916 | 1,007 | 1,073 | 1,032 | 994 | 974 | 818 |
| Castlereagh | 1,060 | 973 | 984 | 990 | 1,060 | 1,150 | 1,354 | 1,371 | 1,367 | 1,462 | 1,167 |
| Coleraine | 731 | 718 | 855 | 913 | 1,034 | 1,234 | 1,427 | 1,292 | 1,219 | 1,297 | 1,026 |
| Cookstown | 209 | 239 | 230 | 310 | 326 | 367 | 382 | 408 | 371 | 407 | 362 |
| Craigavon | 1,029 | 1,042 | 1,072 | 1,366 | 1,444 | 1,769 | 2,030 | 1,974 | 1,755 | 1,922 | 1,607 |
| Derry | 1,493 | 1,593 | 1,611 | 1,813 | 1,993 | 2,157 | 2,417 | 2,418 | 2,574 | 2,993 | 2,762 |
| Down | 930 | 976 | 919 | 928 | 1,027 | 1,166 | 1,297 | 1,292 | 1,213 | 1,323 | 1,250 |
| Dungannon | 408 | 455 | 517 | 599 | 667 | 753 | 859 | 915 | 895 | 1,022 | 920 |
| Fermanagh | 536 | 614 | 734 | 785 | 918 | 1,038 | 1,029 | 894 | 833 | 853 | 639 |
| Larne | 371 | 368 | 370 | 390 | 380 | 505 | 518 | 526 | 509 | 550 | 406 |
| Limavady | 303 | 289 | 337 | 403 | 474 | 522 | 569 | 521 | 497 | 472 | 372 |
| Lisburn | 1,761 | 1,791 | 1,876 | 2,053 | 2,109 | 2,391 | 2,666 | 2,670 | 2,607 | 2,595 | 2,268 |
| Magherafelt | 272 | 302 | 356 | 397 | 409 | 495 | 524 | 503 | 507 | 512 | 429 |

| District Council | 2001/02 | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Moyle | 169 | 187 | 225 | 275 | 289 | 301 | 365 | 359 | 357 | 334 | 326 |
| Newry & Mourne | 1,157 | 1,238 | 1,301 | 1,375 | 1,562 | 1,727 | 1,801 | 1,778 | 1,828 | 1,827 | 1,571 |
| Newtownabbey | 1,323 | 1,310 | 1,293 | 1,313 | 1,459 | 1,578 | 1,825 | 1,726 | 1,691 | 1,743 | 1,514 |
| North Down | 1,312 | 1,423 | 1,488 | 1,517 | 1,639 | 1,857 | 1,913 | 1,930 | 1,885 | 1,884 | 2,146 |
| Omagh | 360 | 354 | 370 | 472 | 514 | 640 | 704 | 620 | 590 | 622 | 495 |
| Strabane | 416 | 470 | 529 | 607 | 587 | 561 | 593 | 482 | 525 | 638 | 511 |
| TOTAL | 25,903 | 26,248 | 27,515 | 29,608 | 31,908 | 36,182 | 39,688 | 38,923 | 38,120 | 39,891 | 34,533 |

Homeless People

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development to provide the number of people presenting as homeless in each district council area since 1992.

(AQW 15107/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested as prior to the year 2000 the statistics are not available by District Council area. Therefore, Table 1 below details the overall number of people who presented as homeless for the years from 1992/93 through to 2000/01. Table 2 below details the number of people who presented as homeless from 2001/02 through to 2011/12 broken down by District Council area.

TABLE 1 – HOMELESS PRESENTERS

| Year | Homeless Presenters |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| 1992-93 | 10,081 |
| 1993-94 | 10,099 |
| 1994-95 | 10,068 |
| 1995-06 | 10,768 |
| 1996-97 | 11,092 |
| 1997-98 | 11,672 |
| 1998-99 | 11,552 |
| 1999-2000 | 10,997 |

TABLE 2 – HOMELESS PRESENTERS BY DISTRICT COUNCIL

| District Council | 2000/01 | 2001/02 | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Antrim | 429 | 454 | 611 | 677 | 522 | 652 | 584 | 468 | 510 | 539 | 600 | 541 |
| Ards | 584 | 558 | 679 | 698 | 638 | 611 | 618 | 635 | 631 | 743 | 726 | 695 |
| Armagh | 120 | 164 | 192 | 178 | 154 | 207 | 286 | 309 | 250 | 223 | 278 | 300 |
| Ballymena | 600 | 723 | 648 | 763 | 754 | 1,014 | 951 | 733 | 726 | 763 | 904 | 806 |
| Ballymoney | 100 | 103 | 115 | 210 | 214 | 273 | 271 | 236 | 164 | 156 | 172 | 209 |
| Banbridge | 271 | 343 | 328 | 332 | 343 | 445 | 510 | 457 | 307 | 303 | 345 | 310 |
| Belfast | 3,842 | 4,001 | 4,541 | 4,817 | 4,665 | 5,779 | 5,829 | 5,143 | 5,053 | 5,343 | 5,544 | 5,285 |
| Carrickfergus | 365 | 347 | 520 | 479 | 480 | 472 | 517 | 447 | 437 | 450 | 500 | 466 |
| Castlereagh | 413 | 465 | 465 | 529 | 556 | 617 | 619 | 548 | 500 | 651 | 715 | 714 |
| Coleraine | 288 | 254 | 417 | 517 | 748 | 753 | 718 | 653 | 590 | 545 | 586 | 536 |
| Cookstown | 136 | 152 | 126 | 120 | 124 | 126 | 145 | 126 | 191 | 238 | 247 | 180 |
| Craigavon | 355 | 407 | 594 | 633 | 718 | 750 | 982 | 975 | 744 | 792 | 868 | 821 |
| Derry | 1,013 | 1,152 | 1,291 | 1,208 | 1,107 | 1,144 | 1,195 | 1,222 | 1,343 | 1,394 | 1,523 | 1,655 |
| Down | 534 | 526 | 677 | 576 | 519 | 533 | 550 | 547 | 557 | 525 | 609 | 574 |
| Dungannon | 282 | 298 | 329 | 352 | 538 | 555 | 552 | 529 | 491 | 547 | 611 | 561 |
| Fermanagh | 302 | 260 | 317 | 495 | 543 | 581 | 653 | 543 | 409 | 409 | 475 | 407 |
| Larne | 223 | 279 | 294 | 260 | 314 | 314 | 404 | 322 | 291 | 236 | 291 | 293 |
| Limavady | 118 | 114 | 106 | 113 | 248 | 266 | 314 | 272 | 284 | 282 | 219 | 276 |
| Lisburn | 862 | 1,188 | 1,380 | 1,280 | 1,275 | 1,736 | 1,930 | 1,660 | 1,617 | 1,568 | 1,563 | 1,661 |
| Magherafelt | 176 | 243 | 201 | 293 | 194 | 180 | 215 | 199 | 203 | 163 | 191 | 190 |

| District Council | 2000/01 | 2001/02 | 2002/03 | 2003/04 | 2004/05 | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Moyle | 41 | 46 | 55 | 58 | 72 | 92 | 153 | 137 | 119 | 112 | 137 | 124 |
| Newry&Mourne | 459 | 481 | 547 | 608 | 675 | 825 | 807 | 726 | 781 | 742 | 770 | 805 |
| Newtownabbey | 496 | 813 | 891 | 834 | 809 | 1,002 | 1,028 | 955 | 827 | 958 | 1,057 | 1,125 |
| North Down | 434 | 550 | 828 | 761 | 774 | 846 | 839 | 768 | 755 | 698 | 804 | 689 |
| Omagh | 124 | 137 | 168 | 163 | 171 | 203 | 197 | 244 | 164 | 119 | 219 | 249 |
| Strabane | 127 | 106 | 106 | 196 | 207 | 145 | 146 | 176 | 132 | 165 | 204 | 265 |
| Total | 12,694 | 14,164 | 16,426 | 17,150 | 17,362 | 20,121 | 21,013 | 19,030 | 18,076 | 18,664 | 20,158 | 19,737 |

Differences between the Welfare Reform Bill and the Welfare Reform Act 2012

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to detail each of the differences between the Welfare Reform Bill and the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

(AQW 15121/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are minimal differences between the Welfare Reform Bill for Northern Ireland and the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

The Welfare Reform Bill for Northern Ireland does not include an equivalent to the following sections of the Welfare Reform Act 2012:

| | Description | Reason |
|-------------------|---|---|
| 60 | Claimants dependent on drugs etc | This repeals provisions introduced by the 2009 Act which were not replicated in NI |
| 76 | Calculation of working tax credit | Section in Welfare Reform Act 2012 extends to Northern Ireland |
| 103 & Schedule 12 | Supersession of decisions of former appellate bodies | This clause has no relevance in NI because the social security appeal bodies have not been replaced by the Upper tribunal as in GB. |
| 109 | Recovery of fines etc by deductions from employment and support allowance | This amends a criminal justice provision on fines which has no counterpart in NI. |
| 117 | Benefit offences: disqualifying and sanctionable benefits | This brings tax credits within the regime in certain sections of the Social Security Fraud Act. Tax credits are however an excepted matter. As the clause deals solely with tax credits and is not ancillary to other provisions it would be outside legislative competence to replicate this clause. Tax credits should be dealt with under the Westminster Fraud Act in the same way as war pensions (see s 6A(2) of that Act). |
| 120 | Loss of tax credits | This amends the Tax Credits Act on a UK wide basis and already contains appropriate NI references. |
| 122 | Tax credit fraud: investigation | This extends certain of the investigations provisions of the Administration Act to offences relating to tax credits. Tax credits are however an excepted matter. As the clause deals solely with tax credits and is not ancillary to other provisions it would be outside legislative competence to replicate this clause. Tax credits should be dealt with under Westminster legislation. |
| 123 | Information-sharing for prevention etc of tax credit fraud | This extends information sharing provisions in the Administration to Tax Credits. Tax credits are however an excepted matter. As the clause deals solely with tax credits and is not ancillary to other provisions it would be outside legislative competence to replicate this clause. Tax credits should be dealt with under Westminster legislation. |
| 124 | Tax credit fraud: prosecution and penalties | This amends the Tax Credits Act on a UK wide basis and already contains appropriate NI references. |

| | Description | Reason |
|-------------------|--|--|
| 125 | Unauthorised disclosure of information relating to tax credit offences | This amends the Administration Act to permit disclosure of tax credit information). Tax credits are however an excepted matter. As the clause deals solely with tax credits and is not ancillary to other provisions it would be outside legislative competence to replicate this clause. Tax credits should be dealt with under Westminster legislation |
| 126 | Tax credits: transfer of functions etc | This extends UK-wide and already provides for the transfer of tax credit functions in NI and the consequential amendment of NI legislation. |
| 127 | Information-sharing between Secretary of State and HMRC | Section in Welfare Reform Act 2012 extends to Northern Ireland |
| 128 & 129 | Information-sharing between Secretary of State and DPP | This enables HRMC to share information with those including DSD administering social security. It extends to NI and already contains appropriate NI references. |
| 135 | Functions of registration service | Relates to Registration Service Act 1953 – different structure in Northern Ireland - not required |
| 141 | Review of fees regulations | Relates to Child Maintenance pilot- not applicable for Northern Ireland to pilot |
| 143 | Standards of decision-making | GB are abolishing the standards of decision making report – NI are going to continue to produce this report. |
| 145 & Schedule 13 | Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission | This amends the Child Poverty Act and related enactments on a UK-wide basis Commission is UK wide |
| 146 | UK child poverty strategies | No equivalent amendments required for Northern Ireland legislation as the Child Poverty Act extends to Northern Ireland |
| 148 & 149 | Financial Provision & Extent | Technical provisions of a Westminster Bill, not required for an Assembly Bill. |

The Welfare Reform Bill for Northern Ireland has additional clauses not in the Welfare Reform Act 2012 as detailed below:

| | Description | Reason |
|-----|--|--|
| 128 | Reduced fee for dog licences | updates the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 to include certain income-related benefits for the purposes of reduced dog licence fees. |
| 129 | Orders of SoS under Administration Act | This amendment is in relation to reciprocal agreements and the need for it has arisen from a previous consequential amendment to section 165 made by paragraph 10 of Schedule 4 to the Tax Credits Act 2002 which unintentionally narrowed the scope of the power and prevented its exercise by the Secretary of State. This restores the original position. |

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| 130 | Rate relief schemes: application of housing benefit law | This amends Article 30A of the Rates (Northern Ireland) Order 1977, which is an existing enabling power that allows DFP to make whatever regulations are necessary to maintain support schemes for domestic ratepayers. This amendment will allow that power to be extended to cover the replacement for the rates element of Housing Benefit, which will cease to exist from 1 April 2013. |
|-----|---|---|

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department is seeking to ensure that all regulations flowing from the Welfare Reform Bill will be approved by the Assembly by March 2013; and to outline the consequences should these regulations not be enacted by this date.

(AQW 15122/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There will be many sets of regulations flowing from the Bill not all of which will have an operational date of April 2013. Where the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) operational date for regulations is April 2013 or before, I am seeking to have the equivalent Northern Ireland regulations approved by the Assembly as soon as possible after Royal Assent, and where possible to match the DWP operational date.

Delays with regard to timing could have repercussions on funding for our benefits' system here in Northern Ireland which is predicated on the assumption that we will seek to maintain parity, both in terms of substance and timing insofar as possible. Whitehall has expressly reserved its right to review funding arrangements should it be considered there is undue delay in implementing reform here. As I said during the 2nd Stage debate the financial impact of not implementing the Welfare Reform Bill is likely to be very significant. The estimated direct costs amount to some £207 million over the three remaining years of this Spending Review period.

Undoubtedly, given our dependence on IT systems operated via DWP there could well be cost implications should Northern Ireland be out of step with change implementation, similarly there would be operational considerations for the Social Security Agency.

There are also possible repercussions over some aspects of the reform agenda, e.g. the Social Fund, where proposals are that some elements will move outside of the Social Security system altogether. I am keen that the funding stream for any replacement scheme is not jeopardised by undue delay and that those dependent on such support are not disadvantaged as a result.

Personal Independence Payment

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the new criteria for the Personal Independence Payment.

(AQW 15123/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The proposed Personal Independence Payment assessment criteria, weightings and entitlement thresholds are intended to reflect and differentiate between the barriers and extra costs faced by individuals who require extra support to undertake a range of everyday tasks taking account of physical, sensory, mental, intellectual and cognitive impairments. Eleven key activities, fundamental to everyday life, will be assessed – each relating to one of the two new components of the benefit:

Daily Living Component

- 1 Planning and buying food and drink;
- 2 Preparing and cooking food;
- 3 Taking nutrition;
- 4 Managing medication and monitoring health conditions;

- 5 Managing prescribed therapies other than medication;
- 6 Washing, bathing and grooming;
- 7 Managing toilet needs or incontinence;
- 8 Dressing and undressing; and
- 9 Communicating with others.

Mobility Component

- 1 Planning and following a journey; and
- 2 Moving around.

In November 2011 a second draft of the Personal Independence Payment assessment criteria was published, which significantly revised and improved the first draft following testing of current Disability Living Allowance customers, including 180 from Northern Ireland, and a lengthy consultation and engagement process with disabled people and their representative organisations.

Formal consultation on the assessment criteria, which sought views from a broad range of local disability and advice groups, was carried out between 16 January and 30 April. My officials are working with the Department for Work and Pensions to analyse the replies, and a response to the consultation is due in the autumn.

Assessing Company of the Personal Independence Payment

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development when the new contract for the assessing company of the Personal Independence Payment will be agreed.

(AQW 15124/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The procurement process for the awarding of the contract has been completed but there remain a small number of approval and contract award processes which have yet to be completed.

It is anticipated that the formal award will take place within the next 4-6 weeks

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development what would be the financial consequences for his Department if the Welfare Reform Bill was not passed in sequence with similar changes in the rest of the UK.

(AQW 15132/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The financial consequences of the Welfare Reform Bill (Northern Ireland) 2012 not progressing in accordance with accepted practice will be a matter for the Northern Ireland Executive which could impact on the total funding available in Northern Ireland for the delivery of public services.

Were decisions to be taken not to mirror welfare reform, there would need to be discussions between the Northern Ireland Executive and the United Kingdom government as to the consequences arising from the break in parity and the implications arising from the Statement of Funding Policy. Early financial estimates are that the consequences could be in the region of £1.5 billion over the SR 2010 and SR 2014 periods.

It is likely that the costs of delivering benefit services to benefit customers would significantly increase through increased costs for IT systems and more administrative based delivery methods.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Social Development when he last met the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on its Community Asset Transfer research.

(AQW 15139/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have not met with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation although my officials have engaged with the authors of the research project into 'Social Economics, Assets and the Community and Voluntary sector in Northern Ireland.'

The findings and conclusions from this research project will inform the development of a community asset transfer policy framework in Northern Ireland.

Community Asset Transfer Policy

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Social Development whether he plans to introduce legislation to underpin his Community Asset Transfer policy.

(AQW 15141/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I am aware that legislation forms part of the enabling framework for Community Asset Transfer in the rest of the UK. The need for new legislation to support Community Asset Transfer in Northern Ireland will be considered by a cross-Departmental Steering Group, supported by research and analysis and early consultation with key stakeholders.

The ultimate decision on whether or not legislation is necessary will rest with the Executive.

Community Asset Transfer Policy

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Social Development what training, support, grants or other assistance is available to ensure the use of assets transferred to the community through his Community Asset Transfer policy.

(AQW 15142/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My department is leading on the development of a policy framework for Community Asset Transfer, which will be governed by a cross-Departmental Steering Group. The Steering Group will consider a range of issues including safeguards to ensure sustainable use of transferred assets and the accountability of a receiving organisation to the local community.

The transfer of individual assets will in all cases need to be supported by an appropriate business case which would be expected to address the viability of the proposed use of the asset and the capacity of the receiving organisation to manage and develop the asset.

In addition, my department is funding the Development Trusts Northern Ireland as a key partner to support the implementation of Community Asset Transfer policy. They will advise the Steering Group on the level of both monetary and non-monetary support required to facilitate successful Community Asset Transfer and will develop and deliver resources tailored to Northern Ireland circumstances.

Community Asset Transfer Policy

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Social Development how he will ensure the future sustainability of transferred assets under his Community Asset Transfer policy.

(AQW 15144/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Risk management is an important part of Community Asset Transfer and extensive guidance has been developed elsewhere in the UK which will be useful to inform policy and practice in Northern Ireland.

The transfer of individual assets will in all cases need to be supported by an appropriate business case which would demonstrate sustainability. Community Asset Transfer can take different forms, ranging from short-term 'meanwhile' uses, to management agreements and leases and including full transfer of ownership. The nature of the risks involved will vary from case to case. The nature of the asset, the proposed plans for the asset and the experience of the receiving organisation would all be important factors. Ongoing costs associated with managing and maintaining the asset would need to be addressed at the outset.

The cross-departmental steering group on Community Asset Transfer will be considering funding opportunities to support Community Asset Transfer.

In addition, my department is funding the Development Trusts Northern Ireland as a key partner to support the implementation of Community Asset Transfer policy. They will support the delivery of a number of demonstration projects which will identify key lessons for policy and practice.

Social Security Computer System

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been spent on the Social Security computer system in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15174/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Each year my officials are provided with a detailed itemised monthly bill by the Department for Work & Pensions of all costs which are attributed to the running of the Agency's Social Security computer systems. The table below summarises this information.

| Year | Total |
|---------|-------------|
| 2011/12 | £14,244,134 |
| 2010/11 | £16,483,522 |
| 2009/10 | £16,232,371 |
| 2008/09 | £14,760,813 |
| 2007/08 | £10,300,000 |

Children in Poverty

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development what percentage of children are currently classed as being in poverty; and what the figure was in 2002.

(AQW 15175/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The percentage of children who live in a household which is considered to be in relative income poverty in 2010/11 was 21% of the child population in Northern Ireland. The figure is presented on a Before Housing Costs basis.

The percentage of children who live in a household which is considered to be in relative income poverty in 2002/03 was 25% of the child population in Northern Ireland. The figure is presented on a Before Housing Costs basis.

The results are produced using the Family Resources Survey and Households Below Average Income datasets for Northern Ireland. In April 2002 the Family Resources Survey was extended to include households in Northern Ireland, resulting in 2002/03 analysis being the earliest available for Northern Ireland. Analysis of poverty previous to this was only available at the Great Britain level. The latest available information is from the 2010/11 survey year. Results for 2011/12 are expected in June of 2013.

Housing Executive Double Glazing Scheme

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development for an estimate of the number of existing Housing Executive homes that will benefit from the double glazing scheme; and how many of these are in the East Londonderry constituency.

(AQW 15185/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive currently has 22,500 dwellings programmed for double glazing installation over the three year period 2012/13 to 2014/15.

Of these dwellings 1,119 are in the East Londonderry constituency. Three schemes involving 289 dwellings are currently on site. Another scheme for 264 dwellings is due on site in January 2013. The remaining 566 dwellings will be addressed over the next two years through the new double glazing contract being introduced in late January 2013.

Definition of Social Clauses in Public Contracts

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Social Development how he will ensure that the definition of social clauses in public contracts reflects the maximum requirement from Central Procurement Directorate guidance and is not defined as a twenty six weeks steps to work scheme.
(AQW 15186/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In accordance with the Programme for Government commitment and Central Procurement Directorate's guidance, my department considers the inclusion of social clauses in all public procurement contracts for supplies, services and construction. This is considered on a project by project basis, to determine which social considerations are relevant to the needs and the obligations to be met by the procurement. Any relevant social considerations are/will be clearly stated in tender documentation. My department promotes that public procurement should be undertaken and managed via a Centre of Procurement Expertise namely Central Procurement Directorate within the Department of Finance and Personnel. Subsequently this helps to ensure that social clauses are included where appropriate.

Double Glazing in Housing Executive Properties

Mrs Dobson asked Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 13996/11-15, why the Housing Executive does not designate properties as older person's dwellings or non-older person's dwellings; and how it is able to prioritise works, such as single glazed window replacement, for elderly and vulnerable tenants.

(AQW 15199/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive does not designate properties as older person's dwellings or non-older person's dwellings because in accordance with the housing selection scheme accommodation is allocated on the basis of applicant's housing needs, as determined by the totality of their circumstances and not on the basis of their age.

The only exception to this is the sheltered housing scheme at Ardavon in North Belfast which is restricted to households aged over 55 years old, reflecting the purpose for which sheltered housing complexes were originally constructed.

With regard to the second point, the prioritisation of planned maintenance works, such as single glazed window replacement schemes, is on the basis of the lifecycle and condition of such a component and will conventionally be addressed on a "worst first" basis.

Replacing Windows in Housing Executive Properties

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development to explain the current arrangements for replacing windows in Housing Executive properties which are damaged as a result of accident or vandalism; and whether single glazed windows are replaced on a like-for-like basis in such circumstances.

(AQW 15200/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that under its general conditions of tenancy the responsibility for replacement of glass lies with the tenant. Under Schedule 4 of the Conditions of Tenancy the Housing Executive is responsible for, "...work including structural repairs to external walls, external doors, windows (but not glass, roofs....". In exceptions where the Housing Executive does replace glass, the policy is to replace glass on a like-for like basis. However, if the window requires replacement of both the frame and glass the Housing Executive will replace with a double glazed unit.

Double Glazing in Housing Executive Properties

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 13996/11-15, (i) what steps he has taken to ensure that a new double glazing contract will be in place for January 2013; (ii) why such a contract can not be put in place sooner; and (iii) whether funds will be returned to the Executive by his Department as a result of such a contract not being in place.

(AQW 15201/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In relation to (i) the Housing Executive is currently working on the tender documentation for the commencement of a procurement exercise that will deliver a specific double glazing contract. The procurement plan has scheduled a start date of February 2013 subject to a legal challenge not being made.

In relation to (ii) the Housing Executive currently has a contract in place which includes the provision of window replacements. This contract expires on 27 January 2013. An earlier start to the new double glazing contract may attract a legal challenge.

Finally, in relation to (iii) the Housing Executive anticipates spending the 2012/13 budget amount allocated for double glazing in full.

Successful Applications to the Social Fund

Mr McGlone asked the Minister for Social Development how many successful applications have been made to the Social Fund in each of the last five years.

(AQW 15214/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information requested is set out in the table below.

Social Fund Awards

| | 2007/2008 | 2008/2009 | 2009/2010 | 2010/2011 | 2011/2012 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Sure Start Maternity Grants | 8,842 | 10,064 | 9,904 | 10,453 | 3,994 |
| Funeral Payments | 2,508 | 2,657 | 2,612 | 2,639 | 2,421 |
| Community Care Grants | 25,899 | 26,797 | 24,936 | 24,110 | 23,822 |
| Budgeting Loans | 96,430 | 100,497 | 104,560 | 120,096 | 118,698 |
| Crisis Loans | 78,621 | 101,271 | 116,746 | 122,903 | 114,492 |
| Total | 212,300 | 241,286 | 258,758 | 280,201 | 263,427 |

Social Housing Properties for People with Disabilities

Mr B McCreagh asked the Minister for Social Development how many social housing properties are available for people with disabilities.

(AQW 15247/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information requested is not available in the format requested as it is the nature of the disability which dictates whether or not accommodation is suitable for an individual's needs and many social housing properties have had adaptations carried out for people with disabilities. For example, a profoundly deaf person can live in the same type of housing as hearing persons while requiring only some approved equipment to offer assistance answering the door and telephone.

The Housing Executive provides an adaptation service for tenants or members of their household who have a disability. Provision of suitable social housing for people with disabilities can be achieved through a variety of options. In addition, of a current total stock of 89,780 properties, the total bungalow stock is 18,349, of which 6,767 are described as meeting mobility standards. Ground floor flat stock is currently 8,601.

Housing Associations advise that in the main all accommodation in the Housing Association sector is available for people with disabilities although some would not be suitable to certain disabilities e.g. wheelchair accessible. Also many Housing Association properties have been built to Lifetime Homes Standards which means they are easily adaptable to meet the needs of disabled residents.

The Housing Executive is currently working on the development of the Accessible Housing Register. This is an information tool that will enable the Housing Executive to make better decisions on the identification of properties that may meet the needs of specific groups of applicants on the waiting list. Initially the Register will consist of Housing Executive stock only, holding data on the various types of property available within each area and identify properties that have been adapted. The Housing Executive is working with Housing Associations to discuss the logistics of including Housing Association stock in such a register.

Adaptations for People with Disabilities

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development how many houses have had to be adapted for people with disabilities in the last five years; and what was the total cost of these adaptations.
(AQW 15248/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information requested is not available in the format requested as the figures provided relate to adaptation works, not houses, and there will also be instances of houses being subject to more than one adaptation. However, the Housing Executive has confirmed that it carried out 29,015 major and minor adaptations to its housing stock, at a cost of £69.4million. A further 7,638 adaptations were completed to properties in the private sector, for which £77m was provided in Disabled Facilities Grant Aid.

The Housing Executive also administered funding of £11m in Disabled Facilities Grant for the Housing Association sector facilitating 6,080 adaptations.

Housing Associations have advised that they have carried out a further 1,745 adaptations to their own stock over the last five years, at a cost of £1.7m which has not been grant funded.

Definition of Complex Housing Needs

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development for his Department's definition of complex housing needs.
(AQW 15249/11-15)

Mr McCausland: While my Department does not have a definition for people with complex housing needs, applicants with intense care or support needs will be considered, for the purposes of the Housing Selection Scheme, as being "Complex Needs Applicants" People requiring adapted or purpose built accommodation, such as wheelchair accommodation, and who do not have intense care / support needs are not considered to be Complex Needs applicants for the purposes of the Housing Selection Scheme.

The procedures involve a multi-disciplinary approach between housing and Health and Social Services personnel in the identification of Complex Needs applicants and agreement on the most suitable re-housing options available to them. The two main housing options for such applicants are:

- a Supported Housing Option.
- b General Needs Accommodation Option - with an agreed, tailored care package for the relevant Applicant, or household member.

The Housing Selection Scheme contains the following information on Complex Needs:-

- Some applicants may have special circumstances which mean they require intensive care and support.
- This need may be met in a specialist housing scheme, where additional support or care services are provided or in general housing where a tailored support and care package has been arranged.
- Where a specialist scheme is considered appropriate, applicants will be placed on a separate, non-pointed waiting list.
- Where support and care can be provided within general housing, applicants may be awarded additional points under the Health and Social Well-Being category

The Housing Association Guide places the emphasis on Supported Housing as being that which caters for people with a need for a more supportive and intensive style of housing management than is found in 'ordinary' housing. The Guide advises that there is a reluctance to label people who have complex needs as various groups are covered e.g. learning, mental health related problems, or a combination of problems.

Community Asset Transfer Legislation

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Social Development when he proposes to bring Community Asset Transfer legislation to the Executive, in line with his Programme for Government commitment.

(AQW 15267/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department's commitment under the Programme for Government is to develop policy to support Community Asset Transfer. A cross-Departmental Steering Group has recently been established to govern this process. The question of whether legislation is needed in Northern Ireland will be considered by the Steering Group and will ultimately be a matter for the Executive to determine.

Fuel Poverty

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development how many households in each constituency are in fuel poverty in relation to those which spend (i) 10 percent; and (ii) 20 percent of their household income on fuel.

(AQW 15275/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested. The table overleaf details the number of households in fuel poverty, taken from the 2009 House Condition Survey, and is shown by proposed review of public administration council areas.

I expect that latest findings from the 2011 House Condition Survey to be available in the coming weeks and these results will include updated fuel poverty statistics from Northern Ireland.

| Proposed RPA Council Areas | Near Fuel Poverty (0.1 -10%) | Marginal Fuel Poverty (10.1-15%) | Moderate/Severe Fuel Poverty (15.1 to >20%) | Total |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---------|
| Belfast | 67,578 | 30,036 | 26,166 | 123,780 |
| | 54.60% | 24.30% | 21.10% | 100% |
| Derry City & Strabane | 30,518 | 12,433 | 10,644 | 53,595 |
| | 56.90% | 23.20% | 19.90% | 100% |
| Armagh City & Bann | 38,724 | 17,694 | 15,701 | 72,119 |
| | 53.70% | 24.50% | 21.80% | 100% |

| Proposed RPA Council Areas | Near Fuel Poverty (0.1 -10%) | Marginal Fuel Poverty (10.1-15%) | Moderate/Severe Fuel Poverty (15.1 to >20%) | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|----------------|
| Lisburn & Castlereagh | 44,760 | 11,786 | 15,893 | 72,439 |
| | 61.80% | 16.30% | 21.90% | 100% |
| Newry and Down | 29,435 | 14,264 | 14,115 | 57,814 |
| | 50.90% | 24.70% | 24.40% | 100% |
| Antrim & Newtownabbey | 30,607 | 12,304 | 10,253 | 53,164 |
| | 57.60% | 23.10% | 19.30% | 100% |
| Ards and North Down | 37,089 | 15,791 | 12,864 | 65,744 |
| | 56.40% | 24.00% | 19.60% | 100% |
| Causeway Coast | 32,473 | 11,365 | 13,913 | 57,751 |
| | 56.20% | 19.70% | 24.10% | 100% |
| Fermanagh & Omagh | 22,000 | 7,193 | 9,253 | 38,446 |
| | 57.20% | 18.70% | 24.10% | 100% |
| Mid Antrim | 30,462 | 13,419 | 9,790 | 53,671 |
| | 56.80% | 25.00% | 18.20% | 100% |
| Mid Ulster | 25,499 | 5,689 | 11,744 | 42,932 |
| | 59.40% | 13.30% | 27.40% | 100% |
| Total | 389,145 | 151,974 | 150,336 | 691,455 |
| | 56.30% | 22.00% | 21.70% | 100% |

Numbers are too small to permit disaggregation below the level on the table. The >20% as a group by proposed RPA has figures that are too small to be meaningful.

Please note that numbers are estimates and should be rounded if quoting. Caution should be used with smaller numbers (6,000 – 9,000 range).

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.

Older People: Poverty

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development what action he will take to reduce the poverty experienced by older people.

(AQW 15276/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department delivers a range of measures to tackle poverty and disadvantage. Two of these measures have a particular focus on older people: Benefit Uptake and Fuel Poverty.

Whilst not a statutory requirement, my Department has demonstrated a very clear commitment to working across government to tackle income poverty by diverting almost £4m to date to a range of proactive, evidence based approaches to inform people about the range of benefits that they could be entitled to, to encourage them to have a full and confidential entitlement check; and, where entitlement is identified, to make a claim.

This investment to date has generated over £50m in additional annual benefit, £40m of which went to those aged 60 and over.

This year the 2012/13 Benefit Uptake Programme will include four direct targeting exercises aimed at providing 27,000 older people with an opportunity to receive a full benefit entitlement check. It will also include a wide ranging multi channel promotional campaign, which will seek to build on the success of the Make the Call advertising campaign. The campaign will include different types of advertising and a range of promotional approaches to help increase the uptake of benefits. Building on some pilot work that the Social Security Agency has been trialling, engagement with partners over and above traditional (advice sector) partners are being explored and all opportunities optimised. These include churches and faith based groups, community and sports/community development organisations and civic partners.

A new three year Strategy for Improving Benefit Uptake will be launched for consultation later this year.

To help address Fuel Poverty, my Department will continue to deliver mainstream schemes such as the Warm Homes Scheme and the Housing Executive's Heating Replacement Scheme for older people and others and is working on a number of new projects to tackle fuel poverty.

I recently launched a new Boiler Replacement Scheme, following on from the pilot scheme which ended in March 2012. The scheme offers a grant of up to £1,000, to older people and others, towards the cost of replacing old, inefficient boilers, depending on householders income. The level of grant also depends on whether householders replace oil with oil or gas and whether controls are also installed.

My Department has recently commenced an Affordable Warmth pilot, working with OFMdFM, DARD, the University of Ulster, Housing Executive and a number of local councils to target areas of high fuel poverty. This area based approach will deliver energy efficiency improvements to homes in small concentrated areas. The University of Ulster have developed a sophisticated targeting methodology which can identify areas of poor housing and low incomes which could indicate a high prevalence of fuel poverty.

In February 2012 a Pay as You Go for Oil pilot was launched in conjunction with Kingspan Renewables and Carillion Energy Services. This exciting new technology offers householders an opportunity to pay of oil as they use it, similar to the process that is in place for electricity and gas. The technology was piloted for 3 months and both the evaluation from Carillion Energy Services and an independent evaluation by the Housing Executive have been extremely positive. Officials are having on-going discussions about the development of a Pay as You Go Oil system which could be rolled out in future energy efficiency schemes.

National Insurance Numbers Issued to Foreign Nationals

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many National Insurance numbers have been issued to foreign nationals in each year since 2000; and (ii) to list (a) the twenty countries which had the most National Insurance numbers issued to their nationals; and (b) the total number issued for each country.

(AQW 15299/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information regarding how many National Insurance numbers have been issued to foreign nationals is only available from June 2005 and is set out in the table below.

| Period | National Insurance numbers issued |
|-------------------------|--|
| June 2005 – March 2006 | 14,054 |
| April 2006 – March 2007 | 19,856 |
| April 2007 – March 2008 | 16,744 |
| April 2008 – March 2009 | 12,486 |

| Period | National Insurance numbers issued |
|-------------------------|--|
| April 2009 – March 2010 | 9,016 |
| April 2010 – March 2011 | 9,756 |
| April 2011 – March 2012 | 9,039 |
| April 2012 – Sept 2012 | 4,244 |

The information regarding the nationality is only available from April 2008. The table below lists the top twenty countries and the numbers of national Insurance Numbers issued to their nationals during the period April 2008 – Sept 2012.

| Nationality | April 08 – March 09 | April 09 – March 10 | April 10 – March 11 | April 11 – March 12 | April 12 – Sept 12 | Total |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Polish | 3192 | 1815 | 1746 | 1683 | 941 | 9377 |
| Irish | 1380 | 1690 | 1883 | 1793 | 965 | 7711 |
| Lithuanian | 1135 | 1088 | 1517 | 1149 | 507 | 5396 |
| Slovakian | 862 | 313 | 370 | 314 | 193 | 2052 |
| Latvian | 397 | 544 | 562 | 351 | 124 | 1978 |
| Portugese | 481 | 300 | 409 | 472 | 235 | 1897 |
| Hungarian | 369 | 238 | 256 | 324 | 215 | 1402 |
| Indian | 350 | 273 | 350 | 275 | 90 | 1338 |
| Chinese | 286 | 240 | 283 | 70 | 59 | 938 |
| Romanian | 138 | 294 | 272 | 165 | 30 | 899 |
| Spanish | 147 | 150 | 191 | 213 | 138 | 839 |
| French | 178 | 149 | 131 | 128 | 71 | 657 |
| Bulgarian | 275 | 139 | 100 | 104 | 22 | 640 |
| Czech Rep | 240 | 110 | 90 | 93 | 39 | 572 |
| American | 124 | 115 | 131 | 101 | 43 | 514 |
| German | 98 | 96 | 122 | 122 | 70 | 508 |
| Filipino | 170 | 134 | 128 | 44 | 18 | 494 |
| Italian | 66 | 80 | 100 | 121 | 53 | 420 |
| Australian | 99 | 81 | 62 | 59 | 24 | 325 |
| South African | 59 | 30 | 35 | 7 | 9 | 140 |
| Total | 10046 | 7879 | 8738 | 7588 | 3846 | 38097 |

Kilcooley Estate in Bangor: Neighbourhood Renewal Plans

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development which areas of the Neighbourhood Renewal plans are still to be implemented for the Kilcooley Estate in Bangor.

(AQW 15308/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Kilcooley Neighbourhood Partnership's Action Plan sets out priorities for implementing Neighbourhood Renewal through to 2015. The action plan is reviewed yearly by the Neighbourhood Partnership with new actions and projects added. The areas of the plan remaining to be implemented, which may attract Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund assistance, include:

- support for local community infrastructure;
- training and pre-employment;
- childcare;
- restorative justice;
- healthcare; and
- numeracy and literacy programmes.

The Department is also working with the Partnership on a number of potential capital projects to enhance local community and sports facilities.

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what communication he has received from the Department for Work and Pensions regarding a risk to Social Security jobs in Northern Ireland should there be a delay in the implementation of the Welfare Reform Bill.

(AQW 15366/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Since being appointed Minister for Social Development in May 2011, I have met regularly Department for Work and Pensions Ministers to discuss Welfare Reform. At these meetings I have sought assurances that the jobs in both the Social Security Agency's Belfast Benefit Centre and Child Maintenance and Enforcement, which support customers in Great Britain, will continue to remain in Northern Ireland. Whilst the Department for Work and Pensions Ministers have been sympathetic to my viewpoint, they have not, to date, been in a position to provide me with that assurance. The Belfast Benefit Centre was not successful in Department for Work and Pension's recent Universal Credit site selection Phase 1 and, at my meeting with Lord Freud this week, I will once again restate the importance of these jobs to Northern Ireland.

Around 1,400 Northern Ireland staff jobs are currently employed in providing services to Department for Work and Pensions in Great Britain. These jobs may be at risk if Northern Ireland does not progress with welfare reform because many of the competitive advantages which Northern Ireland offers the Department for Work and Pensions will disappear as the staff will no longer be operating the same social security systems.

Employees of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Social Development whether any employees of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs will become Northern Ireland Civil Service staff if the Welfare Reform Bill becomes law.

(AQW 15435/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Welfare Reform Bill seeks to make changes to a number of existing benefits and to introduce a Universal Credit. Universal Credit will replace Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit which are presently administered by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

My officials continue to work closely with colleagues from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. This work includes consideration of the organisational and staffing implications of Welfare Reform.

At this stage no decisions have been taken regarding implications for staff.

Committee for Social Development Report on Fuel Poverty

Mr Maskey asked the Minister for Social Development if she has fully considered, and agreed to adopt, the recommendations contained in the recent Committee for Social Development Report on Fuel Poverty.

(AQO 2722/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In May 2012, I welcomed the report produced by the Committee for Social Development on Fuel Poverty. The Inter Departmental Group on Fuel Poverty and the Fuel Poverty Advisory Group have been amalgamated into the Cross Sectoral Fuel Poverty Partnership and the key recommendation to develop thematic action groups is very much in line with my department's approach. I am confident that the approach taken by my department will meet the recommendations of the Committee.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Union Flag Flown from Parliament Buildings

Mr Allister asked the Assembly Commission whether it will review the days on which the Union Flag is flown from Parliament Buildings to include Ulster Day.

(AQW 14891/11-15)

Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The arrangements for the flying of the Union flag from government buildings in Northern Ireland are set out by the Flags Regulations (NI) 2000, as amended by the Flags Regulation (NI) (Amendment) 2002. The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission follows these Regulations.

A list of designated days under the Regulations are issued each year, generally 15 in total and I have attached for your information, the anticipated timetable for flags in 2012. There are exceptions to flying only the Union flag. For example, on Commonwealth Day the regulations permit the flying of the Commonwealth flag alongside the Union flag on a building with two poles. On Europe day the regulations permit the flying of the European Flag alongside the Union Flag.

The Assembly Commission operates within existing statutory guidance in this area. Your question will be brought to the attention of the Assembly Commission at a future meeting.

2012 - DAYS FOR HOISTING FLAGS ON GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FLAGS REGULATIONS

- | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ 20 January | Birthday of The Countess of Wessex |
| ■ 6 February | Her Majesty's Accession |
| ■ 19 February | Birthday of The Duke of York |
| ■ 10 March | Birthday of The Earl of Wessex |
| ■ 12 March | Commonwealth Day# |
| ■ 17 March | St Patrick's Day |
| ■ 21 April | Birthday of Her Majesty The Queen |
| ■ 9 May | Europe Day |
| ■ 2 June | Coronation Day |
| ■ 10 June | Birthday of The Duke of Edinburgh |
| ■ \16 June | The Queen's Official Birthday* |
| ■ 15 August | Birthday of The Princess Royal |

- 11 November Remembrance Sunday**
- 14 November Birthday of The Prince of Wales
- 20 November Anniversary of Her Majesty's Wedding

Notes:

- # Commonwealth Day is the second Monday in March
- * The day appointed for the official celebration of Her Majesty's Birthday
- ** Remembrance Sunday is the second Sunday in November. Flags should be flown right up all day and not at half- mast.

Dates confirmed by publication in the Belfast Gazette on Friday 27 January 2012

On the above days flags should fly from 8am until sunset

Pensions Paid to Former and Current MLAs and Executive Ministers

Mr Flanagan asked the Assembly Commission to detail the pensions paid to former and current MLAs and Executive Ministers in the 2011/12 financial year; and to provide a breakdown of the amount received by each individual.

(AQW 15048/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The total value of the pensions paid to former Members of the Assembly and to the dependents of deceased former Members of the Assembly is published each year in the Pension Scheme Annual Report and Accounts. The accounts for the 2011-12 financial year are due to be laid before the Assembly by 31 October 2012.

Five MLAs are appointed by the Assembly as Trustees of the Assembly Members' Pension Scheme. The Trustees are responsible for ensuring the pension scheme is administered in accordance with the scheme rules and pensions legislation. Pensions are calculated according to the Scheme Rules and with reference to a number of factors including whether the Member transferred service from another pension arrangement or purchased added years of service in the scheme. In this regard, the Assembly Commission is not responsible for the disbursement of pension benefits.

The Trustees are registered as data controllers in respect of pension scheme information and are of the opinion that it is reasonable for the Scheme's pensioners to expect that their financial details are not disclosed in such a way that they could be identified. Therefore, the Trustees have not provided a breakdown of individuals and their pension amounts. The total value of the pensions paid over the 2011-12 year was £752,881 in respect of 69 pensioners and individual pensions range from approximately £500 per annum to £16,000 per annum.

Pensions are paid to Members only when they leave the Assembly. A Member may not receive a salary as a Member and a pension simultaneously. The additional pension due to Ministers is calculated using the same formula as the additional pension due to any other Assembly Officeholder. There are no special Ministerial pension arrangements.

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