

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 29 November 2013

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

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Allister, Jim (North Antrim)
Anderson, Sydney (Upper Bann)
Attwood, Alex (West Belfast)
Beggs, Roy (East Antrim)
Bell, Jonathan (Strangford)
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Copeland, Michael (East Belfast)
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Ó hOisín, Cathal (East Londonderry)
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Weir, Peter (North Down)
Wells, Jim (South Down)
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 29 November 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Sexual Orientation Strategy

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the sexual orientation strategy is due to be published; and what is the reason for the delay.

(AQW 25072/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): Together: Building a United Community includes our commitment to publish the Sexual Orientation Strategy.

Public consultation is a key stage in the development of the Sexual Orientation Strategy. A draft consultation document to inform public consultation is under consideration within the Department. Consultation will begin as soon as this is finalised.

Civil Service Posts in the Department

Mr Eastwood asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many Civil Service posts existed in their Department on 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013 at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, broken down by local council area.

(AQW 28062/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The number of OFMDFM posts are provided in the tables below.

1 JANUARY 2012

Grade	Local Council Areas			
	Belfast	Belfast, Castlereagh	Armagh	Derry/ Londonderry
Administrative Assistant	3	11	1	0
Administrative Officer	9	39.51	1	2.59
Executive Officer 2	4.81	36.33	2.81	0
Executive Officer 1	1	23.92	0	0
Staff Officer	6	64.16	1.5	0
Deputy Principal	4.89	57.3	4	0
Grade 7	2	41.69	1	0
Grade 6	0	2	0	0

1 JANUARY 2013

Grade	Local Council Areas			
	Belfast	Belfast, Castlereagh	Armagh	Derry/ Londonderry
Administrative Assistant	3	10	1	0
Administrative Officer	9	39.51	1	2.59
Executive Officer 2	7.51	37.33	2.81	0
Executive Officer 1	1	24.92	0	0
Staff Officer	6	68.06	1.5	0
Deputy Principal	3.89	70.26	4	0
Grade 7	3	43.43	1	0
Grade 6	1	3	0	0

Social Investment Fund: Tendering Process

Mrs D Kelly asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the tendering process for the administration of the Social Investment Fund, including the criteria and methods used for selection; and to detail the number of applications received and the successful candidates.

(AQW 28198/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The administration of the Social Investment Fund (SIF) thus far has been provided by OFMDFM officials, therefore there has not been any tendering process for administration.

Social Investment Fund: Payments

Mrs D Kelly asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to list the payments made to each company or individual for the administration of the Social Investment Fund, including the dates.

(AQW 28199/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The administration of the Social Investment Fund (SIF) thus far has been provided by OFMDFM officials, therefore there have been no payments made to companies or individuals for the administration of SIF.

Social Investment Fund

Mr Lunn asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Social Investment Fund.
(AQO 5010/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Strategic area plans were received by the Department on 28 February 2013. Each zone submitted economic appraisals for up to ten projects within their area plans. A significant number of the projects have concluded internal appraisal and discussions are ongoing with the steering groups as to the implementation and roll out of the successful projects.

Older People's Commissioner

Mr D McIlveen asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland.

(AQO 5011/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Commissioner for Older People's main aim is to safeguard and promote the interests of older people. The Commissioner has made an impact in the Social Security Agency's "Make the Call" campaign and at the Department's invitation, chairs the Ageing Strategy Advisory Group, which has significantly shaped the developing draft Active Ageing Strategy.

Following extensive consultation with older people, the Commissioner is currently undertaking a number of major projects including raising awareness of the positive contribution of older people to our society and publishing and providing information on valuing an ageing workforce.

The Commissioner is also reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the law and policy relating to older people. This is in addition to her work with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Health and Social Care Trusts, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority and other relevant bodies to ensure that standards and quality of care are at the heart of services provided to older people.

Gender Equality Strategy

Ms Fearon asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Gender Equality Strategy. **(AQW 28440/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A review of the Gender Equality Strategy (GES) and its associated cross departmental Action Plans is currently nearing completion. The Review considered how effectively the Strategy has performed against its objectives; assessed the effectiveness of the Action Plans; and has made recommendations for the aims, objectives and delivery of the Strategy and Action Plans in the years remaining – 2014-16.

A revised GES is currently being developed in consultation with the Gender Advisory Panel (GAP). The GAP is made up of key stakeholder representatives. It is intended that the revised document will be published in January 2014.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Average Rainfall: Effect on Farms

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether the above average rainfall in the week leading up to the cut off date for the spreading of slurry had an adverse effect on farms. **(AQW 28190/11-15)**

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): While weather conditions were difficult at the start of this year and spring was very late, there has been generally good weather since then. It has been the driest summer in six years, and therefore field conditions have been suitable for slurry spreading.

My Department has consistently advised farmers to spread slurry when grass growth is greatest from spring through to late summer. This will help to maximise the yield response to slurry nutrients and ensure that slurry tanks are empty well ahead of the cut off date for slurry spreading in preparation for winter housing period.

Farms are required to have a minimum of 22 weeks slurry storage capacity, and the closed spreading period is some 16 weeks long. This is to ensure that farms have sufficient storage capacity to allow for times when weather and field conditions are unsuitable either before or after the closed spreading period.

Given these circumstances, any above average rainfall in the week leading up to the cut off date for slurry spreading should not have had any significant adverse effect on farms.

Future Ownership of Lough Neagh

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for a progress report on the inter-departmental/ministerial group on the future ownership of Lough Neagh.

(AQW 28265/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In December last year, I shared the Inter-Departmental Working Group report with ministerial colleagues whose officials had contributed to the report through membership of the Working Group.

Since then, the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure has been considering the value of additional research to complement the findings in the report. I intend to meet Minister Ní Chuilín shortly to discuss the findings of this work and how they might add value to the Inter Departmental Working Group Report. I will then assess next steps, including putting recommendations to the Executive as soon as possible probably in the early part of next year.

Tree Population in North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the areas in North Down in which her Department plans to increase the tree population.

(AQW 28275/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Woodland cover in North Down is 8.6 % of land area compared with an average of 8 % in the north of Ireland. I remain committed to increasing the extent woodland cover by provide support to landowners under the Rural Development Programme to encourage creation of new woodland. During the Programme period 2007-2013 funding of almost £10 million supported the establishment of over 1,400 hectares of new woodland. This Programme is now closed to new applicants and my officials are developing new afforestation schemes in consultation with stakeholders in preparation for the 2014 -2020 Rural Development Programme. Stakeholders have told us that they wish to see support continuing for creation of a wide range of woodland types, that new woodland is particularly suited to land of limited agricultural productivity and that forestry schemes should be integrated, where possible, with the delivery of Agri-environment Schemes.

Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether Japanese Knotweed will be listed as a noxious weed by an affirmation order under Article 3 (2) (a) of the Noxious Weeds (Northern Ireland) Order 1977.

(AQW 28321/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Japanese knotweed is prescribed under The Wildlife Order (NI) 1985 which makes it an offence for any person to intentionally plant or otherwise cause this Invasive Alien Species to grow in the wild. As there are existing legislative controls available my Department do not see a requirement to introduce new subordinate legislation listing Japanese knotweed under the Noxious Weeds (NI) Order 1977.

North South Animal Welfare and Transport Working Group

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the work of the North South Animal Welfare and Transport Working Group

(AQW 28345/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: In my answer to AQW 26710/11-15 I advised that I raised the issue of wild animals in travelling circuses at the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Agriculture meeting on 10 July 2013 and subsequently my officials met officials from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) under the auspices of the North South Animal Welfare and Transport Working Group on 5 September 2013.

Minister Coveney and I received an update on the issue at the NSMC Agriculture meeting on 13 November.

There are no circuses based here but there are a number of circuses registered in the south of Ireland, some of which travel here. I can advise that DAFM officials have contacted stakeholders and are scheduled to meet them to discuss this issue in the near future.

Officials will report back to Minister Coveney and I once they have met all relevant stakeholders and have had an opportunity to consider the available evidence and information.

Inspection of Tobacco Entering Northern Ireland

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what role her Department plays in the inspection of tobacco entering Northern Ireland.

(AQW 28368/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Plant Health Order (NI) 2006 does not require tobacco leaf to be inspected at the point of entry. Tobacco in its dried leaf form presents no plant health risk to the north of Ireland and therefore my Department does not routinely inspect imports of dried tobacco leaf.

Countries that grow tobacco as a commercial crop and countries outside the EU which buy cigarettes and other tobacco products produced in the north of Ireland may request Phytosanitary certificates to accompany export consignments. To facilitate this trade officials from my Department produce Phytosanitary certificates in support of exports and undertake inspections at premises to check for the presence of pests including tobacco beetle.

Equine Industry: Research and Management

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what funding arrangements are in place to help the equine industry with research and management issues.

(AQW 28387/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: DARD's Evidence and Innovation Strategy is the overarching framework for all DARD funded research and development to underpin evidence-based policy and delivery and promote innovation in agri-food, farming, forestry and other rural businesses, including equine businesses. There is on-going engagement with stakeholders, including through an annual stakeholder conference, to help inform the identification and prioritisation of research needs. The Equine Council NI, (ECNI), the industry representative body for the equine sector in the north that is taking forward the industry's equine strategy, is involved in this process.

DARD's Research Challenge Fund (RCF) is a key element of the DARD Evidence and Innovation Strategy. It gives small and medium sized businesses from the agri-food and other rural sectors an opportunity to get help with research. It aims to encourage industry-led consortia to get involved in research projects, by providing grant of up to 50% assistance (to a maximum value of £250k) with research funding.

My Department's CAFRE also provides a wide range of education and training programmes to meet the needs of the equine industry. Further and Higher Education programmes for new entrants are delivered at Enniskillen Campus and training programmes for those working in the industry are delivered at out-centres throughout the north.

The equine provision currently includes full-time programmes at Level 2 Diploma, up to BSc (Hons) level, farriery programmes and short courses. Higher Education programmes are validated by the University of Ulster.

Enniskillen Campus has a strong ethos of "learning by doing". Several innovative 'learning by doing' projects are used to support delivery of education programmes, including Equine Breeding, Horse Racing and Equitation Units.

DARD engages closely with ECNI and provided start-up funding to ECNI following its establishment, for the two year period to 31 March 2013. This funding was extended for six months to allow ECNI further time to make its arrangements for self-funding and I recently met ECNI to hear about its plans for future direction and funding.

Legislation Relating to Greyhound Racing and Welfare

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 25696/11-15, whether there are further plans to meet with (i) Hope 4 Hounds; (ii) Greyhound Rescue NI; (iii) The Dogs Trust; (iv) Mid-Antrim Animal Sanctuary; (v) ASSISI; (vi) Rainbow Animal Rescue; (vii) Causeway Coast Animal Rescue; and (viii) any other organisations to discuss legislation relating to Greyhound racing and welfare.

(AQW 28399/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Although my Department is not responsible for greyhound racing, my officials and I from time to time meet greyhound organisations in fulfilment of our policy and legislative responsibility for the welfare, control, identification, licensing and breeding of dogs. For example, in December 2012 my officials met Homes for Unwanted Greyhounds and Dogs Trust, and in April this year the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Carál Ní Chuilín MLA, and I met the Irish Coursing Club to discuss greyhound-related issues.

I do not at present have further meetings planned on this issue but many of the organisations that you mention are consultees with which my Department engages when considering policy and legislative changes relating to dogs or animal welfare. This includes: Dogs Trust; Mid Antrim Animal Sanctuary; Assisi Animal Sanctuary; Rainbow Rescue Centre; and also Greyhound Action NI and Greyhound Rescue NI.

I also sought input from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) on this issue. My ministerial colleague Carál Ní Chuilín MLA has advised that she has not met any of the groups detailed to discuss legislation for greyhound racing.

National Dairy Council

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she is aware of any local agri-food company that has lost a contract in the Republic of Ireland due to the stance taken by the National Dairy Council.

(AQW 28537/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am aware that a number of our major milk processors have lost significant business in the south due to the National Dairy Council's campaign.

While country of origin labelling is legal, I am concerned about any loss of business by our processors. I strongly believe that in the current economic climate fostering all Ireland trade would benefit producers in both north and south.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for an update on the current levels of Bovine Tuberculosis.

(AQO 5084/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Bovine TB annual herd incidence has declined from its peak of 7.46% at 31 October 2012 to 6.47% at 30 September 2013.

During 2013 to date there have been 1,021 new TB breakdowns compared with 1,214 in the same period in 2012, which represents a 15.9% reduction.

During 2013 to date there have been 5,785 TB reactors removed to slaughter compared with 7,888 in the same period in 2012, which represents a 26.6% reduction.

While this reduction is welcome I am not complacent and wish to see further progressive reduction in TB levels with the ultimate aim of TB eradication.

Farming: Capital Grants

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans she has for a capital grant scheme in the new Rural Development Programme that will help farmers improve their farms. **(AQO 5082/11-15)**

Mrs O'Neill: My proposals for a capital grant scheme in the new Rural Development Programme were outlined in a consultation document published on 1 July 2013.

The document detailed proposals for a Business Investment Scheme which aims to improve the competitiveness, efficiency and sustainability of agriculture by providing grant support to:-

- Introduce new technologies and/or processes;
- Upgrade or replace buildings and/or equipment to provide better nutrient management, biosecurity, disease prevention and improved welfare conditions for animals;
- Improve storage facilities for the horticulture and/or arable sectors to provide better bio security and improved crop quality standards on farms; and
- Establish renewable energy technologies on-farm to ensure that farm resources are used to provide a secure energy supply and improve farm income.

My Department consulted on proposals to introduce a single scheme with a 3-tiered funding structure, with a maximum grant amount of £250,000 available, at a grant rate of 40% of total project costs. It was proposed that the requirements of the application process would increase in line with the level of funding sought.

The period of public consultation on the next Rural Development Programme closed on 21 October 2013 and my officials are considering the responses received.

Single Farm Payments

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what assurance she will give that 90 per cent of Single Farm Payments for the scheme year 2013 will be made by the end of December 2013. **(AQO 5083/11-15)**

Mrs O'Neill: 37,629 claims were submitted to the 2013 Single Farm Payment (SFP) Scheme. EU legislation permits DARD to release full rate payments on verified claims from 1 December 2013 providing that all eligibility checks, including on-farm checks on the land eligibility inspections which were required in respect of the 2013 year, have been carried out.

Within this legislative framework, our objective is to pay as many claims as possible at the earliest practicable stage.

The total budget for the 2013 Single Farm Payment Scheme is £265.25 million. To keep farmers and the industry informed and to help manage expectations on the flow of payments, the payment timeline was published on 20 November setting out the processing targets for the first three months of the SFP payment window.

We are aiming to finalise 85% of the claims submitted to the scheme in December 2013. The vast majority of farmers will receive their payments before Christmas. This is an increase of 5% on the December 2012 target, and an increase of 2.2% on payments actually achieved in December 2012. We also aim to finalise 95% of claims by the end of February 2014.

Whilst we have improved our payment performance, farmers can help us go further by submitting their claims online. This reduces the volume of manual processing involved and helps us pay claims more quickly. If 40% of farmers submitted their applications online, we could pay 90% of claims in December of that year.

With regard to inspection cases the objective is to finalise the majority of payments by the end of February 2014, which is four months ahead of the position on inspections for 2012.

Forest Service: South Antrim

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how much revenue her Department received from the Forest Service in South Antrim in each of the last three years.

(AQO 5085/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Forest Service is an Agency of the Department and all Agency income and expenditure is contained within the DARD Estimates and accounted for through both the DARD and Agency Resource Accounts.

The Forest Service revenue in the South Antrim constituency is called Operating Income and comes from its operating activities in the area. This was £33,227 in 2010/11, £214,574 in 2011/12 and £109,322 in 2012/13.

Fishing: Ardglass/Kilkeel/Portavogie

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when her Department will produce a fishing development plan relating to the ports of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.

(AQO 5086/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I met with fishing industry representatives on 5 November 2013 and we agreed to meet early in 2014 to discuss the challenges facing the industry from now to 2020 and how it might adapt. As part of the preparations to implement the new European Maritime and Fisheries Fund my Department will be required to develop an investment plan for fisheries for the period 2014-2020. This will be developed in consultation with the fishing industry and is likely to be published by the end of 2014.

Horse Passports

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the effectiveness of the European horse passport system in monitoring the recording and traceability of horses.

(AQO 5087/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Under Commission Regulation (EC) No. 504/2008, it is a requirement for all horses and ponies (and other forms of equidae) within the EU to have a passport identifying the animal. The Regulation is implemented in the north by the Horse Passports Regulations (NI) 2010, on the identification of equidae.

In response to the recent horse meat fraud, the Commission wrote to Member States with its 5 Point Action Plan, which contains a number of measures in relation to food fraud, country of origin labelling and actions in respect of horse passports.

On horse passports, the Commission proposes to amend Commission Regulation (EC) No. 504/2008 to make mandatory the recording of horse passports in a central national database and to transfer the issuing of horse passports entirely to the competent authorities. It also proposes to reduce the number of passport issuing bodies in the forthcoming proposal on Zootechnics.

DARD officials are working with counterparts in Defra, Scotland and Wales with a view to improving the quality of horse passports and producing new efficiency guidelines for Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs). PIOs have been consulted on the guidelines and it is hoped to have them in place during February 2014.

DARD officials are also working with counterparts in Dublin to explore the possibility of having an all island horse passport centralised database and to enhance the security of the equine identification system.

Given the all-island nature of the equine industry it is important that we co-operate on the arrangements we put in place to strengthen the horse passport system and help to prevent food fraud throughout the island.

Agrifood: Careers

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what she is doing to ensure that younger people enter the agri-food industry as a career.

(AQO 5088/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department's College, CAFRE, provides support through its education programmes to those who are preparing for a career in the agri-food industry. I am pleased to report that enrolments are at a five-year high.

CAFRE makes contact with all secondary schools and DEL Careers' Advisers to promote careers in the agri-food industry to young people. During the last academic year over 70 percent of secondary schools hosted a career's talk, arranged for their students to have work experience at CAFRE or participated in a curriculum support activity at one of CAFRE's campuses.

I am conscious that the decision for young people to enter farming in particular can be complex as it impacts on the whole farm family. For this reason, as part of the Rural Development Programme, my Department developed the Family Farm Options programme. This programme provides the family with an Agriculture Mentor who helps them consider the key business issues.

In looking to the future, as part of the local implementation of the reformed Common Agricultural Policy, my Department is consulting with industry stakeholders. The main areas affecting young farmers include additional support through the Basic Payment Scheme and a top-up to financial support available to support investment.

As Minister, I am focussed on encouraging young people to enter the agri-food industry and to helping them build a successful career which will assist the industry achieve its full potential.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether the Central Investigation Service has investigated any aspect of the service delivered by the Northern Ireland Events Company.

(AQW 24629/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Central Investigation Service has not been required to investigate any aspect of the service delivered by the Northern Ireland Events Company.

Following the disclosure of the financial deficit in the Company, the Department engaged a number of other experts to investigate specific aspects of its affairs. Subsequent to this, Company Inspectors were appointed by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment to carry out a comprehensive investigation into the affairs of the Company.

Ulster Museum, Belfast

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the current policy on flying the Union Flag over the Ulster Museum, Belfast.

(AQW 25444/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: No flags are flown over any NMNI sites.

October Monitoring Round: Sports Stadia

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if she will bid for further funds for sub-Regional Sports stadia in the October Monitoring Round.

(AQW 25446/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: No bids were submitted in the October Monitoring Round.

Irish Football Association: Windsor Park

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the discussions she had with the Irish Football Association (IFA) in the weeks prior to her recent statement regarding the need for appropriate governance at the IFA before the redevelopment funding for Windsor Park could occur.

(AQW 25754/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Contact with the IFA in the weeks prior to my statement in the Assembly on 10 September 2013, was primarily conducted by my senior officials in the Department however I did have a direct conversation with Mr Patrick Nelson, IFA Chief Executive Officer on one occasion.

Capital Funding for Football Grounds

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to outline the timeframe for the provision of tranches of capital funding for football grounds.

(AQW 26626/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI, an arm's length body of my Department, is currently developing a new capital funding programme aimed at multisport, multi-agency partnerships community projects in areas of deprivation and to which football clubs may be eligible to apply.

The programme has an anticipated launch date of Spring 2014 and it is planned that information workshops and further communication will occur from January 2014 onwards. To receive timely information in relation to the development of the programme it is advised that potential applicants register on the Sport NI website at <http://www.sportni.net/Funding+registrations/Funding+Registrations.htm>

Sport NI, has advised that currently there is no capital funding programmes available for football clubs to apply to.

Irish League Soccer Clubs

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for a timescale on the distribution of funds to Irish League soccer clubs for capital projects.

(AQW 26682/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Sport NI, an arm's length body of my Department, is currently developing a new capital funding programme aimed at multisport, multi-agency partnerships community projects in areas of deprivation and to which football clubs may be eligible to apply.

The programme has an anticipated launch date of Spring 2014 and it is planned that information workshops and further communication will occur from January 2014 onwards. To receive timely information in relation to the development of the programme it is advised that potential applicants register on the Sport NI website at

<http://www.sportni.net/Funding+registrations/Funding+Registrations.htm>

Sport NI, has advised that currently there is no capital funding programmes available for football clubs to apply to.

Applicants for Civil Service Posts

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 26139/11-15, given the significant under representation of those from the Protestant community in applications for posts to her Department, to outline the steps she will take to increase applications.

(AQW 26806/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Recruitment to the NI Civil Service, including DCAL, is regulated by the NI Civil Service Commissioners, who have a statutory duty to ensure that all appointments are made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition.

The three DCAL led competitions referred to in AQW 26139/11-15 were initiated and progressed in compliance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code and in accordance with the NICS Recruitment Policy and Procedures Manual, which may be accessed via the following link.

NICS Recruitment Policy and Procedures Manual Version 13

The Manual includes details of the outreach measures already taken in order to create a welcome for all who might consider a career in the NICS.

In compliance with Article 55 of the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 all proposed recruitment competitions are referred to the Department of Finance and Personnel's Equality & Diversity Branch for advice on the inclusion of statements in job advertisements welcoming applications from identified under-represented groups. The inclusion of such a statement was not deemed necessary for the three competitions referred to.

Glentoran Football Club

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to clarify the reported promise of £10 million to Glentoran Football Club by her predecessor, including where funding for the Club now stands, in terms of quantum and timescale.

(AQW 27504/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is neither bound by, nor committed to, any notional or specific award of funding to any club's development plans at this stage. As any funding for sub-regional stadia development still needs to be secured in the next CSR, subsequent possible bids will be considered on the basis of evidenced need and demonstrable outcomes for society. Therefore no decisions of any kind on funding to assist the development of particular stadiums, has been taken.

Commonwealth Games 2014: Ulster Hockey Team

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail what assistance her Department has provided to the Ulster Hockey team in its endeavours to enter a Northern Ireland team in the Commonwealth Games 2014.

(AQW 27843/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for entering teams from the north of Ireland, into the Commonwealth Games 2014, rests wholly with the NI Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC).

Neither my Department, nor Sport NI - an arms length body of my Department, has been approached by Ulster Hockey or the NICGC to provide assistance in this matter.

However, over the last 5 financial years, Sport NI has provided almost £4.2m of exchequer and Lottery funding towards the development of the sport of hockey across the north of Ireland. During the period 2009-2013 Sport NI provided £1,000,303 to the Ulster Hockey Union through the Investing in Performance Sport Programme.

Furthermore, Sport NI has agreed to invest £840,440 into Ulster Hockey through the Performance Focus Programme for the period 2013-2017.

Legal Actions: Cost

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail how much her Department spent on (i) legal costs; and (ii) paying damages or compensation as a consequence of legal actions, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27960/11-15)

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

Year	Legal costs (£)	Damages/compensation paid as a consequence of legal actions (£)
2008-09	10,672	-
2009-10	63,396	-
2010-11	85,317	-
2011-12	43,756	36,465
2012-13	94,141	-

Lough Erne: Anglers with a Disability

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on sourcing an alternative access to Lough Erne for anglers with a disability, given the continuing difficulties experienced reopening the Garvary jetty.

(AQW 28023/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has been involved in a series of discussions with land owners regarding access to the Garvary jetty and there are indications of progress towards a positive resolution.

Officials will continue to explore options for additional access to Lough Erne for anglers and in particular for those with a disability.

Electricity Supply Board

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions her Department has had with the Electricity Supply Board on the recently reported death of fish at the dam on the River Erne.

(AQW 28070/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My officials met with representatives of the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) on 3 October in Enniskillen to review the operation of the "Trap and Truck" arrangement for the conservation of eels on the Erne.

During the meeting, officials raised reports about recent fish deaths at the dam on the River Erne. ESB officials advised that they had undertaken an investigation but had not found any evidence to substantiate the claims.

ESB has agreed to provide regular updates on the numbers of salmon passing upstream (including any fish that die in the pass) to allow DCAL to monitor Erne salmon runs.

Lough Neagh: Size of Nets

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the number and type of nets permitted on Lough Neagh; and (ii) the monitoring system in place to check the size and grade of nets.

(AQW 28074/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) There are five types of nets permitted on Lough Neagh and these are detailed below:
- Bait net for the taking of freshwater fish other than trout or rainbow trout for use as bait;
 - Eel draft net exceeding 118 metres;
 - Draft net for the capture of salmon and freshwater fish;
 - Single wall set net or trammel net for the capture of trout;
 - Single wall set net or trammel net for the taking of freshwater fish other than trout or rainbow trout.
- (ii) DCAL Fisheries Protection Officers (FPO's) undertake patrols both on and around Lough Neagh to detect, disrupt and deter those involved in illegal fishing activity. FPO's regularly carry out net checks to ensure that these are properly marked, of legal construction and being fished in accordance with legislation.

Nets found to be in breach of legislation may be seized and if the owner is identified the matter will be reported with a view to prosecution. If the owner is not identified the Department will make application to the Courts to issue a destruction order for the nets.

Library Services: Inner South Belfast

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for her assessment of whether library services are delivering to their full potential for inner south Belfast.

(AQW 28174/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Library services to inner south Belfast are delivered by the Ormeau Road, Lisburn Road and Belfast Central Libraries. Mobile and Homecall services are also provided within the area. The provision of services to any particular area is an operational issue for the Board of Libraries NI.

In line with my Department's 2013/14 business plan, Libraries NI is prioritising resources to those libraries serving the 10% most deprived Super Output Areas, as measured by the NI Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010. These redeployed resources are to enable the release of experienced front-line staff to undertake outreach and community engagement activity in deprived areas. As inner south Belfast contains 5 Super Output Areas that are recognised to be within the top 10% most deprived areas, the area stands to benefit from this approach.

Libraries NI has responded to feedback from community engagement in inner south Belfast by starting regular Rhythm and Rhyme sessions and story-time sessions for mother and toddler groups at both the Markets and Donegal Pass Community Centres. A reading group is also being set up from Lagan Fold and discussions have taken place with Shaftesbury Community Centre in relation to establishing a book group, regular story sessions for children, literacy skills support and a junior reading gang.

Library Services Demand

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether library services meet demand.

(AQW 28176/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The demand for library services in the north of Ireland was assessed by Libraries NI between 2009 and 2011 as part of its Strategic Review of the Libraries' Estate. It was further assessed by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) in 2012/13 as part of a wider review of the success of the Department's policy for the public library service, Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries.

Both these reviews have shown that the public continues to value the public library service. In order to increase participation and strengthen related demand, Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries contains a number of Public Library Standards designed to improve access to and usage of the library service. Work on meeting these standards is being taken forward by Libraries NI through its annual business plans. In line with the recommendations of the Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries review, DCAL is also in the process of reviewing the existing Public Library Standards with a view to creating new Standards on

participation, customer satisfaction, access and usage of libraries by people suffering from poverty and social exclusion. Work on the development of these new Standards is expected to be completed in the New Year.

Library Services: Inner South Belfast

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the demand for library services in inner south Belfast, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 28177/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Demand for library services is measured by Libraries NI on the basis of a range of indicators, namely Issues & Renewals, Active Members, Public Access Computer Sessions, Activities¹ and Visits. The branch libraries serving inner south Belfast are Belfast Central, Lisburn Road and Ormeau Road. Mobile and Homecall Services are also provided within the area.

The tables below detail the demand for library services at these branches over the last 3 financial years:-

2010/11

Library	Issues & Renewals	Active Members	Public Access Computer Sessions	Activities		Visits
				Sessions	Participants	
Belfast Central	117,140	9,098	138,560	46	637	384,059
Lisburn Road	67,781	2,803	5,582	171	3,300	57,500
Ormeau Road	67,701	3,451	31,031	189	3,911	91,900
Total	252,622	15,352	175,173	406	7,848	533,459

2011/12

Library	Issues & Renewals	Active Members	Public Access Computer Sessions	Activities		Visits
				Sessions	Participants	
Belfast Central	114,371	8,234	139,165	50	737	391,282
Lisburn Road	69,515	3,088	5,691	203	5,059	69,172
Ormeau Road*	50,829	3,465	22,114	154	2,958	64,540
Total	234,715	14,787	166,970	407	8,754	524,994

* Ormeau Road was closed January - March 2012 for refurbishment

¹ Activities include class visits, Got IT? sessions, Reading Groups, Rhythm & Rhyme, Storytime, Knit & Natter groups, Job Clubs

2012/13

Library	Issues & Renewals	Active Members	Public Access Computer Sessions	Activities		Visits
				Sessions	Participants	
Belfast Central	97,744	7,840	131,709	91	1,490	357,687
Lisburn Road	67,659	3,024	5,129	210	4,889	62,458
Ormeau Road	72,044	3,955	29,864	200	3,681	90,207
Total	237,447	14,819	166,702	501	10,060	510,352

Figures for Mobile Library and Homecall services over the last 3 years are held separately and are not immediately available. I will therefore write to the member with details of these as soon as I receive them.

Lough Erne Netting Survey Report

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure when the results of the Lough Erne Netting Survey Report will be published.

(AQW 28182/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: A draft report on the recent survey of pike stocks in spawning areas of Lower Lough Erne is currently under consideration by my Department and is expected to be released to the public shortly.

This initial survey and report are part of a wider, on-going body of fish stock scientific monitoring and assessment of the Lough Erne fishery. The results of the full surveys will be available early in 2014.

Civil Servants Based in Derry

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, pursuant to AQW 27945/11-15, why no civil servants from her Department are based in Derry.

(AQW 28244/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department is the main funder of the City of Culture's Cultural Programme of projects and events during 2013. While my officials were not permanently located in Derry, the Head of 2013 Projects Team spent much of the year working with project partners in the City. Regular oversight and project management meetings were also held in Derry which included representation up to Permanent Secretary level.

As part of City of Culture legacy plans, I recently announced that DCAL wishes to widen its focus after 2013 to the North West area. A delivery structure including a new delivery body will be required to take forward future support and development of DCAL's objectives in the North West.

As part of this new delivery structure, DCAL will establish a DCAL North West office to provide support with the establishment of the new body, establish effective governance within the new organisation and continue to work with community organisations and stakeholders to deliver DCAL's key objectives of tackling poverty and social exclusion in the region.

Detailed arrangements and costs for the new DCAL North West office and delivery body have not yet been finalised.

Windsor Park Redevelopment Project

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the Windsor Park redevelopment project.

(AQW 28282/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The IFA IST tenders were returned on 23rd September 2013 and are currently being assessed with regard to compliance to budget and specification. In addition DCAL are working with the IFA to be assured that appropriate governance and accountability structures are in place.

I remain confident that these issues will be resolved and that any delays around any legal challenges are avoided, and that the Windsor Park development will remain on programme.

Rebuilding of the Lyric Theatre

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, following the concerns over the contract awarded for the rebuilding of the Lyric Theatre, to detail (i) the changes that have been made to how her Department manages capital projects; and (ii) whether the recommendations made by the NI Audit Office have been implemented.

(AQW 28344/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) The following changes to managing major capital projects have been made:
- The Department now requires capital projects to adhere to the best practice project management structure of “Achieving Excellence in Construction”.
 - Capital projects will undergo either a full Gateway Review or a Gateway Healthcheck.
 - A senior departmental official will be appointed as Investment Decision Maker (IDM) or joint IDM.
 - A Senior Responsible Owner will be appointed for each project and will be a representative from the contracting authority. The SRO reports to the Investment Decision Maker and is accountable for the project delivery.
 - Each project is required to have rigorous management structures in place at different levels. A Project Board is put in place that will meet at least bi-monthly and take a strategic overview of the project.
 - Each capital project must also have a steering group which meets on a monthly basis to address technical and financial issues and provide funders with an update on how potential risks will be managed.
 - The Department engages the services of CPD. The CPD client advisor provides procurement advice from the beginning of the project and on-going technical and project management advice throughout the life of the project through to Post Project Evaluation.
 - The use of CPD as the COPE is included in letters of offer, for capital projects, issued by the Department as a condition of funding.
 - New guidance and procedures in relation to Post Project Evaluation (PPE) within DCAL were launched in June 2011. The Department has made compliance with this guidance a condition of funding.
 - A benefits realisation plan must be in place for every capital project.
 - It is the Department’s policy to retain all contract documentation in line with public sector practice. The Department is also amending procedures to ensure the requirement to retain contract documentation in line with public practice is communicated to all partners engaged in the delivery of capital projects.
- (ii) Five of the nine recommendations made by NIAO have already been implemented, three are partially implemented and one is not implemented. The Department has drafted procedures that will ensure all of the recommendations are fully implemented prior to the end of the financial year.

City of Culture Contingency Fund

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why AQW 26871/11-15 remains unanswered.

(AQW 28397/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The answer to AQW 26871/11-15 was issued to the Member on 20 November 2013.

Library Members of Antrim and Ballyclare

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of members of (i) Antrim; and (ii) Ballyclare libraries, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 28472/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The number of active members of i) Antrim ii) Ballyclare libraries, in each of the last three years is as follows:

	1st April 2011	1st April 2012	1st April 2013
(i) Antrim Library	4,098	4,111	4,147
(ii) Ballyclare Library	2,759	2,659	2,516

Commonwealth Games 2014 in Glasgow

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans she has to attend the Commonwealth Games 2014 in Glasgow.

(AQW 28482/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My diary commitments for July and August 2014 have not yet been planned.

Department: EU Funding Surrendered

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the EU funding surrendered by her Department in each of the last two financial years.

(AQW 28494/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has surrendered no EU funding in each of the last two financial years.

Performing Arts Framework for Further and Higher Education

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions she has had with the Minister for Employment and Learning about developing a Performing Arts Framework for Further and Higher Education.

(AQW 28496/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have not had any discussions with the Minister for Employment and Learning about developing a Performing Arts Framework for Further and Higher Education.

Devolution of Broadcasting Powers

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what discussions she has had with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on the devolution of broadcasting powers.

(AQW 28497/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have had initial discussions with DCMS Ministers, most recently with Ed Vaizey around the potential devolution of broadcasting.

Business Case for a Velodrome

Miss M McIlveen asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether she would consider commissioning a business case for a velodrome.

(AQW 28498/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for bringing forward proposals for the development of a cycling velodrome rests in the first instance with the governing body of the sport, Cycling Ireland.

A Business Case for such a facility would have to demonstrate value for money, and would need to be considered within the wide context of the Executive's priorities, my Departmental priorities for sport, including those set out in Sport Matters, and as part of a clear co-ordinated strategy for the sport, developed by the governing body.

The first stage in considering DCALs potential role in the development of a velodrome is through a feasibility study which I would ask my officials to consider.

Any proposal would need to set out how any such facility would be sustainable going forward.

Lough Neagh and the River Bann: Commercial Fishing Licences

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the current commercial fishing licences granted for Lough Neagh and the River Bann.

(AQW 28520/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The following commercial fishing licences for Lough Neagh and the Lower Bann have been issued in the current year up to 22 November.

Long line for eels Lough Neagh (less than 1200 hooks)	91
Long line for eels Lough Neagh (more than 1200 hooks)	6
Eel draft net	47
Eel weir - Toome	1
Eel weir - Portna Upper Row	1
Draft net for L Neagh	24
Single wall set net or trammel net for the capture of trout	73
Single wall set net or trammel net - coarse	128
Bait net	73

With the exception of the eel weirs, commercial fishing is not permitted in the River Bann.

Waterways Ireland Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of staff employed by Waterways Ireland, broken down by religion.

(AQW 28562/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The total number of staff employed by Waterways Ireland is 333. There is no legal requirement for Waterways Ireland to monitor the religion of the 249 staff working in the South. Currently Waterways Ireland employs 84 staff in the North. Of these one is employed from a recruitment agency and as such details relating to religion are not available.

Of the remaining 83 employees, 29 are Protestant, 51 are Roman Catholic and 3 declared as other.

Ulster Scots Agency Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the number of staff employed by the Ulster Scots Agency, broken down by religion.

(AQW 28564/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The total number of staff employed by the Ulster Scots Agency is 16 of which 14 are based in the North.

There is no legal requirement to monitor the religion of the 2 staff working in the South.

As there are only 14 staff based in the North and less than five of those are in one of the categories it would not be appropriate to provide a breakdown by religion in this case.

Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the implementation of the Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language.

(AQW 28583/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Now that the consultation process – including with Executive colleagues' Departments – has closed, and views have been taken into account, I am currently considering next steps in relation to delivering a Strategy to Enhance and Protect the Development of the Irish Language, in line with my Department's 2011-2015 Programme for Government commitment.

City of Culture 2013

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) tenders awarded; and (ii) funding provided to organisations in Derry to deliver the City of Culture 2013.

(AQW 28672/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has allocated a total of £12.6m (£6.5m for 2012/13 and £6.1m for 2013/14) to Derry City Council for the 2013 City of Culture's cultural programme of events.

Derry City Council has responsibility for awarding any tenders and providing funding to organisations for events as part of the cultural programme.

C S Lewis

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how her Department and its arm's-length bodies publicly commemorated the fifty year anniversary of the death of C.S. Lewis.

(AQO 5097/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: To commemorate the anniversary, Libraries NI is running a programme of events including exhibitions, talks and readings. These are centred around Holywood Arches library and Belfast Central library both of which are close to where CS Lewis was born.

The Arts Council contributed to the commemorations by acting as an adviser on aspects of the inaugural C.S. Lewis Festival. As part of the Festival, Replay Theatre, a funded client of the Arts Council, toured an interactive adventure inspired by C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. The Belfast Film Festival, which is funded by NI Screen, participated by screening the *Through Joy and Beyond* documentary and PRONI displayed copies of some original C.S. Lewis material over the course of the week of the festival.

In addition my Department, through the Ulster Scots Agency, was involved in a joint project with Tourism Ireland on the production of a book that records Lewis's Ulster Scots ancestral links. These links can be traced back to James II of Scotland and include connections to the Hamilton and Montgomery story. This connection has been endorsed and welcomed by the Hamilton Rowan's of Killyleagh while the Ulster Historical Foundation has confirmed the validity of the Lewis link to Scotland and to the royal lineage.

Anaerobic Digester: Sion Mills

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure if she proposes to make a submission to the Planning Appeals Commission in relation to the proposal to construct an Anaerobic Digester on the River Mourne in Sion Mills. [R]

(AQO 5098/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The appropriate siting and the granting of planning permission for anaerobic digester plants are a matter for DoE and the Planning Service.

The River Mourne is an important salmon river. As Fisheries Minister, I will want to be assured that any potential impacts on salmon and their habitats are properly considered and my officials are liaising with the Loughs Agency to submit a statement to the Planning Appeals Commission.

My officials have also been liaising with DARD on this application. DARD has provided comments to Planning Service in relation to the protection of animal health, the requirement for approval under animal by-products legislation and the location of the proposed digester close to a floodplain.

Ulster-Scots Dictionary

Mr Lunn asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much public money has been spent by her Department on the provision of an Ulster-Scots dictionary.

(AQO 5099/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: My Department has spent £25,673 on preparatory work for an Ulster-Scots dictionary. £20,673 was for the development of an Ulster-Scots “Spelling and Pronunciation Guide” and “Word Glossary” under the auspices of the Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group in 2011, £13,523 of this money was spent by the Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group and £7,150 by the Ulster-Scots Agency. The Ministerial Advisory Group Ulster Scots Academy has provided a further £5,000 to the Ulster Scots Language Society for completion and publication of the “Spelling and Pronunciation Guide” and “Word Glossary” and their subsequent launch in March of this year. Their publication included an invitation for consultation feedback. These documents will make an important contribution to the aim of the Ministerial Advisory Group – Ulster Scots Academy to develop an Ulster-Scots dictionary. This will first require agreement on the orthography of Ulster Scots. This will be a step by step process based on consensus across the Ulster Scots sector and is likely to take some time to develop. Preparation of an Ulster-Scots dictionary is an important piece of work to be taken forward by the Ulster-Scots academy.

Fish: Hydroelectric Schemes

Mr Boylan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what are the current specifications for the installation of fish passes on hydro-electric schemes.

(AQO 5100/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: All hydro electric planning applications are submitted to DCAL Inland Fisheries Group, as a statutory planning consultee. Each application is assessed as to compliance with Section 54 of the Fisheries Act (NI) 1966 (as amended) which requires adequate and appropriate fish passage arrangements for impoundments in watercourses.

Assessment of proposed fish passage arrangements is carried out by a Technical Assessment Group (TAG) consisting of Senior Fisheries Officers and Fisheries Scientists. The TAG uses best practice guidance as detailed in technical manuals used by DEFRA, the Environment Agency and the Food and Agriculture Organisation. These run to hundreds of pages and are available on the appropriate websites. A recommendation is then made by the TAG on whether DCAL should approve the proposed fish passage arrangements based on the information provided. Section 54 of the Fisheries Act requires that all fish passes must be approved by DCAL.

The TAG also considers the potential impact of the abstraction operation on the existing fisheries ecology and fish passage opportunities within the depleted channel.

Casement Park

Mr Sheehan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, given that Casement Park is currently closed, what plans she has to provide assistance and support to other grounds during any re-development period.

(AQO 5101/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The redevelopment of Ravenhill and the planned redevelopment of Windsor Park allow for the use of the Stadiums to be maintained during the construction period.

The situation with Casement Park, due to its complexity means that the use of the Stadium, during the redevelopment cannot be maintained.

Whilst the UCGAA are responsible for developing proposals and alternatives for this situation, my officials are willing to engage and consider any request for assistance and support which may develop.

Currently no assistance or support has been requested during the redevelopment phase, but proposals are being reviewed and considered for post completion phase.

Department of Education

Regional Training Unit Project

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how he proposes to take forward the recommendations contained in the final pilot evaluation report on the Regional Training Unit project Optimising Achievement through a whole school approach to Wellbeing.

(AQW 28139/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): The report on the evaluation of a pilot training course about the 'Optimising Achievement' materials has only recently been forwarded to my Department. The report reflects the feedback from staff from 15 schools immediately following the 3 days of training completed in early March. Until I have had an opportunity to consider the evaluation report and its wider implications, there will be no decision on the place which the 'Optimising Achievement' approach to pupils' emotional health and wellbeing has within the overall 'iMatter' Programme.

Nonetheless, the priority at this time within the 'iMatter' Programme is the development and piloting of an audit tool for use by schools to assess their current approach to promoting pupils' emotional health and wellbeing and how that might be improved.

Education and Training Inspectorate: Inspections

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many (i) full; and (ii) focused inspections were carried out in schools by the Education and Training Inspectorate, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 28203/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

Academic Year	'Full' inspections	'Focused' inspections *
September 2003- August 2004	63	-
September 2004- August 2005	113	-
September 2005- August 2006	114	-
September 2006- August 2007	117	-
September 2007- August 2008	123	75
September 2008- August 2009	104	49

Academic Year	'Full' inspections	'Focused' inspections *
September 2009- August 2010	133	49
September 2010- August 2011	128	73
September 2011- August 2012	168	65
September 2012- August 2013	155	53

***Note:** 'focused' inspections are a subset 'full' inspections.

Note:

- The figures provided are for primary, post-primary, independent and special schools.
- The inspection figures in the table above do not take account of any follow-up inspection work, survey evaluation visits or district inspection visits.
- A 'focused' inspection is a 'full' primary inspection. Note: 'full' inspection includes all inspections, involving an evaluation of quality of provision for learning, leadership and management, achievements and standards, and overall effectiveness.
- Prior to 2007, inspection data was held manually. The number of 'full' inspections has been included in the response; however, the cost of providing a more detailed breakdown of 'focused' inspections would be disproportionate.

Education and Training Inspectorate: Inspections

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how many inspections were graded (i) outstanding; (ii) very good; (iii) good; (iv) satisfactory; and (v) inadequate, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 28204/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd:

Academic Year	Inspection grade: 'Outstanding'	Inspection grade: 'Very Good'	Inspection grade: 'Good'	Inspection grade: 'Satisfactory'	Inspection grade: 'Inadequate'
September 2008 – August 2009	18	65	82	63	18
September 2009 – August 2010	30	73	85	60	14
September 2010 – August 2011	36	86	83	57	15
September 2011 – August 2012	23	110	122	55	17
September 2012 – August 2013	34	114	121	73	20

School Crossing Patrols

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many assessments have been made on a school crossing patrol being retained, in each of the last five years; and how many of these assessments resulted in the removal of the patrol.

(AQW 28214/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Library Boards have advised that the number of assessments made on a school crossing patrol being retained, in each of the last five years, and how many of these assessments resulted in the removal of the patrol, is as follows:

Year	Number of assessments of school crossing patrols	Number of patrols removed
2009	219	10
2010	219	9
2011	229	14
2012	222	15
2013	213	9

Classroom Assistants in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of classroom assistants in each school in North Down.

(AQW 28423/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The table below details the number of classroom assistants (headcount) in schools in North Down.

School Name	Headcount
Bangor Central Nursery School	3
Hollywood Nursery School	nil
Trinity Nursery School	1
Ballyholme Primary School	15
Ballymagee Primary School	13
Ballyvester Primary School	2
Bangor Central Primary School	15
Bloomfield Primary School	17
Clandeboye Primary School	7
Crawfordsburn Primary School	8
Cygnets House Preparatory Department	1
Donaghadee Primary School	16
Glencraig Integrated Primary School	7
Grange Park Primary School	8
Hollywood Primary School	7
Kilcooley Primary School	5
Kilmaine Primary School	18
Millisle Primary School	7
Rathmore Primary School	14

School Name	Headcount
St Anne's Primary School	2
St Comgall's Primary School	10
St Malachy's Primary School	8
St Patrick's Primary School	9
Sullivan Upper Preparatory School	4
Towerview Primary School	14
Bangor Academy & 6th Form College	9
Bangor Grammar School	13
Glenlola Collegiate	2
Priory College	18
St Columbanus' College	14
Sullivan Upper School	11
Clifton Special School	59
Killard House School	35
Lakewood Special School	7

Signature Projects

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what training and support is in place for teachers who have been appointed as part of the Signature project.

(AQW 28475/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Over 270 additional teachers will be in 300 schools as part of the Delivering Social Change Literacy and Numeracy Project. A wide programme of support has been put in place to support both the additional recent graduate teachers and the teachers seconded to provide the support to pupils.

General information about the project and contact details of officers in the implementation team (CASS and HR) and local ELB CASS Officers has been provided to all schools in hard copy and via the WELB website.

A dedicated website NISPLAN has been set up to provide specific help and support. This includes an online help facility. All queries submitted via the help facility are responded to by the relevant specialist and CASS Officers in each ELB provide support by telephone, email and school visits (as required).

All the recent graduate teachers who are beginning teachers (BT) or in Early Professional Development (EPD) are being supported through the Beginning Teacher/EPD programme, already provided by the ELBs.

All Teacher Tutors (teachers in school who provide support in house to BTs/EPDs) are provided with support and training through the BT/EPD programme.

A specific training programme has been developed and is being delivered to all centrally recruited recent graduate teachers who will provide the direct support to pupils. A specific training programme has been developed and will be delivered over December and January 2014 to all the experienced seconded teachers.

Capital Investment in the Youth Sector

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what criteria was used to determine need in relation to the investment of £12m in the youth sector.

(AQW 28476/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: To be eligible for grant-aid funding, the youth organisation must be registered with and have the support of an education and library board or receive funding from Youth Council for Northern Ireland. The organisations must also demonstrate they operate a Youth Service Programme for a minimum 9 hours per week over at least 30 weeks per year.

All eligible applications which met the above criteria were then scored and weighted against: creating access and facilities for the disabled; carrying out essential Health & Safety work; fire safety; child protection; meeting the needs of young people within section 75; collaboration, partnership, sharing facilities/resources; existing use by youth; and cost effectiveness/value for money.

Capital Investment in the Youth Sector

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to list the projects which have benefitted from the announcement of capital investment in the youth sector; and to detail the funding allocated to each project.

(AQW 28477/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In my announcement on 14 November 2013, 53 schemes were successful in applying for grant-aid from the Youth Capital Funding Scheme for Voluntary Organisations for 2013/2014. I have enclosed a table listing the successful schemes and the approximate costs that the Department of Education (DE) has been asked to contribute. The actual cost for each scheme and DE's contribution will be dependent on Departmental approval of detailed drawings and costings.

Youth Organisation	Location	Approx Cost to DE
*1st Hillsborough Scout Group	Hillsborough	£50,000.00
1st Randalstown Scout Group	Randalstown	£50,000.00
1st Tyrone Scouts	Dungannon	£309,800.00
314 Northern Ireland Girls Brigade, Monkstown	Monkstown, Newtownabbey	£150,000.00
4th Portadown (St Mark's) Scout Group	Portadown	£140,000.00
6th Belfast Scout Group	Ophir Gardens, Belfast	£5,000.00
6th Fermanagh Scouting Ireland	Irvinestown	£18,665.00
6th Tyrone Scouts	Cookstown	£66,871.00
Ardoyne Youth Club	Ardoyne, Belfast	£324,000.00
Ardstraw Presbyterian Church Youth Council	Omagh	£144,177.00
*Ballysillan Youth for Christ Community Drop in Centre	Benvue Road, Belfast	£360,000.00
Boys Brigade Belvoir Project	BB House, 14 May Street, Belfast, BT1 4NR	£299,000.00
Catholic Guides of Ireland Northern Region, Belfast	Beechmount Drive, Belfast	£246,322.00
Cladagh Glen Centre, Fermanagh	Enniskillen	£142,529.00

Youth Organisation	Location	Approx Cost to DE
*Clann Eirann Youth Club	Lurgan	£850,000.00
Comber Youth for Christ	Comber	£119,130.00
Conway Youth Centre	Conway Street, Belfast	£103,102.00
Corpus Christi Youth Centre	Ballymurphy Road, Belfast	£146,295.00
Croi Éanna	Glengormley	£5,000.00
Deanby Youth Centre	Oldpark Road, Belfast	£112,000.00
Downpatrick Group Scouting Ireland	Downpatrick	£12,780.00
Ebrington Church Youth Council	Derry	£107,260.00
Fairhill Youth Centre, Maghera	Maghera	£49,000.00
Forthspring Inter Community Group	Springfield Road, Belfast	£29,094.00
Gallbally Youth and Community Association	Gallbally, Dungannon	£87,336.00
Girlguiding Ulster, Lorne House, Craigavad	Craigavad, Holywood	£145,000.00
Glarryford Young Farmers' Club	Glarryford, Ballymena	£50,000.00
*Glenview Community Centre	Derry	£150,000.00
Goal Line Youth Trust, Portadown	Portadown	£93,011.00
Holy Family Youth Centre, Belfast	Limestone Road, Belfast	£135,216.00
Holy Trinity Youth Centre	Norglen Gardens, Belfast	£116,900.00
Hollywood Family Trust	Hollywood	£140,000.00
John Paul II Youth Club	Brookfield Place, Belfast	£292,487.00
Kingdom Youth Club	Kilkeel	£36,000.00
Londonderry YMCA	Londonderry	£148,000.00
Loughiel Community Association	Loughiel, Antrim	£89,352.00
Magnet Young Adult Centre	Newry	£312,000.00
National Council of YMCAs of Ireland, Newcastle	Newcastle	£146,000.00
Newhill Youth & Community Centre Association	Whiterock Road, Belfast	£607,200.00
Patrician Youth Centre, D'patrick	Downpatrick	£137,500.00
*Portadown YMCA	Portadown	£1,200,000.00
Rosario Youth Centre	Ormeau Road, Belfast	£200,580.00
Saints Youth Centre	Twinbrook, Belfast	£149,895.00
Share Discovery Village	Lisnaskea	£55,440.00
St Comgalls Youth Centre	Antrim	£149,756.00
*St Mary's Youth Club, Derry	Derry	£2,384,073.00

Youth Organisation	Location	Approx Cost to DE
St Michael's Scout Group Enniskillen	Drumlyon, Enniskillen	£140,890.00
St Patricks Youth Centre, Donaghmore	Donaghmore	£117,000.00
St Peter's Immaculata Youth Centre	St Peter's Square North, Belfast	£77,064.00
St Teresa's Youth Club, Belfast	Glen Road, Belfast	£149,980.00
The Scout Association - NI Scout Council	National Scout Centre Crawfordsburn	£500,000.00
West Kirk Community Project	Conway Street, Belfast	£140,000.00
Willowfield Parish Church	My Lady's Road, Belfast	£240,000.00
Overall Total		£12,030,705.00

Nominees for Boards of Governors

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education how he will ensure that nominees for Boards of Governors, as part of the current reconstitution process, will be empathetic to the ethos of the various schools.
(AQW 28479/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Applicants for governor appointments to be made by the Department or the education and library boards are invited to describe on their application forms their commitment to the ethos of the schools or types of schools in which they would prefer to serve. The information on the form will be considered for the purpose of ensuring that governor appointments comply with statutory requirements.

Education Bill: Meetings

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 28068/11-15, to detail (i) the dates on which he has met with political representatives or parties; (ii) the name of each political party at each meeting; (iii) the attendees at each meeting; (iv) the purpose of each meeting; and (v) the outcomes from each meeting.
(AQW 28613/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My diary does not record details of political meetings. I have met with a large number of political representatives regarding the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA). The establishment of ESA is raised at most meetings with educational and political stakeholders as a matter of course.

Children with Special Education Needs

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education whether the South Eastern Education and Library Board will be allocated extra resources due to an anticipated increase in numbers of children with special education needs.
(AQW 28679/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The majority of special educational needs (SEN) expenditure is met from the Board's block grant and resulting pressures/easements are considered in conjunction with other block grant pressures/easements. The South Eastern Education and Library Board 2013-14 budget is currently being assessed, in conjunction with the bids submitted by the Board, as part of the January 2013/14 Monitoring exercise.

Salaries of CEOs

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education to detail the salaries of the CEO of (i) each Education and Library Board; (ii) the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools; (iii) the Irish Medium support body; and (iv) the Integrated Education support body.

(AQW 28732/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: My Department does not give details of individuals' salaries or other payments.

The remuneration for CEOs in each public body sponsored by the Executive is published annually by OFMDFM in the Public Bodies Annual Report. The latest report available (2011/12) can be viewed at <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/public-appointments-annual-reports>.

Comhairle Na Gaelscolaíochta and the Council for Integrated Education were designated as public bodies in 2012/13. Information on these bodies will be included in the 2012/13 report when published.

Department for Employment and Learning

Zero-Hours Contracts

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the differences for people employed on a zero hours contract compared with those with a twenty hour contract in terms of redundancy, maternity/paternity pay/leave, sick pay, holiday pay, tax credits, housing benefit and other such rights or benefits.

(AQW 27973/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): I have grouped the answers to these three questions together for ease of reference.

I am not aware of any official type of contract called a "twenty hour contract". I therefore am assuming that the question refers to a part-time worker contract.

The main difference between a zero-hours contract and a part-time worker contract is that for the former, a person agrees to be available for work as and when required, but has no guaranteed hours or times of work. A part-time worker on a twenty hour per week contract, for example, does have guaranteed hours of work.

It is difficult to address the general rights of people on zero-hours contracts, as there are a variety of cases and situations in which these contracts can be used. For example, most people on a zero-hours contract are workers who operate under a contract, and are entitled to:

- the National Minimum Wage;
- rest breaks, paid holiday and night work limits;
- protection against unauthorised deductions from pay;
- statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay (but not leave);
- protection under Public Interest Disclosure law;
- protection from unlawful discrimination;
- Health and Safety protection; and
- additional rights under the Agency Workers Regulations (NI) 2011.

Whilst most people on zero-hours contracts are 'workers', a 2012 employment tribunal case in Great Britain, *Pulse Healthcare Ltd -v- Care Watch Care Services Ltd*, found that six individuals employed on zero-hours contracts were 'employees'. Employees have all the rights of workers, plus:

- maternity, paternity and adoption leave;
- unfair dismissal rights; and
- eligibility for statutory redundancy pay.

Therefore, if a zero-hours contract worker is, by the terms and conditions of his/her appointment an employee, they would receive these additional rights, as would a part-time worker in a similar contractual position.

Zero-hours contracts generally do not provide a worker with sick pay. A part-time worker would receive sick pay under the provisions of the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, if, as is likely, a comparable full-time worker receives sick pay.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has advised that Working Tax Credit (WTC) is a work incentive measure to top up the earnings of workers on low incomes and is available only to people who are in qualifying remunerative work. Remunerative work is defined as work done for payment (or in expectation of payment) for at least 16 hours a week or a higher figure depending on a person's circumstances. An additional requirement is that the work must be expected to last for at least 4 weeks from the date of claim.

In principle, HMRC treats zero-hours contracts similarly to how it treats other contracts. HMRC asks a WTC claimant to advise how many hours of paid work they normally do each week. If a claimant normally works more than the qualifying number of hours, with only the occasional week dipping below, they are treated as eligible. If, on the other hand, their working pattern is unpredictable and they regularly work less than the qualifying number of hours, then they would not be regarded as normally working the qualifying number of hours and they would not be treated as eligible.

The Department for Social Development (DSD) has advised that Social Security benefit claimants on a zero-hours contract can claim, in the same way as other part-time workers, for hours that they can work, and for payment disregards for paid employment. In order to claim Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support, a person must not be working, or working less than 16 hours per week. As a rule, claimants who are receiving Employment Support Allowance are not permitted to work; however, there are some exceptions which apply to certain categories of claimants.

DSD has also advised that partners of claimants who are receiving Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment Support Allowance can work up to 24 hours a week. For claimants receiving contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or contribution-based Employment Support Allowance, the hours that the partner works do not affect the claimant's claim.

Zero-hours contracts have no impact on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, but I assume that the question refers to the impacts of zero-hours contracts on the various categories of person listed in Section 75, particularly women and young people.

Seasonally unadjusted figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest that in the period October to December 2012, there were 76,000 persons aged 16-24 in the UK employed on a zero hours contract, out of a total of around 200,000. The same figures stated that there were 78,000 people aged 25-49, and 47,000 people aged 50 and over, on zero-hours contracts.

The ONS figures also stated that of the 200,000 people estimated to be on zero-hours contracts in October to December 2012, there were 96,000 men and 104,000 women. There does not appear to be a disproportionate impact on women or young people.

I have no immediate plans at present to regulate or legislate on zero-hours contracts. I am aware that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has reviewed the use of zero-hours contracts in GB, and may be producing legislation. I will monitor developments there, and will await the production of

quantitative and qualitative research on the position in Northern Ireland, before making decisions on any potential regulation or legislation here.

Zero-Hours Contracts

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the impact that zero hour contracts may have on Section 75 legislation, given that they are predicted to be more common amongst women and young people

(AQW 27974/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have grouped the answers to these three questions together for ease of reference.

I am not aware of any official type of contract called a “twenty hour contract”. I therefore am assuming that the question refers to a part-time worker contract.

The main difference between a zero-hours contract and a part-time worker contract is that for the former, a person agrees to be available for work as and when required, but has no guaranteed hours or times of work. A part-time worker on a twenty hour per week contract, for example, does have guaranteed hours of work.

It is difficult to address the general rights of people on zero-hours contracts, as there are a variety of cases and situations in which these contracts can be used. For example, most people on a zero-hours contract are workers who operate under a contract, and are entitled to:

- the National Minimum Wage;
- rest breaks, paid holiday and night work limits;
- protection against unauthorised deductions from pay;
- statutory maternity, paternity and adoption pay (but not leave);
- protection under Public Interest Disclosure law;
- protection from unlawful discrimination;
- Health and Safety protection; and
- additional rights under the Agency Workers Regulations (NI) 2011.

Whilst most people on zero-hours contracts are ‘workers’, a 2012 employment tribunal case in Great Britain, *Pulse Healthcare Ltd -v- Care Watch Care Services Ltd*, found that six individuals employed on zero-hours contracts were ‘employees’. Employees have all the rights of workers, plus:

- maternity, paternity and adoption leave;
- unfair dismissal rights; and
- eligibility for statutory redundancy pay.

Therefore, if a zero-hours contract worker is, by the terms and conditions of his/her appointment an employee, they would receive these additional rights, as would a part-time worker in a similar contractual position.

Zero-hours contracts generally do not provide a worker with sick pay. A part-time worker would receive sick pay under the provisions of the Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, if, as is likely, a comparable full-time worker receives sick pay.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has advised that Working Tax Credit (WTC) is a work incentive measure to top up the earnings of workers on low incomes and is available only to people who are in qualifying remunerative work. Remunerative work is defined as work done for payment (or in expectation of payment) for at least 16 hours a week or a higher figure depending on a person’s circumstances. An additional requirement is that the work must be expected to last for at least 4 weeks from the date of claim.

In principle, HMRC treats zero-hours contracts similarly to how it treats other contracts. HMRC asks a WTC claimant to advise how many hours of paid work they normally do each week. If a claimant normally works more than the qualifying number of hours, with only the occasional week dipping below, they are treated as eligible. If, on the other hand, their working pattern is unpredictable and they regularly work less than the qualifying number of hours, then they would not be regarded as normally working the qualifying number of hours and they would not be treated as eligible.

The Department for Social Development (DSD) has advised that Social Security benefit claimants on a zero-hours contract can claim, in the same way as other part-time workers, for hours that they can work, and for payment disregards for paid employment. In order to claim Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support, a person must not be working, or working less than 16 hours per week. As a rule, claimants who are receiving Employment Support Allowance are not permitted to work; however, there are some exceptions which apply to certain categories of claimants.

DSD has also advised that partners of claimants who are receiving Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or income-related Employment Support Allowance can work up to 24 hours a week. For claimants receiving contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, or contribution-based Employment Support Allowance, the hours that the partner works do not affect the claimant's claim.

Zero-hours contracts have no impact on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, but I assume that the question refers to the impacts of zero-hours contracts on the various categories of person listed in Section 75, particularly women and young people.

Seasonally unadjusted figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) suggest that in the period October to December 2012, there were 76,000 persons aged 16-24 in the UK employed on a zero hours contract, out of a total of around 200,000. The same figures stated that there were 78,000 people aged 25-49, and 47,000 people aged 50 and over, on zero-hours contracts.

The ONS figures also stated that of the 200,000 people estimated to be on zero-hours contracts in October to December 2012, there were 96,000 men and 104,000 women. There does not appear to be a disproportionate impact on women or young people.

I have no immediate plans at present to regulate or legislate on zero-hours contracts. I am aware that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has reviewed the use of zero-hours contracts in GB, and may be producing legislation. I will monitor developments there, and will await the production of quantitative and qualitative research on the position in Northern Ireland, before making decisions on any potential regulation or legislation here.

Zero-Hours Contracts

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any plans to regulate or legislate for zero hour contracts.

(AQW 27975/11-15)

Dr Farry: I have grouped the answers to these three questions together for ease of reference.

I am not aware of any official type of contract called a "twenty hour contract". I therefore am assuming that the question refers to a part-time worker contract.

The main difference between a zero-hours contract and a part-time worker contract is that for the former, a person agrees to be available for work as and when required, but has no guaranteed hours or times of work. A part-time worker on a twenty hour per week contract, for example, does have guaranteed hours of work.

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hours contract, out of a total of around 200,000. The same figures stated that there were 78,000 people aged 25-49, and 47,000 people aged 50 and over, on zero-hours contracts.

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I have no immediate plans at present to regulate or legislate on zero-hours contracts. I am aware that the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has reviewed the use of zero-hours contracts in GB, and may be producing legislation. I will monitor developments there, and will await the production of quantitative and qualitative research on the position in Northern Ireland, before making decisions on any potential regulation or legislation here.

Initiatives, Programmes and Strategies for Employment and Training Support

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline (i) the opportunities for alignment between initiatives, programmes and strategies for employment and training support; and (ii) the 15 key actions associated with a childcare strategy, including information on the 4 key actions in respect of workforce development.

(AQW 28145/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Executive's Bright Start programme provides an opportunity for a number of key Departments to undertake greater partnership working in order to better support and develop the childcare sector.

My Department's main contribution concerns the four actions under the programme's 'Workforce Development' theme. Support for these actions will directly support the delivery of many of the other actions in the programme, including the provision of additional childcare places.

In particular, we will continue to work with the NI Social Care Council and employers, largely through the SkillsActive Sector Skills Council, to help address skills demand, and support the development of greater capacity and better quality provision to support the sector's expansion. The Department's on-going work with the sector will give a particular priority to addressing the issues highlighted in Bright Start.

Many of my Department's services and programmes already support clients who wish to pursue a career in the childcare sector. In addition, we recognise the need for accessible entry points to the childcare workforce for those who are unemployed or economically inactive, including young people. Therefore, my Department's Bridge to Employment Programme will provide a route to help unemployed people gain the necessary skills to enable them to compete for specific vacancies on an equal basis with others.

To help address the need for initiatives to encourage greater diversity in the childcare workforce, my Department provides funding for ESOL courses for people who do not have English as their first language. My Department is also open to exploring with OFMDFM colleagues, with regard to their equality remit, the opportunities for better support for minority ethnic communities.

Training and Employment Programmes: Learning Disability Provision

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail why there is no specific section or addendum inclusion for learning disability provision on his departmental website under the Statistics section of Training and Employment Programmes.

(AQW 28150/11-15)

Dr Farry: The Statistics section of the Department's website contains information produced by its Analytical Services Unit. Each of the main areas in the 'Training and Employment Programmes' sub-section contains a breakdown of participation from Section 75 groups, including disability. There is no further breakdown into those with a learning disability as they are not always separately identifiable and if they are, the numbers are often small and potentially disclosive.

Analytical Services also publishes an article in its Labour Market Bulletin detailing the equality breakdown of participants in a wide range of the Department's provision, including participation by those with a disability.

Programmes specifically for people with a disability are managed by the Department's Disability Employment Service. Whilst statistics on this provision are not currently published, Analytical Services and the Disability Employment Service are currently working together to develop official statistics in relation to disability employment related matters to be published on the Department's website in due course. The decision has yet to be taken as to whether learning disability will be separately identified, but if there is a user need to do so and the numbers are robust, then it is likely that statistics will be produced.

University of Ulster: One Plan Target

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail any discussions he has had with the University of Ulster regarding the One Plan target of 9400 students by 2020.

(AQW 28272/11-15)

Dr Farry: I and my officials have discussed the expansion of the University of Ulster's Magee campus on various occasions in the past few years. The focus of those discussions was the One Plan's interim target for an additional 1,000 undergraduate places by 2015.

Within the resources available to me for higher education, I have been able to allocate an additional 652 undergraduate places to the University of Ulster which it has undertaken to locate at Magee. These will be in place by 2015.

I will continue to bid for resources for additional higher education places for Northern Ireland and I would hope to be able to move the University close to, if not achieve, the interim target by 2015.

University of Ulster Magee: Staff

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether there are any plans to relocate University of Ulster staff from Magee to any other campus.

(AQW 28273/11-15)

Dr Farry: This is not information that my Department would normally hold. However, further to the response given to you in AQW 28279/11-15, the University has informed me that it has no plans to transfer any posts from Magee to any other University of Ulster campus

South West Regional College: Provision for Students with a Learning Disability

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning in relation to learning disability provision within South West Regional College and specifically the Dungannon & Cookstown campuses, what consideration was given and consultation took place in relation to difficulties of Post-19 students from the Dungannon area accessing the Cookstown Campus.

(AQW 28473/11-15)

Dr Farry: I will refer the member to my response to AQW 25350/11-15 and AQW 25524/11-15, when I provided details of the collaboration between South West College (SWC) and Transitions Officers, Day Opportunity Workers and the Principals and staff of Sperrinview and Kilronan schools.

As advised previously, SWC have informed my Department that the College has well-established links with Transitions Officers and Day Opportunity Workers. As a result of these links, provision for young adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has been expanded at the Cookstown campus, during the last 5 years. During this period, the College used meetings, open days and celebration of achievement events to discuss opportunities with students, parents and school managers.

Colleges Code of Governance: McConnell Recommendations

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to provide an update on the Colleges Code of Governance incorporating the McConnell Recommendations, and a date for its completion.
(AQW 28655/11-15)

Dr Farry: The McConnell report identified issues relating to the modus operandi of the Governing Body. Specifically, these were around the conflicts of interest associated with the role of the staff and principal on the Governing Body and the scope of debate of Governing Body discussions. Mr McConnell understood that there was work ongoing on a Code of Governance. The work on the Code had in fact concluded and the Code was in place in 2012. It originated from the Review of Governance and its purpose was to provide clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the Governing Body, the Principal, and the Department.

The discussions which led to the Action Plan identified that the Governing Body would benefit from further training on the Code. It was the intention to provide this at a scheduled meeting of the Governing Body in September. However, this was postponed in order to prioritise the implementation of other recommendations from the review of industrial relations at the college. It will be held at a Governing Body meeting in early 2014.

The Department has already presented and discussed the Code with the North West Regional College Governing Body in February 2012. The further training will underpin this and specifically examine the roles of staff and principal members of Governing Bodies and the accountability lines between the Governing Body and the management team of the college. This session will be used to identify any lessons learned from the issues in NWRC and the Code will be amended, if necessary, after this session.

European Social Fund

Mr Attwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the current drawdown of European Social Fund monies for programmes within his Department, and the measures that are being put in place to maximise this resource.
(AQO 5120/11-15)

Dr Farry: The level of drawdown from the European Social Fund is largely determined by the actual spend for each of the individual projects assisted by the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme, 2007-13.

Since the commencement of the European Social Fund Programme in 2007, my Department has achieved all annual spending targets set by the European Commission. This has ensured that there has been no de-commitment or loss of funds to the programme.

A total of €71 million of European Social Funding has been drawn down from the European Commission since from the start of the programme, with a further €25 million to be drawn down before the end of December 2013.

My Department has taken action to increase the capacity of the European Social Fund Programme through the appropriate utilisation of under-spends in other European funds, and through additional funding made available by the NI Executive.

The initial allocation of €166 million from the European Social Fund was augmented by the transfer of €24 million from the European Regional Development Fund.

This additional funding has enabled my Department to increase the number of projects assisted by the programme, and the actual number of individual participants that will be supported by the fund.

My Department has fully committed all available funding and anticipates that all funding still to be drawn down will be fully utilised over the duration of the Programme, which runs until 31 March 2015.

Unemployment Law: Consultation Responses

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many responses were received to the consultation on the Employment Law Review.

(AQO 5124/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department launched a 16-week consultation on a review of employment law in July this year, in order to fulfil a commitment in the Executive's Economic Strategy. The consultation, which closed on 5th November, elicited 41 responses. In the interest of obtaining as much evidence as possible, extensions have been given to a small number of stakeholders who did not meet the deadline.

The responses received provide a significant amount of information and comment on the Department's initial proposals. My officials are analysing the responses at present, and are drafting the Department's response.

The Departmental response will outline the firm proposals for reform which I intend to bring forward, and I plan to publish this response early in the New Year.

However, many of the policy proposals will require primary and secondary legislation. I will therefore arrange for the Assembly Committee to be briefed on the outcomes of the public consultation early in the New Year. As soon as possible thereafter, I plan to present final policy proposals to the Executive.

Universities: R & D

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on his efforts to support university research.

(AQO 5125/11-15)

Dr Farry: Under "Graduating to Success my Department's Higher Education Strategy", I have introduced a new model which directs funding towards research which makes a meaningful contribution to the economy of our region and the wider community.

This model distributes £48.7 million to our Universities and I have recently approved a £3 million increase to core research funding for the current academic year.

Critically, our universities are punching above their weight compared to their UK counterparts with income from business and community interaction.

Contributory factors to this strong overall performance are:

- Income from collaborative research – 3.6% of UK total;
- Income from intellectual property – 6.9% of UK total,
- The number of spin-off companies still active after 3 years is now standing at 48 which is 4.8% of the UK total.

In view of this strong performance, I have increased recurrent funding for Knowledge Transfer, through the Higher Education Innovation Fund, by £2.68m to £11.68m.

My Department has also supported 12 leading edge, tri-national project through the US-Ireland R&D Partnership.

Furthermore, the European Commission's Framework 7 programme will shortly be succeeded by Horizon 2020 which will run from 2014-2020 with a budget of €77 billion².

Together with the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment, my Department has developed a £1.8m Higher Education EU Support Fund for 7 Northern Ireland Contact Points who provide specialist support to academics and businesses across areas of economic relevance to us, such as energy,

advanced materials and transport technologies, information and communication technologies and connected health.

In order to offer our students a wider range of postgraduate opportunities here, I have committed also to a substantial increase in the number of directly funded PhD places.

As a first step I have identified funding to support an additional 350 PhD places over the next three Academic Years towards the target in the Strategy of 1,000 postgraduate awards by 2020.

The Research and Development undertaken by our Universities will continue to play a critical role in successfully rebuilding our economy and, moving forward, funding, at least at current levels is necessary for them to develop and sustain a world-class research base in Northern Ireland.

Paternity Leave

Ms Fearon asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the shared paternal leave proposals.

(AQO 5121/11-15)

Dr Farry: Public consultation dealing with shared parental leave and pay, and a proposed extension of the right to request flexible working, formally closed on 23 August.

A majority of the 28 substantive responses received by my Department supported the introduction of a Northern Ireland system of shared parental leave and pay that corresponds with that currently being taken forward in Great Britain. There was also support for extending the right to request flexible working to cover all employees.

Shared parental leave and pay are intended to afford working parents greater choice and flexibility around how they share between them caring responsibilities following the birth or adoption of a child.

Extending the right to request flexible working will support the wider recognition of changing patterns in family life and the shift away from the 9 to 5 workplace.

The Committee for Employment and Learning was briefed on the outcome of the consultation on 25 September and the proposals were further considered by the Executive on 7 November, when agreement was given to draft an Assembly Bill.

Once drafting is complete and the necessary approvals have been secured, my objective will be to introduce the Bill in the Assembly in March 2014, with regulations to follow. Ultimately I intend to make the rights available from April 2015.

Jobs: Vacancies

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many employment vacancies are on display through Jobs and Benefits Offices compared with unemployment figures.

(AQO 5123/11-15)

Dr Farry: As at Monday 18 November 2013, the total number of vacancies listed on JobCentre Online was 1,607. JobCentre Online displays all vacancies notified to the Department.

The number of vacancies notified to the Department increased by 21% to 58,890 in 2012/13 in comparison with 48,658 notified in 2011/12. The claimant count at October 2013 was 60,119 which makes up 6.6% of the workforce. This is a decrease of 3% from the previous month and a decrease of 5.3% from the previous year.

Redundancies: DEL Support

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what retraining his Department has offered people affected by redundancies at FG Wilson/Caterpillar.

(AQO 5126/11-15)

Dr Farry: Retraining was offered to all employees affected by the redundancies at FG Wilson /Caterpillar.

My Redundancy Advice Service delivered a tailored package of support to staff across all three FG Wilson/Caterpillar sites in Larne, Monkstown and Springvale.

In addition, my officials worked with the company's appointed out-placement provider, Lee Hecht Harrison, represented locally by Gilpin Executive Search and Development, to organise a job fair and a training and recruitment fair, at each of the sites. My Department offered retraining to all individuals who needed reskilling or up-skilling to facilitate a move into a new role. A number of recruiting companies participated in the job fairs. One example was the retraining offered in relation to 28 posts identified in the food processing sector, mainly with Moy Park.

The training and recruitment fairs provided an opportunity for workers facing redundancy to find out more about relevant opportunities and pathways into a different career. Northern Regional College, South Eastern Regional College and Belfast Metropolitan College participated in these fairs, along with the relevant Sector Skills Councils and a number of private recruitment agencies.

At November 2013, of the 244 former employees who initially made a claim for Jobseekers Allowance, 72 are still in receipt of benefit. All individuals receive help and support from the Employment Service and advice on training and employment programmes. Our records indicate that former FG Wilson employees are availing or have participated in the Steps to Work Programme, Jobclubs and Short Accredited Training Programmes, to assist them return to work.

Industrial Relations: NWRC

Mr McCartney asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the McConnell Review of Industrial Relations in the North West Regional College Report.

(AQO 5127/11-15)

Dr Farry: There has been notable progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Review of Industrial Relations in North West Regional College.

After the report had been published, the college developed a plan detailing the actions required to implement the report. This was developed and agreed with stakeholders, including the University and College Union. The production of the action plan demonstrated the commitment of the Governing Body and senior management to a process of change in the college.

The college subsequently appointed a Change Manager to implement the action plan. I am pleased that all parties have been engaging with the change manager and have been working to implement the report.

There have been some notable actions, which have already been completed. In particular, the college has agreed a revised Course and Performance Review system with the University and College Union. This has been implemented with effect from this academic year.

The Human Resource Services Department of the college has also made significant progress addressing recommendations, and is currently consulting on a new draft strategy.

Finally, the Change Manager has been brokering negotiations between the University and Colleges Union in the college, and the Governing Body and senior management of the college, with the aim of them rejoining the local liaison forum.

It is important to note that the report stated that it would take between three to five years to change relationships in the college. Therefore, the full benefits of the changes in the college will only be realised in the longer term. Nevertheless, the Department will continue to monitor and hold the college to account for the ongoing implementation of the report.

Unemployment: Young People

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds as outlined in the latest labour market figures.

(AQO 5128/11-15)

Dr Farry: The latest unemployment rate published in the monthly Labour Market Report is derived from the Labour Force Survey. The survey is a small sample of 3,000 households. I have previously stated in response to oral question AQO 4935/11 – 15 that, as the young unemployed group is a subset of the overall sample, there is a sampling error associated with the Youth Unemployment rate of plus or minus 5.8%. The November report estimates the unemployment rate for 18 to 24 year olds at 24.7%, an increase of 5.5 percentage points over the year. As I said in my previous answer on this subject, while I would not want to underplay the level of youth unemployment, it is important to note that this change over the year is not statistically significant.

In terms of the Northern Ireland claimant count, at October 2013 there were 16,286 under twenty-fives claiming benefit, representing a decrease of 6.3% over the month and a decrease of 11.3% over the year. This is a real change which is not subject to sampling error. While the number of young persons claiming benefits remains high, at 27.1% of all claimants, I welcome the decrease of over 1000 claimants this month and the decrease of over 2000 in the past twelve months.

My Department continues to implement and review policies and programmes to address youth unemployment. Pathways to Success and our Youth Employment Scheme provide employment and skills incentives to assist young people. A post implementation review of the Youth Employment Scheme has resulted in enhancements being introduced, at the end of September, to increase the participation of both young people and employers.

Apprenticeships

Mr Milne asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the level of portability of apprenticeships across the border.

(AQO 5129/11-15)

Dr Farry: Every apprentice funded by my department follows an apprenticeship framework, approved by the relevant Sector Skills Councils; this framework sets out the appropriate national occupational standards and qualifications, which must be achieved by the participant.

Framework qualifications must appear on the Register of Regulated Qualifications.

Over the years, the Qualifications' Regulators across the UK and Ireland have sought to gain a better appreciation of the comparability of qualifications offered in the different countries. This joint working has resulted in the publication of a reference leaflet: Qualifications can cross boundaries: a rough guide to comparing qualifications in the UK and Ireland.

The leaflet provides a better understanding of how qualifications in the UK and Ireland are organised, and makes it possible to compare qualifications across national boundaries. It also allows comparisons to be drawn between the UK and Irish frameworks, and the European qualifications frameworks.

The fourth edition of the leaflet was published in July 2013 and is available to view or download from the Regulators' websites.

Finally, as the member will be aware, back in February I announced a major review of my Department's apprenticeship policy. The review process has included discussions with Ruari Quinn, TD Minister for Education and Skills, about mutual apprenticeships reviews, co-operation on training opportunities, and qualifications.

The outcome of the apprenticeship review, which will be announced shortly, considers the issue of portability by examining how to ensure that an apprenticeship in Northern Ireland is seen internationally as a substantial achievement, with a recognised currency.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

European Regional Competitiveness and Employment Funding

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to list the programmes under her responsibility which have received funding from the current round of European Regional Competitiveness and Employment funding.

(AQW 28103/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):

1 Programmes under my responsibility, listed by Intermediate Body (IB) are:

Intermediate Body	Programme
Invest NI	Business Improvement Agent
Invest NI	Business Information Centre
Invest NI	Compete
Invest NI	Design Development Programme
Invest NI	Envirowise
Invest NI	NI Symbiosis Programme
Invest NI	Product and Process Development
Invest NI	Proof of Concept Programme
Invest NI	Research & Technology Development Centres of Excellence
Invest NI	SMART
Invest NI	Start
Invest NI	Grant for Research and Development
Invest NI	Interim Management Programme
Invest NI	ICT Awareness
Invest NI	Management Information System
Invest NI	Co-investment Fund
DETI	NI Science Park Connect Programme
Invest NI	Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Promotion in SMEs (EEIPS)
Invest NI	Northern Ireland Screen
Invest NI	Selective Financial Assistance
DETI	Local Economic Development
NITB	Tourism Marketing
NITB	Tourism Innovation Fund
NITB	Tourism Development Scheme
NITB	Giro D'Italia
DETI	Broadband Fund
DETI	ICT Demonstration Centres

Intermediate Body	Programme
DETI	Next Generation Broadband
DETI	Action Renewables
DETI	Offshore Renewables
DETI	Renewable Energy Research Activities
DETI	Sustainable Energy
DETI	Common Arrangements for Gas
Invest NI	Environmental and Renewable Energy Fund
DETI	Technical Assistance
Invest NI	Technical Assistance
NITB	Technical Assistance

- 2 Further information on the projects and activities funded can be obtained from the Programme website (www.eucompni.gov.uk). A full list of the Programme beneficiaries is also available at <http://www.eugrants-successes.org>

Future of the Consumer Council

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether a decision on the future of the Consumer Council would have to be taken at Executive level, given the cross-cutting nature of its functions.

(AQW 28107/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I will bring my recommendations on the future arrangements for consumer representation to the Executive for consideration in 2014.

Administrators of Construction Companies

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether there are plans to introduce legal powers to compel the administrators of construction companies to make building sites safe and meet health and safety requirements.

(AQW 28109/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department has responsibility for oversight of the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI).

Whilst HSENI has a legal remit on a construction site where there is a work activity being carried out, I am afraid that the power to compel administrators of construction companies to make building sites safe and meet health and safety requirements is outside their remit and there is no intention of introducing such legal powers at this time.

Hydraulic Fracturing: Meetings with Groups

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the people and organisations that have contracted her requesting a meeting to discuss their concerns regarding hydraulic fracturing; (ii) the requests she has accepted; and (iii) which people/organisation she has subsequently met.

(AQW 28112/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In light of Data Protection considerations, it is not appropriate to name specific individuals but I can confirm that three people contacted me requesting a meeting to discuss their concerns regarding hydraulic fracturing:

- (i) a Belfast resident;
a fellow MLA; and
the Director of a Development Media Workshop based in Northern Ireland;
- (ii) of these requests, one was accepted;
- (iii) a meeting with the MLA took place on 28 May 2012.

I have met a number of people and groups as a local constituency representative.

Carbon Trust Loan Scheme

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the Carbon Trust Loan Scheme is compatible with the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive.

(AQW 28127/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The issue of whether the Carbon Trust Loan Scheme is compatible with the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive is currently being considered by my Department under the Renewable Heat Incentive dispute resolution procedures. The outcome of the review will be published on the DETI website in due course.

Wind Turbine Energy Production

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the amount paid in subsidies for wind turbine energy production, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 28133/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Support for renewable electricity generation is provided under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) in the form of Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation Certificates (NIROCs). As the NIRO is a market-based support mechanism, the actual value of a NIROC to a generator will depend on the supply and demand for NIROCs during a given obligation period, and the individual arrangements reached between generators and the supplier or other person to whom they sell their NIROCs. Table 1 sets out the approximate value of NIROCs issued in each of the last three financial years for wind generation. Totals for all three Renewables Obligations (NIRO, Renewables Obligation Scotland and Renewables Obligation England & Wales) are provided in brackets.

TABLE 1

Year	NIROCs issued*	ROC value (buyout price plus 10%)	Total
2010-11	694,828 (7,683,275)	£40.68	£28,265,603 (£312,555,627)
2011-12	1,127,027 (11,661,386)	£42.55	£47,954,998 (£496,191,974)
2012-13	1,059,842 (12,181,066)	£44.78	£47,459,724 (£545,468,135)

* **Source:** Ofgem RO Annual Reports and Ofgem Renewables and CHP Register

Electricity from Renewable Sources

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the research and assessment carried out on the capacity of the electricity grid to receive the resulting flow, prior to

the Executive embarking on incentives to induce 40 percent of electricity production from renewable sources; and why there is such a volume of non-viable approvals.

(AQW 28220/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Executive's decision to set a target of 40 percent electricity consumption to come from renewable sources by 2020 was informed by a number of assessments, one of which was the 2008 All Island Grid Study. The Study was a comprehensive assessment of the ability of the electrical power system on the island to absorb large amounts of electricity from renewable sources.

The study concluded that it was technically feasible for up to 42 percent of electricity demand to come from renewable generation. It was envisaged that the majority of this would come from large scale onshore wind which is the least cost renewable generation option. The study recognised that significant capital investment in the grid would be necessary in some areas to accommodate the anticipated higher levels of renewable generation. The scale and timing of grid investment is a matter for Northern Ireland Electricity and the Utility Regulator through the price determination regime.

Unprecedented demand for small scale renewable generation connections has put a strain on the 11kV distribution network. Under current arrangements approved by the Utility Regulator, the cost of connecting small scale generation to the 11kV network is met by the generator. This means that the cost of upgrading 11kV lines to connect individual generators in certain circumstances may be prohibitive.

Electricity from Renewable Sources

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many approved renewable schemes, in number and their capacity, have not been implemented due to a lack of a viable/affordable connection to the electricity grid.

(AQW 28221/11-15)

Mrs Foster: No information is held by the Department on the reasons why individual developers may decide not to proceed with renewable electricity projects.

Overloading of the Electricity Grid

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action has been, and will be, taken to address the overloading of the electricity grid.

(AQW 28222/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Energy policy for Northern Ireland is set out in the Strategic Energy Framework which has been endorsed by the Northern Ireland Executive and which establishes energy priorities to 2020.

Approval for investment in the electricity grid is a matter for the Utility Regulator under the Price Determination regime.

However, DETI is currently in discussion with the Regulator, Northern Ireland Electricity and the System Operator (SONI) to examine the potential to use some European funding, with the aim of supporting investment in the grid to enable the integration of greater renewable electricity generation. Discussions which are at an early stage, are subject to securing the necessary approvals and the quantum will be small in relation to the scale of requirements in the current NIE price determination.

Northern Ireland Tourist Board: Review

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether there is a requirement to periodically review the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, and if so, when the most recent review was completed.

(AQW 28249/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Executive, in its 2011-15 Budget, committed to undertake periodic reviews of Arms Length Bodies to ensure Ministerial priorities and statutory commitments continue to be delivered in the most cost-effective manner. The review of NITB and wider tourism structures is a continuation of

this process of ensuring value for money in the use of public funds and the delivery of services to the Northern Ireland public. The last Departmental review of NITB took place in 1997.

Abandoned Petroleum Wells

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of times that abandoned petroleum wells have been inspected, in each of the last ten years.

(AQW 28250/11-15)

Mrs Foster: DETI currently has no programme of on-going monitoring of petroleum exploration wells after they have been permanently plugged and abandoned in accordance with a specification approved by the Department.

Manufacturing and Engineering Companies in South Antrim

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the manufacturing and engineering companies in South Antrim that are clients of InvestNI.

(AQW 28255/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Manufacturing Sector includes a range of industries, one of which is Engineering. Therefore to answer the question, Table 1 contains the names of manufacturing businesses located in the South Antrim Parliamentary Constituency Area that have been supported by Invest NI between 1st April 2010 and 31st March 2013. The table also highlights those businesses, whose primary activity is engineering.

TABLE 1: INVEST NI MANUFACTURING CUSTOMERS OFFERED SUPPORT IN SOUTH ANTRIM PCA (2010-11 TO 2012-13)

Name	Engineering
A A Joinery	
Abbey-Crete Limited	
Amtec Medical Limited	Y
Andrew Christie Engineering Ltd	Y
Antrim Hills Spring Water Company Limited	
Ashers Baking Company Limited	
ATC Systems Limited	Y
B M SYSTEMS	Y
B.N.E. Electronics Limited	Y
Belfast Foiling Company	
Belfast Print Finishers Ltd	
Big Ted's American Cookies	
Brett Martin Limited	
Camden Group Limited	
Canyon Europe Limited	Y
Centurion Systems UK & Ireland Limited	Y
Cherry Polymers Ltd	

Name	Engineering
Chesapeake Belfast Limited	
Contract Acoustic Testing Services Limited	
Craig Foods (NI) Limited	
Crawford And Pearce Electrical	Y
Crosskey's Fast Food Limited	
D Engineering Limited	Y
Diffusion (NI) Limited	
Edgewater Contracts Ltd	
Electronic Sports Solutions Ltd	Y
Fast Engineering Limited	Y
Findmea Europe Limited	
Fortress Diagnostics Ltd	
Fortress Doors (NI) Ltd	Y
Frameline Systems Ltd	
Fred C. Robinson Limited	
Fujitsu Telecommunications Europe Limited	Y
Giltspur Scientific Limited	Y
Glory Be	
Golden Popcorn Limited	
Golf Network	
Gray & Adams (Ireland) Limited	Y
GRP Systems Ltd	
H Ireland & Son Ltd	
Hoys Farmhouse Ice Cream	
Indigo Ivy	
Inspevision Limited	Y
Jordan Products Ltd	Y
Kerrikids Ltd	
King Medical Ltd	Y
L.M. Innov8s Limited	Y
Leadlines & D Esler Stained Glass	
Linnodee Limited	
Listo Limited	
LMI Foods Limited	

Name	Engineering
Lough Neagh Foods Ltd	
M.E.T. Steel Limited	Y
Marcon Fit-Out Ltd	Y
McCauley Trailers Ltd	Y
McGrath Trailers & Co	Y
MDF Engineering Ltd	Y
Metal Technology Limited	Y
Mo Team Ltd	Y
Moover Limited	
N. K. Coatings Ltd	Y
N.L. Rubber Limited	
N.M. Williams (UK) Ltd.	
National Food Treasures	
New Olive Company Limited	
Nicholl Engineering	Y
Nicholson & Bass Limited	
Nu-Track Limited	Y
Oakdene Services	
Oakfield Cabinets Ltd	
Oakwood Door Designs Limited	
Okotech Limited	Y
P. F. Copeland Limited	Y
Pneutrol International Limited	Y
Primepac Ltd	
R & D Laboratories Limited	
Radox Food Diagnostics Limited	
Radox Laboratories Limited	
Radox Sectional Buildings	
Radox Toxicology Ltd	
Rea Sawmills	
Richard Atkinson and Company, Limited	
RLC (UK) Limited	Y
Robinson Fit-Out Limited	
S.M. Components Ltd	Y

Name	Engineering
Schrader Electronics Limited	Y
Springfarm Architectural Mouldings Limited	
Springvale EPS Limited	
Stonebridge Premium Feeds	
Stoneyford Technocrete Corporation Limited	
Tardree Stone	
TEC Heating Controls	Y
The Dog's Apron Limited	
The Pallet Centre Limited	
Thornton Roofing (Ireland) Limited	Y
Top Glass Contracts Ltd	
Traktronic Limited	Y
Unibase Cabinet Systems Limited	
Unique Coffins	
Unitek Ltd	
Varifed Ltd	
Vaughan Engineering Group Limited	Y
Vertical Wind Energy Limited	
W. & G. Baird Limited	
William Coates Ltd	Y
Windflow (NI) Ltd	

Electricity from Small Generation Schemes

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail any improvements made in the local electricity network to ensure it can receive surplus electricity from small generation schemes. **(AQW 28268/11-15)**

Mrs Foster: On 25 October 2013, Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) announced that it had been granted investment approval by the Utility Regulator of up to £2.3 million to facilitate additional small scale generation export from the 11 kilovolt (kV) network to the 33kV network. This approval covers investments at 40 primary (33kV) substations, which will enable reverse power flow from the 11kV network to the upstream 33kV network when generation levels are high.

DETI is currently in discussion with the Utility Regulator, NIE and the System Operator (SONI) to examine the potential to use the European Regional Development Fund to support investment in the grid to enable the integration of greater renewable electricity generation, including small scale. Discussions which are at an early stage, are subject to securing the necessary approvals and the quantum will be small in relation to the scale of requirements in the current NIE price determination.

Investments in Energy Stocks

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how she intends to improve public perception and understanding in relation to energy companies hedging investments in energy stocks.
(AQW 28293/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Hedging policy relates to the detailed operations of the energy market. As such, it is a matter for the energy companies, not my Department, and I have no plans to undertake such work.

Changes in Energy Costs

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she will take to reduce the ability of energy companies to sharply increase or decrease their prices, allowing domestic and non-domestic customers to prepare for predicted energy costs.
(AQW 28294/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Energy companies which operate in Northern Ireland are licensed and regulated by the Utility Regulator, and where appropriate, this includes the regulation of retail energy supply tariffs.

The Utility Regulator carries out tariff reviews, on at least an annual basis, of the incumbent electricity and natural gas suppliers, and encourages energy suppliers to have suitable hedging policies in place to reduce the likelihood of significant price changes.

However, wholesale energy costs in world markets largely dictate final retail prices, and such markets react to external political, environmental, economic and financial impacts, which can sometimes result in sharp changes in retail energy prices.

Jobs in the Upper Bann Constituency

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of jobs that have been promoted in the Upper Bann constituency in each of the last five years.
(AQW 28296/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The table below shows the number of jobs promoted by Invest NI in the Upper Bann constituency area in each of the five years between 2008-09 and 2012-13.

Year	Jobs Promoted
2008-09	357
2009-10	780
2010-11	197
2011-12	224
2012-13	519

Businesses in the Upper Bann Constituency

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many businesses have been assisted by InvestNI in the Upper Bann constituency, in each of the last three years.
(AQW 28297/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Table 1 below shows the number of businesses which have been assisted by Invest NI in the Upper Bann Parliamentary constituency area (PCA) in each of the years between 2010-11 and 2012-13.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF BUSINESSES OFFERED SUPPORT IN UPPER BANN PCA (2010-11 TO 2012-13)

Year	Number
2010-11	155
2011-12	180
2012-13	201

In addition, Invest NI offered support and guidance to individuals wishing to start a business through the Regional Start Initiative (RSI), formerly known as the Enterprise Development Programme. These are detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Number of Individuals in Upper Bann PCA Offered Support Through RSI (2010-11 to 2012-13)

Year	Number
2010-11	164
2011-12	150
2012-13	75

Note: A number of individuals receiving RSI offers went on to avail of further Invest NI support. These individuals are removed from Table 1 and counted in Table 2 above.

In addition, Invest NI launched its Boosting Business initiative on 14th November 2011.

This initiative identifies the range of support and advice available to local businesses and provides accessible contact points, via telephone, email and social media. Invest NI now has a dedicated full time Business Support Team in place to deal with enquiries from businesses across Northern Ireland. Since its inception there have been 533 additional enquiries from the Upper Bann area.

Programme for Government 2011/15: Jobs in South Down

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the Programme for Government 2011/15 commitment to increase levels of employment by supporting the promotion of over 25,000 new jobs, in particular the number of jobs promoted in South Down.

(AQW 28354/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Despite the difficult and uncertain economic climate, we are continuing to make excellent progress towards our Programme for Government target of promoting over 25,000 new jobs by 31 March 2015. The most recently available figures show that, at the end of September 2013, a total of 17,201 jobs had been promoted, 612 of which were promoted in South Down.

Agri-Food Loan Scheme

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment with regard to the Agri-Food loan scheme, to detail (i) the aim of the scheme; (ii) how long it will run; (iii) who can apply; and (iv) the application process.

(AQW 28395/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) The aim of the Agri-Food Loan Scheme is to enable the local agri-food industry to maximise the significant opportunity presented by the decision of several major retailers to stock only UK sourced meat. The scheme will help local food producers, who form part of an integrated supply chain, to access the finance they need to invest in the farm buildings necessary to increase supply of the primary produce for processing. A key objective of the scheme is to help producers

to overcome difficulties in accessing bank finance, an issue which was identified in “Going for Growth”, the Strategic Action Plan developed by the Agri-Food Strategy Board.

- (ii) Given the aim of reacting to this market opportunity it is intended that the scheme will operate for a limited period only and is not expected to be open for new business beyond 2015. The first phase of the scheme will be open to broiler (poultry) producers and we in Government are working with the banks with the aim of, where it is shown to be feasible, rolling out subsequent phases of the scheme to other agri-food sectors; with a commitment to examine the potential to extend the scheme to pork, red meat, dairy and eggs by March 2014.
- (iii) & (iv) Producers will apply through their usual bank channels, with processes in the banks and Invest NI co-ordinated to ensure that applicants will only be required to submit one application for finance. For the impending poultry scheme the participating banks have prepared, for applicants, a standard checklist of information required in making an application to them under the scheme. While anyone may apply, ultimately, those applicants that are part of an integrated supply chain are likely to have the greatest chances of making a successful application – in practical terms for this first phase of the scheme, this will be those producers with a supply contract for their poultry produce. Standardised contractual arrangements will also be in place for the poultry scheme to further simplify the process.

Manufacturing and Engineering Companies in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the manufacturing and engineering companies in North Down that are clients of InvestNI.

(AQW 28412/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Manufacturing Sector includes a range of industries, one of which is Engineering. Therefore to answer the question, Table 1 contains the names of manufacturing businesses located in the North Down Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA) that have been supported by Invest NI between 1st April 2010 and 31st March 2013. The table also highlights those businesses, whose primary activity is engineering.

TABLE 1: INVEST NI MANUFACTURING CUSTOMERS OFFERED SUPPORT IN NORTH DOWN PCA (2010-11 TO 2012-13)

Name	Engineering
Agri Web	Y
Belfast Distillery Company Limited	
Calerrific Ltd	
Choux Choux Limited	
Cordiners Kitchens & Bedrooms Limited	
Denman International Limited	
Denroy Plastics Limited	
DLLNI Limited	
Ecogen Energy & Enviromental Technologies Limited	
Empower Energy Systems Limited	Y
Grace's Irish Foods Ltd	
Greenacre Innovations Ltd	
Greenway Healthcare (NI) Limited	

Name	Engineering
Heatherlea Fine Foods NI Limited	
I'm On It (NI) Limited	
Koka Chocolate Ltd	
Marine Services Ireland	Y
McWhinney's Sausages Limited	
Millcraft Furniture Company Limited	
Motivation in Learning Limited	
Munster Simms Engineering Limited	Y
Oakridge Trading Limited	Y
PIA Rossini Ltd	
PPC Environmental Ltd	
Primacy Meats Ltd	
Priory Press	
Richmond Reproduction (Manufacturing) Limited	
Salt & Pepper Catering Ltd	
Scrabo Disability Solutions Ltd	
Sitex Protective Fabrics	
Spiceart	
The Bay Tree Coffee House Limited	
The Clandeboye Estate Company Limited	
The Crossle Car Company Limited	Y
The Feldstein Agency	
The Signature Works Limited	
Ulster Weavers Apparel Limited	
Ulster Weavers Home Fashions Limited	
Valpar Industrial Limited	

Note: The disclosure of third party personal data such as sole traders who have received small amounts of assistance would breach the first and second principles of the Data Protection Act 1998; therefore, these names have been removed from the table.

Narrow Water Bridge Project

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of meetings held by her office relating to the Narrow Water Bridge project, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 28539/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I have not held any meetings relating to the Narrow Water Bridge project in the last twelve months.

Domestic Energy: Affordability

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the actions she intends to take to make domestic energy more affordable.

(AQW 28557/11-15)

Mrs Foster: My Department has no direct role in the setting of energy prices which are mainly driven by wholesale costs set on global markets. Energy companies which operate in Northern Ireland are licensed and regulated by the Utility Regulator, and where appropriate, this includes the regulation of retail energy supply tariffs.

The Utility Regulator carries out regular tariff reviews, of the incumbent electricity and natural gas suppliers, and my Department works with the Regulator and the energy sector to improve competition and provide options for consumers to reduce bills by switching supplier.

There are a number of active suppliers in the domestic electricity market in Northern Ireland, and there is competition in the domestic gas market in Greater Belfast. The domestic gas market outside Greater Belfast will be open to competition from April 2015.

It is also my intention to give consumers additional energy choice by extending the availability of natural gas to towns in the West and North-West, and to other areas where gas extension is economically viable. I am also working to extend the Renewable Heat Incentive to the domestic sector before Spring of next year and already have a premium payment scheme in place to assist with the capital cost of the transition to renewable forms of heat.

I also await the outcome of the ETI Committee review of electricity policy and pricing, including any recommendations the Committee may make.

Industrial and Commercial Energy Supply Market

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the level of competition within the local industrial and commercial energy supply market.

(AQW 28588/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Utility Regulator reports that there are currently five active domestic electricity suppliers and eight active industrial and commercial suppliers in Northern Ireland. A number of these suppliers have entered the market in 2011 and 2012, suggesting that the level of competition continues to evolve.

Department of the Environment

Non-Farming Rural Dwellers

Ms Boyle asked the Minister of the Environment (i) what options are available to non-farming rural dwellers who wish to build a home in the countryside; (ii) whether he plans to carry out a fundamental policy review; and (iii) what assessment he has made of the kinship method carried out in the south of Ireland for non-farming rural dwellers.

(AQW 27681/11-15)

Mr Durkan (The Minister of the Environment): In relation to point (i) regarding the options available to non-farming rural dwellers to live in the countryside I can advise that PPS 21 'Sustainable Development in Countryside' already provides significant opportunities for non-farming rural dwellers wishing to live in the countryside. It does this by providing for:

- Replacement dwellings;
- The conversion and reuse of non-residential buildings as dwellings;
- New dwellings within an existing cluster or ribbon of buildings;

- Social and affordable housing schemes;
- Development within designated Dispersed Rural Communities; and
- A dwelling to meet compelling personal or domestic circumstances.

In relation to points (ii) and (iii) you will be aware of the work of my predecessor Alex Attwood MLA on the review into the operation of PPS21. In his July statement to the Assembly on the outcome of that review he expressed the view that PPS21 was working more effectively, and therefore the issue of a fundamental review did not arise at that time.

I am satisfied that in the period since the previous Ministers statement the policy continues to applied more flexibility to ensure that it meets the needs of rural dwellers. The most recent published statistics support this view. Figures for the first quarter of 2013/14 reveal an approval rate for new single dwellings in the countryside of 90.1%. This is up from 88.8% in the equivalent period the year before. In relation to replacement dwellings the approval rate in the first quarter stood at 93.3%, up from 92% on the equivalent period last year.

However, given the continued interest on the issue of non-farming rural dwellers, I will give further consideration to this matter as part of work on the development of a new single Strategic Planning Policy Statement. As part of this process I will also reflect on what lessons can be learned from the South of Ireland in relation to kinship.

Civil Service Posts in the Department

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of the Environment how many Civil Service posts existed in his Department on 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013 at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, broken down by local council area.

(AQW 27953/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) Northern Ireland Civil Service posts in DOE on 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013 broken down by specified grades, including analogous grades, and local council area are as follows:

NUMBER OF POSTS (FTE)– JANUARY 2012

Council Area	General Service & Analogous Grades								Total
	AA	AO	E02	E01	Staff Officer	DP	Grade 7	Grade 6	
Ards	-	42.7	-	7.0	1.0	-	-	-	50.7
Armagh	1.0	25.8	1.0	3.0	2.0	-	-	-	32.8
Ballymena	5.5	36.5	4.3	15.6	19.8	9.4	2.0	1.0	94.0
Belfast	34.4	221.8	109.0	161.9	280.6	240.3	84.0	15.7	1147.6
Carrickfergus	-	1.0	-	1.0	-	-	-	-	2.0
Castlereagh	1.0	-	-	4.0	-	-	-	-	5.0
Coleraine	78.9	226.5	42.9	33.4	36.3	17.5	7.8	2.0	445.3
Cookstown	-	26.6	-	3.0	1.0	-	-	-	30.6
Craigavon	6.6	37.9	5.8	19.8	27.3	7.7	3.0	-	108.2
Derry	2.4	31.6	7.8	15.8	14.6	5.0	2.0	-	79.2
Down	7.0	33.1	3.9	14.7	21.0	6.6	2.0	-	88.4

Council Area	General Service & Analogous Grades								
	AA	AO	E02	E01	Staff Officer	DP	Grade 7	Grade 6	Total
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1.0	2.0	-	4.0	4.0	-	-	-	11.0
Fermanagh	2.0	30.6	2.0	12.4	7.5	3.0	-	-	57.5
Larne	-	20.5	-	2.0	1.0	-	-	-	23.5
Limavady	-	4.0	-	3.0	-	-	-	-	7.0
Lisburn	9.5	48.9	6.6	68.3	79.7	30.4	7.0	2.0	252.5
Magherafelt	-	-	-	-	1.0	-	-	-	1.0
Newry & Mourne	1.0	21.7	-	6.0	1.0	-	-	-	29.7
Newtownabbey	-	28.5	-	3.0	1.0	-	-	-	32.5
North Down	-	1.0	-	1.0	1.0	-	-	-	3.0
Omagh	4.6	35.4	6.0	7.0	22.0	7.0	4.0	1.0	87.0
Totals	154.9	876.1	189.3	386.0	521.8	327.0	111.8	21.7	2588.5

Staff at Industrial grades are not included.

NUMBER OF POSTS (FTE) – JANUARY 2013

Council Area	Analogous Grade								
	AA	AO	E02	E01	Staff Officer	DP	Grade 7	Grade 6	Total
Ards	-	35.0	4.0	7.0	1.0	-	-	-	47.0
Armagh	1.0	24.3	2.0	3.0	2.0	-	-	-	32.3
Ballymena	4.6	35.2	7.8	15.6	17.8	8.4	2.0	1.0	92.3
Belfast	44.3	226.1	127.0	177.6	294.1	267.2	98.0	13.3	1247.7
Carrickfergus	-	-	1.0	-	-	-	-	-	1.0
Castlereagh	1.0	-	-	4.0	-	-	-	-	5.0
Coleraine	76.3	226.1	47.8	34.4	40.6	15.2	6.8	2.0	449.3
Cookstown	-	25.0	3.0	4.0	1.0	-	-	-	33.0
Craigavon	6.6	32.4	9.0	24.3	29.3	7.7	2.0	1.0	112.2
Derry	3.5	33.6	9.8	18.8	13.6	7.0	3.0	1.0	90.3
Down	7.0	29.4	7.9	22.4	19.4	6.6	3.0	1.0	96.7
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0	5.0	-	-	-	12.0
Fermanagh	1.0	26.8	6.0	11.4	7.0	2.0	-	-	54.2
Larne	-	18.0	3.5	2.0	1.0	-	-	-	24.5

Council Area	Analogous Grade								
	AA	AO	E02	E01	Staff Officer	DP	Grade 7	Grade 6	Total
Limavady	-	-	1.0	5.0	1.0	-	-	-	7.0
Lisburn	8.8	50.4	8.7	78.6	79.7	30.4	9.8	1.0	267.4
Newry & Mourne	-	24.3	2.0	6.0	1.0	-	-	-	33.3
Newtownabbey	-	30.5	-	3.0	1.0	-	-	-	34.5
North Down	-	-	-	1.0	-	-	-	-	1.0
Omagh	3.6	34.8	8.0	7.0	20.0	8.0	3.0	1.0	85.4
Various / TBD*	-	11.5	16.5	8.5	1	1.0	-	-	38.5
Totals	158.6	864.5	260.0	437.6	535.5	353.6	127.6	21.3	2758.6

Staff at Senior Civil Service and Industrial grades are not included.

*To be determined.

Reusable Carrier Bags

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether research has been completed on the impact of consumer behaviour as a result of a levy on low cost reusable carrier bags.

(AQW 27965/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department's research in this area has focused on the environmental consequences of not extending the carrier bag levy to low cost reusable bags. In these circumstances, the relatively low price of low cost reusable bags could lead some people to treat them as single use bags – and discard them prematurely, with significant adverse impact on the environment.

Emerging evidence from Phase 1 appears consistent with this conclusion. That evidence reveals a significant fall in single use bag numbers – but a huge increase in sales of low cost reusable bags.

The Department had anticipated that the levy on single use bags would generate an increase of approximately 70% in annual sales of low cost reusable bags, in the period before the levy was extended to cover them. However data supplied by a number of retailers operating across Northern Ireland suggest increases in excess of 850% in the first six months following the introduction of the single use carrier bag levy.

This data comes from a total of 168 outlets across the region and shows that since April this year those retailers have sold over 1.5 million re-usable bags that are not currently subject to the levy. Moreover a recent local survey, carried out for the Department in June 2013, shows that only 56% of shoppers in Northern Ireland regularly reuse their carrier bags – and evidence from Scotland and Wales suggests that even this figure may overstate the actual percentage of shoppers regularly reusing their carrier bags. Clearly such trends, if they continue unchecked, would diminish the environmental benefits of the carrier bag levy.

Just as the 5 pence levy on single use bags encouraged greater reuse of carrier bags and reduced the number of single use bags being dispensed, I believe that applying a 5 pence levy to low cost reusable bags should help significantly reduce unnecessary purchases of these bags, encourage even higher levels of reuse and generate substantial environmental benefit.

Community Planning Structures for New Council Structures

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to outline how community planning structures for new council structures will take on board the views of young people; and support their participation in civic life. **(AQW 27978/11-15)**

Mr Durkan: The Local Government Bill that I introduced into the Assembly on 23 September 2013 provides the legislative framework for council-led community planning. This framework provides that a council and its community planning partners must ensure that arrangements are made so that the community has the opportunity to express its views on community planning and the production of the council's community plan.

To support the operation of community planning, provision is made for my Department to issue statutory guidance. Based on experience elsewhere, this guidance will, among other issues, provide advice on the arrangements that a council could put in place in relation to its engagement with the community, including children and young people. It will be a matter for each council to determine how best to undertake this engagement.

Wind Turbines: Magherafelt and Cookstown District Council Areas

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the number of single wind turbines which have received planning permission in (i) Magherafelt; and (ii) Cookstown District Council areas. in each of the last five years.

(AQW 27993/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The table below identifies all Single wind turbine applications that have been approved from 2008/09 to 30th September 2013¹

	Decision by Financial year					
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (up to 30/09/2013)
Cookstown	1	3	2	13	39	6
Magherafelt	2	8	5	13	18	12
Total	3	11	7	26	57	18

Notes:

- 1 Official Planning statistics published by the Department of the Environment 30th October 2013.

Illegal Waste at Mobuoy Road

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the extent and potential toxicity of pollution from the illegal waste site on Mobuoy Road, Co. Londonderry.

(AQW 28007/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The criminal investigation involved the collection of 35 samples of liquid that was either present in the infilled waste (leachate) or collected from liquid on the surface of the infilled areas. The detailed results of the analysis of these samples is being utilised currently and will form key evidence when the prosecution case is submitted to the Public Prosecution Service.

The investigation noted that the waste was actively producing leachate and landfill gas which are generally grossly polluting in nature.

Driver and Vehicle Agency

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27141/11-15, and given that this figure appears disproportionately low for a two year period, and in view of complaints,

representations and, in some cases, clear evidence of infringements, what action he will take to address this issue.

(AQW 28010/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Driver and Vehicle Agency continues to seek to improve compliance levels within the taxi industry by targeting its resources to those areas where greatest impact can be made. This has included focussing resources across a range of activities within the taxi industry, including ensuring taxi operator licensing has been implemented and illegal activities are detected and addressed.

Over the last few months, the Agency has directed more enforcement resources towards addressing the problem of taxis illegally plying for hire, and there has been a significant increase in the detection of PSV Licensing offences committed within the city limits of Belfast, with additional fixed penalty notices continuing to be issued during the period 1st July 2013 to 30th September 2013.

Further to this, I have instructed the Agency to ensure there is a sustained focus on deterring and detecting taxis illegally plying for hire.

Statistics that relate to the period 1 June 2013 to 30 September 2013 cannot be made available until the next publication of official government statistics which is planned for 28 November 2013.

Single Use Plastic Bag Levy

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment what projections his Department has made of carrier bag usage in each of the next three years, based on the single use plastic bag levy remaining at 5 pence.
(AQW 28014/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department estimates that around 300 million new single use carrier bags (paper and plastic) were dispensed in Northern Ireland each year prior to the introduction of the single use carrier bag levy in April 2013. Since the introduction of the levy, the number of new carrier bags being dispensed by registered retailers has fallen dramatically.

Declarations from retailers provisionally indicate that 18.4 million new single use bags were dispensed in the first quarter from 8 April to 30 June 2013. Retailer declarations received so far for the second quarter provisionally indicate around 18 million new single use bags were dispensed between 1 July and 30 September 2013.

While it is not possible to accurately forecast the final annual figure for carrier bag use, because of a number of factors such as seasonal variation, data from the first two quarters suggest that the final annual figure for 2013/14 will be in the region of 80 million single use carrier bags. The Department anticipates that the bag use figures for 2014/15 and 2015/16 will be of a similar magnitude.

The Department intends to provide validated statistics for 2013/14 next year.

Single Use Plastic Bag Levy

Mr McKay asked the Minister of the Environment to list the phone calls, meetings and correspondence since he took up office relating to the single use plastic bag levy.
(AQW 28015/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The table attached at Annex A provides a summary of the meetings I have been involved in and correspondence I have received in relation to the single use carrier bag levy since taking office on 16 July 2013. The information has been grouped into Assembly Questions (oral), Assembly Questions (written), correspondence cases, invitations and meetings.

The figures cited in the table relate to correspondence and meetings in which carrier bag issues have featured either exclusively or substantially. There may well be other instances where references have been made to bags issues; however it is neither practical nor appropriate to keep records of these.

The Department does not log individual phone calls and for this reason it is not possible to provide a list of the phone calls that I have received in relation to the single use carrier bag levy since taking office.

ANNEX A

MINISTERIAL MEETINGS AND CORRESPONDENCE SINCE 16 JULY 2013

	Number
Assembly Questions (Oral)	2
Assembly Questions (Written)	7
Correspondence Cases	10
Invitations	3
Meetings	3

Wind Turbines: Planning Applications

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of the Environment to outline the number of planning applications (i) received; and (ii) approved for single wind turbines between 1 May 2010 and 1 November 2013, broken down by generator output levels of (a) 0kW to 50kW; (b) 51kW to 100kW; (c) 101kW to 200kW; and (d) 201kW to 250kW.

(AQW 28018/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The number of planning applications received and approved for single wind turbines between 1 April 2010 and 10 September 2013 is included in Table 1 below.

The Department does not, however, actively seek information on the output level of proposed renewable energy devices. The applicant may provide this information as part of the applications submission; however we have no independent means to verify this information. It is therefore not possible from the information held on the database to provide validated statistical data in relation to the request for output levels.

TABLE 1: SINGLE WIND TURBINE PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND APPROVED FROM 1ST APRIL 2010 TO THE 30TH OF SEPTEMBER 2013¹

	Financial year				
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 (up to 30/09/2013) ¹	Total
Received	629	674	614	315	2232
Approved	117	266	499	205	1087

Notes:

1 Latest available fully validated renewable energy information.

Driver and Vehicle Agency: Video Evidence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27215/11-15, what assurances he can give that all video evidence gathered by Driver and Vehicle Agency enforcement officers in these circumstances is viewed, assessed and examined; and what grades of staff are involved in the process.

(AQW 28046/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Driver and Vehicle Agency enforcement officers use video footage to assist them with the collection of information and evidence that may be considered during the course of an investigation.

The responsibility for viewing, assessing and examining evidence rests with investigating officers who are required to follow set standards and procedures contained within the Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act (CPIA). The Act regulates the investigation process and provides assurance that any evidence gathered is considered in accordance with best practice.

The investigating officer would normally be a Traffic Examiner or a Professional and Technical Officer. Where case files are prepared for prosecution, these are signed off by the relevant Team Manager (High Professional Technical Officer) and submitted to the Public Prosecution Service for consideration.

Rates Convergence: Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Areas

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment how much of the funding set aside to deal with the issue of rates convergence will be allocated to the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area.
(AQW 28075/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Earlier this year the Executive agreed to provide councils with a reform funding package of £17.8 million over the 2013 to 2015 period, with a commitment of up to £30 million for rates convergence beyond 2015.

The funding will be made available for managing rates convergence as a consequence of councils merging and other boundary changes arising from implementation of the local government reform. DFP and DOE continue to work on the design of a transitional rates relief scheme, within the cost envelope of £30m, which will protect those ratepayers who otherwise would face sudden and excessive increases as a direct consequence of councils merging or due to other boundary changes. The precise model for how this £30 million will be administered and over what period of time has not yet been finalised.

The preferred option is a district rate adjustment at bill level. This would involve a lower rate being applied to the individual rates bills of those ratepayers who would otherwise face sudden and excessive increases. Under this option, the rate relief that will apply to a District Council area will depend on the rate increases faced by ratepayers as a result of the level district rates settle at in the initial years of the new council. As the rates for the new councils have not yet been set, it is too early to estimate the rate relief that will apply.

The primary legislative powers to give effect to a rates convergence scheme is included in the Local Government Bill.

Driver and Vehicle Agency: Video Evidence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27215/11-15, whether his Department or the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) accept non-DVA video footage as evidence in these circumstances.
(AQW 28116/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Criminal Procedure and Investigation Act requires 'all reasonable lines of enquiry to be pursued' in the course of an investigation. DVA investigators are required to consider all relevant evidence that may prove or disprove a criminal offence, including video evidence tendered by a third party.

Red Squirrel Population at Glen Lyon, Holywood

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment why his Department are not taking action to protect the Red Squirrel population at Glen Lyon, Holywood.
(AQW 28118/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Glen Lyon in Holywood is owned and managed by North Down Borough Council. My Department has provided advice to council staff in relation to the conservation of red squirrels in the past. Further advice is publically available through the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's (NIEA) website

http://www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/biodiversity/northern_ireland_squirrel_forum.htm

or through the Northern Ireland Red Squirrel Forum should the local council wish to become involved.

My Department is currently supporting projects which favour red squirrel protection on two landholdings adjacent to Glen Lyon.

Areas of Special Scientific Interest

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment what compensation arrangements exist for farmers suffering loss from having lands designated as Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

(AQW 28155/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) are declared and protected in accordance with the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (the Order). Written consent from NIEA is required before notifiable operations are undertaken by the owner or occupier and applications for such consent must be considered and reported on by NIEA in the context of the statutory requirements imposed by the Order.

The Order does not provide for compensation in the event of consent being refused.

Wind Turbines: Areas of Special Scientific Interest

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment whether there are any limitations on wind turbines being located within an Area of Special Scientific Interest; and if not, how many turbines are located in such areas.

(AQW 28156/11-15)

Mr Durkan: My Department's policy for assessing windfarm proposals does not distinguish explicitly between Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) and other undesignated landscapes. However, it is a policy presumption that development will not be allowed where this will result in an unacceptable adverse impact on visual amenity or landscape character of that area.

The Department does not hold information on wind turbines or wind farms that are located within ASSIs; however it can provide the numbers of applications that have been approved within those areas.

Between April 2002 and September 2013, 2 applications for single wind turbines were approved within the boundaries of an ASSI, while 8 applications for single wind turbines were approved within a 50m buffered area around an ASSI.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Craig asked the Minister of the Environment, given that some recent Planning Appeals Commission's decisions have indicated that the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) is an aspiration, how much weight the Planning Service can place on BMAP; and whether the Planning Appeals Commission been informed of the Planning Service's stance.

(AQW 28159/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I would refer you to the Joint Ministerial Statement published in January 2005 which clarified the weight that should be given to a draft plan in making planning decisions. Paragraph 21 states that planning applications will continue to be considered in the light of both current policies and policies in emerging development plans that are going through the statutory processes. It further states that the weight to be attached to policies in emerging plans will depend upon the stage of plan preparation, increasing as successive stages are reached.

I can confirm that the final stages of BMAP have been reached, and that on the 21 October 2013 the Department for Regional Development awarded the Plan a certificate of general conformity with the Regional Development Strategy 2035. Planning officials will advise the PAC of the current status of the Plan at any appeal hearings where BMAP is a consideration.

In many circumstances the Plan already carries significant determining weight, particularly following Minister Attwood's statement of June 2012 when he published the PAC Reports into BMAP.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Craig asked the Minister of the Environment what is the current status of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan; and when he expects it to be signed off.

(AQW 28160/11-15)

Mr Durkan: After extensive assessment of the recommendations made by the Planning Appeals Commission, my Department recently submitted BMAP to the Department for Regional Development for assessment of the Plan against the Regional Development Strategy 2035. I can confirm that the Plan was awarded a Certificate of General Conformity on 21 October 2013 and I am now considering the next steps in the process.

Driver and Vehicle Agency: Video Evidence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27215/11-15, (i) whether Driver and Vehicle Agency enforcement officers have taken any video evidence to date; (ii) if so, why the decision was taken not to prosecute; and (iii) who is responsible for deciding whether to prosecute.

(AQW 28201/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Driver and Vehicle Agency enforcement officers used video footage to capture the manner in which taxi services were being provided at Ravenhill rugby ground. The purpose of the video footage was to gain a better understanding of the issues that had been previously highlighted by Belfast Public Hire representatives.

The Department has since determined that the provision of taxi services at Ravenhill rugby ground is compliant with the requirements of the Taxi Act (NI) 2008 and other related legislation and as such no prosecutions are being pursued.

Planning Service: Validation

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment how the Planning Service ensures that surveys relating to planning applications, such as parking surveys, are validated by the relevant statutory agency.

(AQW 28202/11-15)

Mr Durkan: When processing a planning application any supporting information which is submitted for consideration is forwarded to the relevant authority as part of the consultation process. This allows the appropriate authority to validate and comment on the information. Supporting information and consultation responses are material considerations which are available for public inspection on the Planning Portal Website.

In the case of parking surveys accompanying planning applications, they are forwarded to Roads Service, as the appropriate authority, for their consideration and comment.

The planning authority will take into account the consultee's advice. However, it is ultimately for the planning authority to make the decision and decide if an application should be approved (with or without conditions) or refused. The planning authority is therefore the final arbitrator in deciding what weight is to be attached to all material considerations.

Flags on Departmental Property

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his Department's policy on the flying of flags on buildings and property under its control.

(AQW 28210/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I can confirm that my Department flies flags in accordance with the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 2000 which makes provision for specified government buildings to fly flags on designated days and this includes the Driver & Vehicle Agency Test Centres across Northern Ireland.

The Premises Management team of each building is responsible for ensuring that the regulations within the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 2000 are adhered to.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Consultations on Planning Applications

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what is the average time taken by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency to respond to a consultation on a planning application.

(AQW 28212/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Between 1st January 2011 and 19th November 2013, DoE Planning consulted the Northern Ireland Environment Agency 17,974 times on planning applications with 16,831 responses having been received. Out of the 16,831 responses, there was a median response time of 12 working days.

It should be noted that in many planning applications further information is required which often results in multiple consultations and responses on an individual case.

It must be noted that these figures are provided from Planning administrative systems and do not form part of published and validated DOE Official Statistics.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment for an update, including the timeframe, of announcements on the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan.

(AQW 28219/11-15)

Mr Durkan: After extensive assessment of the recommendations made by the Planning Appeals Commission, my Department recently submitted BMAP to the Department for Regional Development for assessment of the Plan against the Regional Development Strategy 2035. I can confirm that the Plan was awarded a Certificate of General Conformity on 21 October 2013 and I am now considering the next steps in the process.

Public Liability Matters: Insurance

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27263/11-15, in respect of insurance cover in these instances, whether departmental officials will review this matter as any invalidation of insurance under public liability matters in relation to the incorrect management of obtaining passengers/fares (i) puts the public at risk; and (ii) would reflect detrimentally on the licence issuer and controller.

(AQW 28259/11-15)

Mr Durkan: In terms of insurance, each situation where a private hire taxi obtained a fare through plying for hire without a pre-booking would be considered individually, and would be a matter for the individual insurer to consider.

However, in terms of public liability, the 6th Motor Insurance Directive requires Member States to make provision for a body to guarantee that victims of road traffic collisions will not remain without compensation where the vehicle which caused the accident is uninsured (or incorrectly insured) or unidentified. In the UK, this body is the Motor Insurers' Bureau (MIB). The Uninsured Drivers Agreement (between the Department and MIB) requires the MIB to meet unsatisfied Civil Court Judgements against identified motorists who may not have been insured as required by the Road Traffic Act 1988.

If, as a result of a Civil Court Judgement, it became apparent that a taxi was operating without appropriate insurance, this would be taken into account when considering the repute of a taxi operator.

Advertising Structures: Planning Permission

Mr Allister asked the Minister of the Environment whether 'A' boards, or similar advertising structures located outside commercial premises, require planning permission.

(AQW 28271/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Advertisements are dealt with under the The Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations (NI) 1992 (as amended). "A" Boards, as a type of advertisement, do not benefit from the deemed consent or express consent within this and therefore require planning permission.

The only exception would be under Class 6 for an advertisement on a forecourt where the advertisement can be displayed on the forecourt providing that:

- it does not exceed in aggregate 5sqm in area;
- is not illuminated
- no character or symbol on the advertisement is greater than 0.3m in height
- no part of the advertisement is more than 5m above ground level

Drumclay Crannog in Co. Fermanagh

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the internal inquiry into the difficulties protecting Drumclay Crannog.

(AQW 28292/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Review Team, led by Professor Gabriel Cooney Chair of the Historic Monuments Council, the statutory advisory body to the Department on historic monument matters, has now submitted its final report. This report was passed to me on 23 October.

The Review is welcomed as an objective assessment of what happened at the site, and, as you will appreciate, I wish to give the Review and its recommendations careful consideration before deciding on the next steps.

It is my intention to distribute copies of this review to the Minister for Regional Development, the Committee for the Environment, and; the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure, plus; elected representatives for this area, and yourself included once I have had the opportunity to give it my initial careful consideration.

Flying of Flags at MOT Test Centres

Mr McAleer asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his Department's policy on the flying of the Union Flag at MOT test centres.

(AQW 28323/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I can confirm that my Department flies flags in accordance with the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 2000 which makes provision for specified government buildings to fly flags on designated days and this includes the Driver & Vehicle Agency Test Centres across Northern Ireland.

The Premises Management team of each building is responsible for ensuring that the regulations within the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 2000 are adhered to.

European Charter of Local Self Government

Ms Lo asked the Minister of the Environment why Northern Ireland is the only region out of 47 member states that does not subscribe to the European Charter of Local Self Government; and what steps he is taking to address this situation.

(AQW 28324/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The European Charter for Local Self-Government is a matter for the UK Government. In 1998 when the UK Government ratified the Charter it acknowledged that the Charter enshrines the basic principles reflected in the United Kingdom system of local democracy. At that time, however, it was decided that the Charter would not apply to councils in Northern Ireland, given the lesser range of functions then assigned to those councils, compared with the other regions. The right was reserved to review this position.

The issue of whether the Charter should apply to Northern Ireland, through the UK Government adding the region to its ratification of the Charter, will need to be considered following the transfer of additional functions to councils, as a result of the reform of local government.

Councils: Capital Assets

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the value of the capital assets of each council. **(AQW 28340/11-15)**

Mr Durkan: The most up-to-date information for the value of the capital assets of each council, as at 31 March 2013, is set out in the table below. It should be noted that the capital assets are the net book value of the fixed assets as at the 31 March 2013, taken from the certified accounts of 25 councils and the uncertified accounts of Craigavon Borough Council for 2012/2013.

Council	Net Book Value of Fixed Assets at 31 March 2013 £
Antrim	50,033,824
Ards	45,576,071
Armagh	50,816,369
Ballymena	74,080,877
Ballymoney	21,343,890
Banbridge	27,858,901
Belfast	458,709,626
Carrickfergus	33,077,465
Castlereagh	48,556,833
Coleraine	65,939,952
Cookstown	24,986,916
Craigavon*	63,850,581
Derry	89,764,098
Down	56,255,619
Dungannon & S Tyrone	27,023,549
Fermanagh	43,823,894
Larne	36,903,132
Limavady	23,409,090
Lisburn	72,199,410
Magherafelt	28,816,390

Council	Net Book Value of Fixed Assets at 31 March 2013 £
Moyle	23,694,397
Newry & Mourne	56,520,972
Newtownabbey	77,948,202
North Down	115,719,263
Omagh	43,501,005
Strabane	14,251,161
Total	1,674,661,487

Driver and Vehicle Agency in Coleraine

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the discussions over the retention of jobs at the Driver and Vehicle Agency in Coleraine.

(AQW 28363/11-15)

Mr Durkan: I met Robert Goodwill, the recently appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, on 6 November 2013. At the meeting, I emphasised the potentially very damaging impact on the economy of Northern Ireland, and on Coleraine in particular, of the potential loss of 300 jobs in the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA). I also pointed out that such cuts would be totally inconsistent with the UK Government's commitments to supporting the NI Executive in developing the local economy.

Mr Goodwill acknowledged the robust arguments put forward to support the retention of these jobs in DVA and the significant level of opposition to centralisation in Swansea from public representatives in Northern Ireland. It was very clear from our discussions that the Minister undoubtedly understands the significance of this decision and appreciates the unique factors applicable to Northern Ireland.

I reminded Mr Goodwill of the exemplary performance of staff in DVA, the clear wish of motorists here to be able to deal with DVA staff and the inevitable reduction in the standards of service that centralisation in Swansea would bring.

Mr Goodwill drew attention to the pressure on public sector expenditure and to the centralisation programme in Britain and to the need to extend new services to motorists in Northern Ireland. I pointed out that these services should have been delivered here many years ago through proper investment locally by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and I emphasised that the use of new services presents no justification for centralising all work in Swansea.

I reminded the Minister that, with access to the new IT system, staff in DVA could continue to deliver high quality services to customers in Northern Ireland and, for the first time, would also be able to deliver vehicle licensing services to customers anywhere in the UK.

I am satisfied that the strongest possible case has been made for the retention of vehicle licensing services in DVA and I remain hopeful that the right decision will be made for motorists in Northern Ireland and for the staff in DVA.

Mr Goodwill indicated that a decision is likely to be made early next year.

Convictions: Video Evidence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27215/11-15, how many convictions have been secured in the absence of video footage since enforcement officers began these investigations.

(AQW 28364/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Private hire taxis being used to illegally ply for hire will be in breach of condition of licence which falls within the scope of a generic PSV licensing offence.

This offence would normally be dealt with by way of a £30 fixed penalty ticket although depending on the specific circumstances may be pursued through court. Whilst the Driver and Vehicle Agency holds records relating to convictions for PSV licensing offences, those records do not distinguish which convictions relate to drivers who used their vehicle's to illegally ply for hire within the city limits of Belfast.

Driver and Vehicle Agency Staff Report

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 27856/11-15, whether such a report exists; and if so, to place a copy in the Assembly library.

(AQW 28378/11-15)

Mr Durkan: As confirmed in my response to AQW 27856/11-15, careful consideration was given to the provision of private hire taxis at Ravenhill rugby ground, which included assessing a number of sources of evidence and advice. A report of the findings was not produced but rather the final determination of the legal position as regards the provision of private hire taxis at Ravenhill was compiled and was attached to the response to AQW 27856/11-15.

Listed Buildings in the North Down Constituency

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the names of the listed buildings in the North Down constituency.

(AQW 28390/11-15)

Mr Durkan: Based upon the 1974 ward boundaries, which is how the department holds such records, the total number of listed buildings in the North Down Borough Council (NDBC) area is 287. The North Down constituency also includes two electoral wards of Ards Borough Council in Donaghadee, which contain a further 58 listed buildings (highlighted in bold in the attached table). This gives a total of 345 listed buildings in your constituency.

It should be noted that North Down is being reviewed currently under the second survey process, and this figure may change again, when all records have been reviewed.

To provide the detail of all of these listed buildings by hard copy would be unwieldy; however, the information that you have sought may be accessed electronically at the following link www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/other-index/content-databases/content-databases-build.htm.

Once you have accepted the terms and conditions of the site, a search may be carried out by Council area – in this case Ards and North Down.

You will be aware, however, that there have been boundary changes since 1974, and as a result the figures should not be taken as definitive, in relation to the current boundaries. For that reason I have appended, for your information, a table which shows the number of the listed buildings within each ward of the North Down and Ards Borough Council Areas.

You may also wish to note that NDBC - which is a statutory consultee in the listing process - has been provided with a copy of each listing in its area, since the introduction of the legislation in the early 1970's.

NUMBER OF LISTED BUILDINGS IN THE NORTH DOWN AND ARDS DISTRICT COUNCIL AREAS

HB23 - North Down			HB24 - Ards		
1	Groomspoint	16	1	Portaferry	73
2	Churchill	1	2	Kircubbin	22
3	Ballyholme	4	3	Ballyhalbert	5

HB23 - North Down			HB24 - Ards		
4	Ballymagee	2	4	Grey Abbey	63
5	Bangor Harbour	26	5	Carrowdore	6
6	Conlig	5	6	Donaghadee North	26
7	Bangor Castle	26	7	Donaghadee South	32
8	Whitehill	0	8	Loughries	10
9	Rathgael	0	9	Movilla	5
10	Clandeboyne	23	10	Glen	3
11	Silverstream	0	11	Scrabo	16
12	Spring Hill	1	12	Ulsterville	0
13	Bryansburn	1	13	Central	42
14	Princetown	15	14	Comber North	0
15	Crawfordsburn	30	15	Comber South	32
16	Craigavad	21	16	Ballygowan	13
17	Loughview	7	17	Killinchy	31
18	Cultra	29			
19	Hollywood Demesne	11			
20	Hollywood Priory	69			
	Total	287		Total	379

Queen's Island: Energy Plant

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of the Environment when he will make a decision on Bombardier's proposal to build their own energy plant at Queen's Island.

(AQW 28402/11-15)

Mr Durkan: The Department received the Addendum to the application on 4th November 2013.

As required by the Planning (Environmental Impact Assessments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 this information has been advertised and sent to relevant consultees for comment.

When this statutory process is complete I will be in a position to make a final decision. I anticipate I will be able to do this by the end of the calendar year.

Sunset Park, Portstewart

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the (i) current status of planning permission; (ii) number of proposed dwellings; and (iii) the expiry date of, the vacant premises at Sunset Park, Portstewart.

(AQW 28420/11-15)

Mr Durkan:

- (i) There are currently two live planning permissions on this site for alternative residential development proposals.

- (ii) Planning application Ref: C/2007/0618/F, granted on 23rd February 2009, provides for a total of 18 residential units comprising 10 replacement apartments and 8 townhouses. Planning application Ref: C/2013/0019/F, granted on 19th September 2013, provides for a total of 18 residential units comprising 6 replacement apartments and 12 semi-detached houses.
- (iii) Planning application Ref: C/2007/0618/F expires on 22nd February 2014, and planning application Ref: C/2013/0019/F expires on 18th September 2018.

Environmental Statements

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 26973/11-15, how many of the 8 applications requiring an Environmental Statement were retrospective; and to detail these 8 EIA cases. **(AQW 28463/11-15)**

Mr Durkan: Subsequent to AQW 26973/11-15, of the 8 applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement, 1 application is retrospective in nature (ref: J/2011/0272/F).

Details of the 8 applications are as follows;

1 C/2009/0806/F

Proposal: Northerly and westerly extension to Cam Quarry with restoration to conservation habitats

Location: Whitemountain Quarries, Cam Quarries, 39 Cam Road, Macosquin, Coleraine, BT51 4PX

2 F/2011/0256/F

Proposal: Lateral extension of Demesne Quarry southwards into Tully Field, providing for the agricultural restoration of Parishagh Quarry to original ground level and Demesne Quarry in part to original ground level and Tully Field extraction area to agricultural and biodiversity restoration at a lower level

Location: Tully Field, Parishagh Quarry and Demesne Quarry, 17 Munie Road, Glenarm, Co Antrim, BT44 0B

3 I/2011/0156/F

Proposal: Extraction of sand and gravel by mechanical shovel, processing of extracted minerals using mobile dry screening plant and restoration of site, and passing bays

Location: 250m due south of junction of Cavanoneill Road and Keenaghan Road, Cookstown, BT80 9EJ

4 J/2007/0416/F

Proposal: The phased extension to an existing sand and gravel pit including the excavation of bedrock, phased restoration, regularisation of existing washing plant with associated settlement lagoons and final restoration of the entire area to agricultural grass lands.

Location: 360m North East of 35 Castlewarren Road, Donemana, Co. Tyrone (Church Hill & Fawney Townlands), BT82 0PJ

5 J/2010/0319/F

Proposal: Proposed extraction of sand and gravel, the erection of temporary processing plant and office unit, the construction of setting ponds and restoration of the extraction area to agricultural use.

Location: Approx 180 metres east of No. 20 Tievenny Road, Killeen, Victoria Bridge, Co Tyrone, BT82 9LW

6 J/2011/0272/F (Retrospective)

Proposal: Westerly extension (retrospective) to existing sand pit and proposed proximate south-western extension to existing pit to provide for extraction of sand and gravel, and full restoration of site. Works also include: retrospective retention of mobile washing plant, crushing plant and mobile screener,

removal of unauthorised static washing plant, replacement of unauthorised office with new office block, new toilet block, realignment of internal haul roads and staff parking.

Location: Tyrone Sand and Gravel Ltd, Old Bridge Road, Victoria Bridge, Strabane, BT82 9JR (lands located c. 250m west of the northern junction of Old Bridge Road with Mulvin Road and 240m west of 1 Old Bridge Road, Victoria Bridge and lands located immediately north-east of no 5 Derg Road, Victoria Bridge, Strabane

7 K/2012/0373/F

Proposal: Underground mine and associated surface level works to include car parking area, ancillary buildings (including fan room, miners dry room, ore storage building, mill building, general storage compound), plant (including conveyor belt, material transfer station) and equipment and equipment and removal of rock off-site. Non-compliance with condition No. 37 of planning approval K/1992/0713/F; to allow the extension of mine operations beyond the 8 year limit as per condition No 37.

Location: 56 Upper Botera Road, Cavanacaw, Omagh, BT78 5LH

8 U/2011/0415/F

Proposal: South-westerly extension to existing hard rock quarry for continued extraction of basalt and continuation of on-site processing.

Location: Lands approximately 195m south of 24 Bernice Road, Mallusk, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim

Department of Finance and Personnel

Permanent Secretaries

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail how many Permanent Secretaries are currently employed within the Civil Service; and how many are female.

(AQW 27998/11-15)

Mr Hamilton (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): There are 12 members of staff at substantive Permanent Secretary level currently employed within the Civil Service, of whom 1 is female.

Grade 5 Civil Servants

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail how many Grade 5 Civil Servants are currently in post; and how many are female.

(AQW 27999/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: There are 163 substantive Grade 5 civil servants currently in post, of whom 69 are female.

Grade 3 Civil Servants

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail how many Grade 3 Civil Servants are currently in post; and how many are female.

(AQW 28001/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: There are 39 substantive Grade 3 civil servants currently in post, of whom 9 are female.

Average Hourly Rate of Pay

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the average hourly rate of pay for each year since 2003.

(AQW 28114/11-15)

Mr Hamilton: Information on the median hourly rate of pay for each year since 2003 is provided in Table 1 below, from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) conducted by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA).

The ASHE is based on a 1% sample of employee jobs taken from HM Revenue and Customs pay as you earn (PAYE) records and the reported estimates therefore have an associated degree of sampling error.

TABLE 1: MEDIAN HOURLY PAY (EXCLUDING OVERTIME) FOR ALL EMPLOYEE JOBS¹ - NORTHERN IRELAND 2003-2012

Year ²	Median ³ (£/hr)
2003	7.86
2004	8.23
2005	8.73
2006	9.00
2007	9.00
2008	9.47
2009	9.95
2010	9.70
2011	9.85
2012	10.01

Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

- 1 Employees (full time and part time) on adult rates whose pay for the survey pay-period was not affected by absence.
- 2 The heavy black line in the table indicate discontinuities arising from methodological changes and care should be taken when making comparisons between such periods (see background notes in http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern_ireland_ashe_2012_bulletin-revised_22-11-12.pdf).
- 3 The median is the value of earnings below which 50% of employees fall.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Western Health and Social Care Trust: Home Helps

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether there are any plans to make redundant all Western Health and Social Care Trust employees who operate as Home Helps. **(AQW 28011/11-15)**

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The Western Trust does not plan to make home help staff compulsorily redundant.

The Trust is in the process of reforming its domiciliary care services and intends to accommodate home help staff within the reform process. Throughout the process, the Trust is engaging with staff and with their unions.

If staff cannot, or choose not to be accommodated within this process, then other options such as redeployment will be explored.

Number of Children in Foster Care and Awaiting Foster Care

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of children (i) in foster care; and (ii) awaiting foster care; and the number of children in each category in each of the previous five years.

(AQW 28058/11-15)

Mr Poots: Table 1 below details the number of children in foster care at 31st March in each of the previous five years. These figures can be found in 'Children's Social Care Statistics for Northern Ireland 2012/13' published on the Department's website at the following link: http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/stats-cib/statistics_and_research-cib-pub/children_statistics/stats-cib-children_order.htm

TABLE 1: CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE AT 31ST MARCH (2009 – 2013)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
No. of Children in Foster Care	1,607	1,687	1,862	1,946	2,112

Source: Delegated Statutory Functions Returns, HSCB

Table 2 below details the number of children awaiting foster care at 12th November 2013.

TABLE 2: CHILDREN AWAITING FOSTER CARE AT 12TH NOVEMBER 2013

	2013
No. of Children awaiting Foster Care	35

Source: Health and Social Care Trusts

Note: These figures have not been verified by DHSSPS

Note: Trusts were not able to provide figures for five years

Independent Ambulance Service

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what use each Health and Social Care Trust has made of the Independent Ambulance Service since May 2011.

(AQW 28098/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is aware of the need to ensure that appropriate safety and care standards are applied by the private ambulance sector and the standards of service identified by each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust are described below. Information on the usage of the Independent Ambulance Service (IAS) in respect of each HSC Trust is as follows.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Services (NIAS) does not use and has not used the IAS, however NIAS has used Voluntary Ambulance Services (VAS) i.e. St John's Ambulance, Red Cross and Order of Malta in the event of a major incident and as part of business continuity plan on certain occasions (such as over the Christmas period, Halloween and other periods of significant patient demand). Under the direction of NIAS Command and Control, the VAS has responded to 579 calls since May 2011. In the context of overall activity this represents an exceptionally small proportion of responses undertaken.

NIAS has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the VAS which outlines nationally agreed personnel, driving, vehicles, medical supplies, medical records and training standards that must be in place within the VAS to be able to support NIAS. However, information on training courses available for staff within the VAS or IAS is not centrally held by NIAS.

NIAS is currently developing an exacting specification which will clearly outline the standards and quality expected in future from the IAS and the VAS including the skills, qualifications of staff, the

roadworthiness of vehicles, standard of equipment as well as the performance monitoring and management arrangements to be followed.

The South Eastern HSC Trust has not used private sector/independent ambulance services since May 2011.

The Northern HSC Trust has used private/independent sector ambulances for 485 hospital discharges or transfers during the period May 2011 until August 2013 (inclusive), although the Trust cannot confirm what percentage of its total ambulance usage this is.

The Trust does not tender for independent ambulances and do not manage any contracts for independent ambulances. The Procurement and Logistics Service (PaLS) within the Business Services Organisation (BSO) assists the Northern Trust in procuring this non-direct care transport.

The Belfast HSC Trust provides on average 110 journeys per month by private sector/independent ambulances, this equates to 7% of overall ambulance use for transfers and discharge.

Staff providing the service must be suitably trained to carry out the requirements of the role. All drivers and escorts are to have a minimum level of training in basic first aid to include:

- Basic life support with BVM including adult & child CPR
- Defibrillation using an automatic defibrillator
- Airway management & oxygen therapy.

They must also be trained in:

- Moving and handling including the moving of bariatric patients
- Infection and prevention control
- Customer care.

In addition drivers are to have completed a recognised driving course appropriate to the vehicle. Transport providers were required to provide evidence of training that was evaluated as part of the contract award process.

The Trust's contract specification for the supply of non-emergency patient transport services imposes standards on the type and condition of the vehicle used. It also identifies the required standard for staff in relation to safeguarding adults; training; patient care; and presentation and conduct while providing a service for the Trust.

As part of the contract award process the suppliers were evaluated on technical capacity; quality assurance; staff training; health & safety arrangements; booking & response standards. They provided details of policies and operating arrangements that gave the Trust assurance that the required standards could be maintained. There is no formal compliance monitoring in place other than for verification of invoices.

The Western HSC Trust uses private ambulances to transfer patients to their own homes, private nursing homes and other hospitals especially when NIAS cannot provide this on a timely manner due to limited capacity. This is done through the patient flow manager who then makes contact with the relevant parties. Trust records are unable to give a breakdown of instances where the Trust has used this service or the percentage of total ambulance work.

Ambulance staff who provide the service are expected to be trained in basic life support. Under the terms of the contract, the providers must provide staff with a suitable level of training. The British Red Cross are quality-assured by CQC, the English quality standard body.

CPNI/paramedics have provided documents outlining the requirements of their vehicles/training of staff and levels of service they can provide. The contracts department also hold information regarding St John's, Order of Malta and British Red Cross.

The Southern HSC Trust uses St John's Ambulance, aside from NIAS. Since May 2011 there have been 778 runs using private ambulances, although the Trust cannot confirm what percentage of its total ambulance usage this is.

Training received by all staff includes:

- Induction courses parts A&B
- Child and vulnerable adult protection course
- Operational first aid course
- Automatic external defibrillator course
- Patient moving and handling for first aiders
- Supervised public duty.

The Trust has a contract in place with St John's covering this arrangement.

The Trust receives yearly service history from St John's Ambulance, Portadown division, on equipment service history, MOT, insurance. The Trust requests each member's qualifications and hold record of same.

Independent Ambulance Service

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he will take to ensure that private ambulance services are safe and undertake a professional and patient care centred approach.

(AQW 28099/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is aware of the need to ensure that appropriate safety and care standards are applied by the private ambulance sector and the standards of service identified by each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust are described below. Information on the usage of the Independent Ambulance Service (IAS) in respect of each HSC Trust is as follows.

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NIAS has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the VAS which outlines nationally agreed personnel, driving, vehicles, medical supplies, medical records and training standards that must be in place within the VAS to be able to support NIAS. However, information on training courses available for staff within the VAS or IAS is not centrally held by NIAS.

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The Belfast HSC Trust provides on average 110 journeys per month by private sector/independent ambulances, this equates to 7% of overall ambulance use for transfers and discharge.

Staff providing the service must be suitably trained to carry out the requirements of the role. All drivers and escorts are to have a minimum level of training in basic first aid to include:

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In addition drivers are to have completed a recognised driving course appropriate to the vehicle. Transport providers were required to provide evidence of training that was evaluated as part of the contract award process.

The Trust's contract specification for the supply of non-emergency patient transport services imposes standards on the type and condition of the vehicle used. It also identifies the required standard for staff in relation to safeguarding adults; training; patient care; and presentation and conduct while providing a service for the Trust.

As part of the contract award process the suppliers were evaluated on technical capacity; quality assurance; staff training; health & safety arrangements; booking & response standards. They provided details of policies and operating arrangements that gave the Trust assurance that the required standards could be maintained. There is no formal compliance monitoring in place other than for verification of invoices.

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CPNI/paramedics have provided documents outlining the requirements of their vehicles/training of staff and levels of service they can provide. The contracts department also hold information regarding St John's, Order of Malta and British Red Cross.

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The Trust has a contract in place with St John's covering this arrangement.

The Trust receives yearly service history from St John's Ambulance, Portadown division, on equipment service history, MOT, insurance. The Trust requests each member's qualifications and hold record of same.

Independent Ambulance Service

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what training courses are available for staff in the Independent Ambulance Service.

(AQW 28100/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is aware of the need to ensure that appropriate safety and care standards are applied by the private ambulance sector and the standards of service identified by each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust are described below. Information on the usage of the Independent Ambulance Service (IAS) in respect of each HSC Trust is as follows.

The Northern Ireland Ambulance Services (NIAS) does not use and has not used the IAS, however NIAS has used Voluntary Ambulance Services (VAS) i.e. St John's Ambulance, Red Cross and Order of Malta in the event of a major incident and as part of business continuity plan on certain occasions (such as over the Christmas period, Halloween and other periods of significant patient demand). Under the direction of NIAS Command and Control, the VAS has responded to 579 calls since May 2011. In the context of overall activity this represents an exceptionally small proportion of responses undertaken.

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Independent Ambulance Service

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the standards that must be met by the staff and vehicles of the Independent Ambulance Service; and what procedures are in place to ensure that these standards are met.

(AQW 28101/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department is aware of the need to ensure that appropriate safety and care standards are applied by the private ambulance sector and the standards of service identified by each Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust are described below. Information on the usage of the Independent Ambulance Service (IAS) in respect of each HSC Trust is as follows.

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Domiciliary Care: Spend

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much each Health and Social Care Trust has spent, in real terms, per person on domiciliary care, in each of the last five years. **(AQW 28104/11-15)**

Mr Poots: The information is not available in the format requested.

Emergency Medicine Consultants

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps are being taken to ensure an increase in the number of emergency medicine consultants. **(AQW 28230/11-15)**

Mr Poots: There are currently fifty five consultant posts in emergency medicine across the five Health and Social Care Trusts. Out of the fifty five posts there are three vacancies and these are being filled by locum consultants. Any increase in the number of consultant posts in emergency medicine is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board as commissioner of services. HSC Trusts are working closely with the Health and Social Board on current staffing levels including the number of consultant posts required in emergency medicine.

Allergy NI: Financial Support

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the financial support provided to Allergy NI.

(AQW 28287/11-15)

Mr Poots: Allergy NI is a registered local charity and receives no financial support from my Department. My Department has no plans at present to provide core funding to voluntary organisations in respect of new applications for funding.

Provision of Allergy Services

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to develop the provision of allergy services.

(AQW 28288/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board, which commissions services on behalf of the Health Service in Northern Ireland, has just completed an in-depth assessment of need for paediatric asthma, allergy and anaphylaxis services as part of the local implementation of recent NICE guidance which has been issued on food allergy (CG116) and anaphylaxis (CG134).

The Board has allocated over £400k recurrent funding for these services to the Health and Social Care Trusts to start addressing waiting lists. Much of this funding will meet the needs of children with allergy specifically.

Public Awareness of Essential Tremor

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department has taken to raise public awareness of Essential Tremor.

(AQW 28326/11-15)

Mr Poots: I have been advised by the Public Health Agency that active tremor is not a condition which they have identified as benefiting from a public awareness campaign.

Department's Dementia Strategy

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he has taken, in line with his Department's Dementia Strategy commitments, to address the significant differential in dementia diagnosis rates.

(AQW 28371/11-15)

Mr Poots: The regional dementia strategy, which I published in November 2011, addresses the importance of early diagnosis, and includes an action for the HSC Board in collaboration with the Public Health Agency and HSC Trusts to draw up criteria and clear protocols for referral from GP practices to memory services. This will assist in the assessment and diagnosis of dementia. Work is underway to complete this action, as part of the wider implementation of the strategy. .

You may also be aware that the Alzheimer's Society study entitled 'Mapping the Dementia Gap' shows that Northern Ireland has a diagnosis rate of 63% (11'800 people) which is just marginally below Scotland (64.4%) and well above the UK average of 46%. This is based on the number of people on GP dementia registers.

Broken down by area, the Belfast HSC Trust rates are highest in UK.

Registered Carers: South Belfast

Mr Spratt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of registered carers who are over the age of 60, in the South Belfast constituency.

(AQW 28448/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information requested is not available.

Glassworks Ireland Ltd

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the actions his Department has taken to protect public safety with regards to the claims that Glassworks Ireland Ltd was installing supposedly fire-rated glass, which wasn't recognised, approved or certified as fire-rated.
(AQW 28457/11-15)

Mr Poots: In response to information received from the PSNI and with their agreement, a safety alert was issued to all HSC bodies by the Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre (NIAIC) on 29th August 2013. The purpose of this alert was to notify HSC bodies and the wider health and social care community of the possibility that counterfeit fire rated glass may have been installed in their facilities. The alert advised of the action required to manage this risk for ensuring the safety of the public, staff and service users within the health and social care environment.

As part of the ongoing PSNI investigation to identify the extent of possible locations where the counterfeit glass is installed, the PSNI have issued appropriate information through the broadcast and print media in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Bretton Hall

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 27937/11-15, given that a business case is still being developed, why a decision has been announced; and whether any staff have been transferred.
(AQW 28469/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is not uncommon for a decision on the way forward to be announced prior to business case approval for any associated expenditure. The decision to relocate leads to development of the business case quantifying and seeking approval for any expenditure commitment which may be required. The Northern Trust Board has approved the proposal to locate the Trust senior team at Bretten Hall. The business case is being revised to take account of the emerging solution which also includes a move of some staff from the Business Services Organisation.

A small number of senior staff moved to Bretten Hall in May 2013 at the time of the appointment of the turnaround team and prior to the decision to locate the Trust HQ at Bretten Hall.

Bangor Minor Injuries Unit

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans he has to address the temporary closure of the Bangor Minor Injuries Unit at weekends.
(AQW 28506/11-15)

Mr Poots: The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has advised that the minor injuries unit at Bangor Community Hospital will be closed at weekends starting from Saturday, 23 November 2013 until further notice. This is a temporary measure due to a staff shortage and the South Eastern Trust is exploring a number of options to address this. In the meantime, the minor injuries unit will be open from Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust: Bretton Hall

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the proposed relocation of the Northern Health and Social Care Trust headquarters to Bretton Hall, Antrim Area Hospital will go ahead; and what is the cost of this proposed move.
(AQW 28519/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust Board has agreed to relocate its senior management team to Bretten Hall on the Antrim Hospital site.

A revised business case is currently being developed by the Trust to address the emerging solution. This will take account of all of the costs involved in the proposed organisational moves and final costs will not be known until the business case has been completed.

Departmental Buildings: Visitors Diagnosed with Autism

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to what provision is made within his departmental buildings to receive visitors diagnosed with autism and to cater for their needs. **(AQW 28542/11-15)**

Mr Poots: All visitors to government buildings are treated with courtesy and respect by staff. Where possible, details of visitors are notified to reception in advance of their arrival. Where visitors with disabilities, including those with autism spectrum conditions, advise of additional help and support to cater for their needs, every effort will be made to ensure this is provided for them. All visitors who are attending by invitation, or notify us in advance, are met at reception and are accompanied to their destination.

As required by the Autism Act (NI) 2011, my department led on the development of the cross departmental Autism Strategy and Action Plan, which is currently with the NI Executive for approval. The Action Plan contains proposals for autism awareness training for frontline staff in NICS. Subject to Executive approval, I anticipate being able to launch the Strategy and Action Plan for publication before the end of the year.

Pseudomonas Outbreak: South West Acute Hospital

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the recent Pseudomonas outbreak at the South West Acute Hospital, Enniskillen, to outline the steps his Department is taking to prevent further outbreaks. **(AQW 28550/11-15)**

Mr Poots: There has not been an outbreak of pseudomonas in the South West Acute Hospital.

The recent temporary closure of the neonatal unit in the South West Acute Hospital was a precautionary measure taken by the Western Trust. On routine inspection one infant was found to be carrying pseudomonas – known as colonisation – but was not infected or ill.

With regard to the prevention of cases of pseudomonas infection, through the RQIA I commissioned an independent review of the pseudomonas incidents of December 2011 and January 2012 at the earliest opportunity, in February 2012, in order to identify as quickly as possible any lessons that needed to be learned and acted on to minimise the risk of further tragedies. Professor Pat Troop and her team produced two reports: an interim report published on 31 March 2012 and the final report published on 31 May 2012. The reports contained a total of 32 recommendations, which I accepted immediately. All the recommendations have been implemented. The implementation of two of them has not been completed yet as they involve significant building work, which is progressing.

Northern Ireland Social Care Council: Trade Union Official

Mr McCarthy asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the ruling by Mr Justice Treacy on his decision not to appoint a trade union official to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. **(AQW 28612/11-15)**

Mr Poots: The Department has received the written judgment on 9 November 2013 on the outcome of the judicial review. We will wish to consider the detail of the judgment and consult our legal representatives before making any further comment.

Protect Life Strategy: Services

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether any Health and Social Care Trusts intend to apply, as part of the Protect Life strategy, to carry out services that would normally have been tendered and carried out by the community sector.

(AQW 28617/11-15)

Mr Poots: Under EU Procurement Regulations the Public Health Agency is required to go to public tender for the provision of services such as those currently being delivered under the Protect Life Strategy by the community sector. In line with the Regulations, public tenders must be open to applications from all organisations, including statutory bodies. Health and Social Care Trusts are, therefore, entitled to apply.

It has not been possible to establish all Trusts' intentions on this issue within the time available. However, I can confirm that, at this stage, the Belfast and Western HSC Trusts have no plans to tender for services currently provided by the community sector.

Department of Justice

Management and Care of Vulnerable Prisoners

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27245/11-15, whether he is satisfied that first aid is an appropriate intervention in cases of vulnerable prisoners who are at risk of suicide and self-harm attempts and cannot access Accident and Emergency facilities or similar immediate response services.

(AQW 27906/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): Prisoners who are at risk of suicide and self-harm will be managed under the Supporting Prisoners At Risk procedures, where they are reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team.

At Maghaberry and Magilligan Prison and Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre the Samaritans provide the peer support Listener Scheme – a confidential service available to prisoners 24 hours a day. At Hydebank Wood Prison Samaritans volunteers provide 'one to one' emotional support during their regular visits. A dedicated Samaritans helpline is also available 24 hours a day to prisoners in distress and in need of support.

Vulnerable prisoners have access to a range of other support measures including CRUSE bereavement counselling; abuse counselling; prison chaplaincy; family support and diversionary activities. The Donard Programme in Maghaberry Prison provides a range of therapeutic interventions for the most vulnerable offenders including individually designed programmes delivered on a multi-agency basis.

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust are responsible for providing healthcare within Northern Ireland Prisons, including any appropriate healthcare interventions required by prisoners who are at risk of suicide or self-harm, which may comprise of an assessment and treatment through the mental health team.

All prisoners can request to see a nurse at any time and prison healthcare staff will decide whether treatment required will be given in the prison or at outside hospital.

Prisoners Serving Sentences for Terrorism Offences

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22062/11-15, to detail (i) the number of prisoners, serving a sentence for terrorism offences, that have been granted home leave this year, broken down by prison; (ii) how many total periods of home leave have been granted by prison; and (iii) the number of days that have been granted as release by prison.

(AQW 28064/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below outlines, by prison, the information requested.

PRISONERS SERVING A SENTENCE FOR TERRORISM OFFENCES

	Maghaberry	Magilligan	Hydebank Wood
Number of prisoners granted home leave	7	4	0
Total periods of home leave granted	11	18	0
Number of days that have been granted as release	25	41	0

Prisoners: Addiction to Drugs or Alcohol

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice what support is provided to offenders with complex needs such as alcoholism, substance abuse and learning difficulties to find accommodation when released from prison.

(AQW 28084/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice is committed to supporting prisoners to access appropriate accommodation on release from prison. Those who need housing upon release are referred to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. A key element of resettlement planning includes assessment of offenders needs, such as mental health, learning disabilities and addiction problems.

The Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive jointly fund a Housing Advice in Prisons Project providing information, advice and advocacy to those in custody. This work is carried out in partnership with the prisoner and other relevant parties such as Probation Board for Northern Ireland, voluntary services partners who run hostels, and private landlords. Before a prisoner is released every effort is made to secure accommodation appropriate to their needs.

Prisoners: Addiction to Drugs or Alcohol

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice what facilities are available, with supervision, to support offenders with complex needs such as alcoholism, substance abuse and learning difficulties when released from prison.

(AQW 28085/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice and a range of other organisations and agencies, work together to support offenders with complex needs such as alcoholism, substance abuse and learning difficulties, prior to and on their release from prison.

My Department and other criminal justice organisations are major contributors to the outcomes defined in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's New Strategic Direction for Alcohol and Drugs 2011-16. These outcomes include the development of a care pathway for prisoners leaving prison to return to the community and discharge procedures, involving both in-prison health services and Voluntary and Community agencies, to ensure that on release prisoners have access to services and support across Northern Ireland.

The Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) currently delivers substance misuse interventions for those under its supervision. PBNI also funds a number of organisations across Northern Ireland which provide support services for addiction problems. If deemed appropriate, offenders will be referred to these services on release from prison.

Offenders: Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Learning Difficulties

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department works with other jurisdictions to find suitable facilities for offenders with complex needs such as alcoholism, substance abuse and learning difficulties when released from prison.

(AQW 28086/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am committed to working in close co-operation with Ministers from other jurisdictions to share experience, knowledge and best practice. On 15 November, I, with Alan Shatter TD, opened the 4th Partnership Working for Public Protection conference (PPAG). PPAG provides an excellent annual opportunity for the Probation Board for Northern Ireland the Probation Service to discuss strategic issues of mutual interest.

My Department also continues to work closely with a range of agencies, in a number of other jurisdictions, in designing and developing interventions to ensure a co-ordinated approach to dealing with offenders with complex needs and inform the implementation of best practice programmes.

Review into Prostitution: Publication

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice when the timetable for the review into prostitution will be published.

(AQW 28153/11-15)

Mr Ford: As I announced in September, I am commissioning research into the extent and nature of prostitution in Northern Ireland. Work on the tendering process is underway, in line with Northern Ireland Civil Service procurement guidelines, and I anticipate that the advertisement seeking tenders will be issued within the next few weeks. Tenders will then be evaluated and the award of contract will follow.

Office of the Police Ombudsman: Historical Investigations

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the average time taken for the Office of the Police Ombudsman to complete a historical investigation; and the average cost associated with investigations.

(AQW 28165/11-15)

Mr Ford: Due to the varying nature and complexity of individual cases, it is difficult to provide an accurate figure for the average time taken. Some cases have been completed within three to four months; others have taken a number of years to complete. My Department has provided additional funding for historical cases and the Office of the Police Ombudsman is now confident that 75% of these cases can be completed within one year of their commencement. Although the Police Ombudsman's Office does not individually cost investigations, it is anticipated that the average cost of each historical case will be over £65,000.

Office of the Police Ombudsman: Criminal Justice Inspection

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail how the Office of the Police Ombudsman has changed following the Northern Ireland Office and the Criminal Justice Inspection reports.

(AQW 28166/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since the McCusker Report, commissioned by me as Minister of Justice, and the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) Report commissioned by the then Police Ombudsman in 2011, there have been very significant changes in the Office of the Police Ombudsman (OPONI).

A new Police Ombudsman was appointed in July 2012 and a new Chief Executive Officer took up post in January 2013. They have overseen significant changes to the management structure and governance of the organisation, focusing on improving policies, procedures, and quality assurance processes.

CJINI published a report of its follow up review of the independence of the Office in January 2013. The Chief Inspector referred to there having been "a sea change" within the organisation since the report of September 2011. The review concluded that substantial progress had been made and that it was satisfied that the issues identified in the 2011 report had been remedied to such an extent that it was happy that the Office should recommence the investigation of historical cases.

In particular, the report recognised that "new structures and processes" had been put in place "focused on providing comprehensive and robust quality assurance of investigations into historical cases and the subsequent production of public reports."

Her Majesty's Inspectorate: Inspections

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to outline how many inspections by Her Majesty's Inspectorate have taken place since the formation of the Office of the Police Ombudsman.

(AQW 28168/11-15)

Mr Ford: As the Office of the Police Ombudsman is not subject to inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, no such inspections have taken place. The Office falls under the remit of Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland, which has carried out two inspections.

Office of the Police Ombudsman: Budget

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to provide a breakdown of the increases in budget allocated to the Office of the Police Ombudsman since its formation.

(AQW 28169/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below details the budget allocated to the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland since its formation and the increase, or decrease, from year to year.

OFFICE OF THE POLICE OMBUDSMAN FOR NORTHERN IRELAND BUDGET ALLOCATION SINCE 2000

Year	Budget Allocation (£'000s)	Increase/Decrease (£'000s)
2000/2001	3,518	
2001/2002	6,585	3,067
2002/2003	6,635	50
2003/2004	6,825	190
2004/2005	7,233	408
2005/2006	7,200	-33
2006/2007	8,170	970
2007/2008	8,676	506
2008/2009	8,827	151
2009/2010	9,059	232
2010/2011	8,797	-262
2011/2012	9,658	861
2012/2013	9,524	-134

Police Ombudsman: Prosecution Service

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the total number of cases the Police Ombudsman has submitted to the Public Prosecution Service; and how many have resulted in prosecutions in respect of (i) serving officers; and (ii) retired officers.

(AQW 28170/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since 1 April 2009, the Police Ombudsman has submitted 3,938 cases to the Public Prosecution Service (PPS). There were recommendations for prosecutions in 48 cases. The PPS has directed 18 prosecutions in respect of serving officers and none in respect of retired officers.

Illegal Fuel Laundering Plants

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the number of fuel laundering plants that have been discovered since he took office; (ii) the number of arrests in connection with the discoveries; (iii) the number of related convictions during this period; (iv) the number of landowners, where laundering activities were taking place, were identified; (v) the number of landowners that have been brought before the courts in relation to fuel laundering on their property; and (vi) the number of cases that are pending as a result of allegations of fuel laundering.

(AQW 28185/11-15)

Mr Ford: HM Revenue and Customs, which has responsibility for fuel fraud offences, has provided the following information:

- (i) HMRC has identified and dismantled 99 laundering plants since 01/04/2010 (20 in 2010/11; 29 in 2011/12; 22 in 2012/13 and 28 to date in 2013/14);
- (ii) HMRC Criminal Investigation has recorded 58 arrests in respect of all fuel fraud cases since 01/04/2010 (specific records for laundering operation are not kept) and these are split as 18, 12, 8 and 20 across the years;
- (iii) Convictions for fuel fraud (not solely related to laundering plants) total 22 during the period 01/04/2010 to date;
- (iv) HMRC does not hold this data;
- (v) HMRC does not hold this data; and
- (vi) There are 32 individuals with cases pending in respect of fuel fraud.

Offences Committed by a Prisoner whilst on Remand or Sentenced

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of occasions Kristoff Alauya has committed an offence whilst a remand or sentenced prisoner, including (i) the date of offence; (ii) the nature of the offence; and (iii) the relevant disposal.

(AQW 28194/11-15)

Mr Ford: The information requested constitutes sensitive personal information as defined at section 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998. To release such information would be in breach of the first and second data protection principles.

Prisoner's Accompanied Release from Custody

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 24552/11-15, to answer part (i) of the question.

(AQW 28196/11-15)

Mr Ford: The investigation found specific documentation relating to the prisoner's accompanied release from custody, in both typed and hand-written form.

None of the documents indicated the relationship between the prisoner and the bride as being that of a father and a daughter.

Governor at Hydebank Wood

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27080/11-15, given the previous recommendations on this matter have not been implemented, why the appointment of a new Governor at Hydebank Wood is relevant, particularly as the post has been vacant for some time and a replacement would be a mandatory requirement for the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

(AQW 28252/11-15)

Mr Ford: This was relevant in the context that at the time of the inspection a permanent Governor and Deputy Governor had not been appointed.

Craigavon Magistrates Court: Hearing

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the Preliminary Enquiry for the prisoner in case number 13/091473 at Craigavon Magistrates Court on 4 October 2013, to detail (i) why the committal hearing took place in a court house cell and not in the court room; (ii) why notification was not given to the media in advance of the hearing alerting them reporting restrictions were to be sought as per the guidance from the Lord Chief Justice following the judgement of 8 July 2013 on Anonymity Orders; (iii) why, despite media representatives being in attendance in the courtroom, they were not permitted to be present at the hearing; (iv) under what grounds reporting restrictions were granted, given the name and case in question has been reported widely since the first appearance and there is no nexus to the alleged victim; and (v) whether this matter will be reviewed.

(AQW 28258/11-15)

Mr Ford: The location of the hearing and the ordering of reporting restrictions are judicial decisions. The reporting restrictions in any case may be reviewed by the Judge when the case is next listed for hearing.

Release of a Female Prisoner

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to outline the circumstances leading to the erroneous release of a female prisoner in early November 2013, including (i) the nature and date of conviction; (ii) the tariff imposed; (iii) the court in question; and (iv) the error in release.

(AQW 28260/11-15)

Mr Ford: Although reported as such in certain media, I can confirm that no female prisoner was released in error by the Prison Service in early November.

A female prisoner appeared at Belfast Crown Court on 4 November for sentencing in respect of charges for which she had been convicted in September. Although on bail in respect of these charges, she was in prison serving a sentence for other offences. This sentence was due for expiry on 5 November.

On 4 November, the judge imposed a Determinate Custodial Sentence of two years – one year in prison and one year on licence. The prisoner was returned to prison and in accordance with the warrant issued, the legal document on which sentence calculation is based, was correctly released from prison on 5 November.

However, when the judge became aware that the prisoner had been released, he amended the order to reflect his wish that the sentence he imposed on 4 November should run consecutive to the existing sentence, rather than concurrently, and the individual was returned to prison.

There are reporting restrictions on this case that limit the level of detail which can be placed in the public domain.

Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland: Cases Related to the Troubles

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail the duration the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland anticipates it will take to complete their investigations into cases related to the Troubles.

(AQW 28319/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland anticipates that its current workload of historical cases will be completed within six years, by 31 March 2019.

Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland: Cases Related to the Troubles

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice how many cases related to the Troubles the Police Ombudsman has opened in the last six years, including the number that remain ongoing.

(AQW 28320/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Police Ombudsman has opened 206 historical cases since 1 November 2007. Of these, 162 are ongoing.

Disciplinary Hearings under the Code of Conduct 2013

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether the suggestion by Independent Arbitrators, Dr Carol Ackah and Liam Deane, contained at 13.4 of their December 2009 Report that ‘the use of an officer other than the Adjudicating Governor to present the Northern Ireland Prison Service management case at disciplinary hearings may serve to reinforce the impartiality of the decision maker’ is to be incorporated into disciplinary hearings under the Code of Conduct 2013, particularly in cases of gross misconduct, and if not, to provide his rationale for doing so.

(AQW 28329/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the Member to my answer to his similar question AQW/27817/11-15.

Pro Bono Costs Orders

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the development of Pro Bono Costs Orders.

(AQW 28334/11-15)

Mr Ford: My officials met and discussed initial proposals to expand the current provision for Pro Bono Costs Orders with interested groups in July 2013. These proposals are being further considered by the interested groups.

Law Society: Review of Legal Aid

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice what consideration has been given to the Law Society’s proposal for a fundamental review to identify inefficiencies in the legal system prior to any further cuts in Legal Aid.

(AQW 28346/11-15)

Mr Ford: I recently announced to the Law Society my intention to commit to Phase 2 of the Access to Justice Review. The exact scope of the Review setting out precisely what issues it should address is currently being developed, and I will bring this to the Assembly in due course. It is my intention the review will not interrupt the reforms already underway but rather build on these reforms setting an agenda to shape Access to Justice in the future.

Cost of Legal Aid

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the reasons for the increase in spending on Legal Aid; (ii) how these factors were assessed; and (iii) the rationale for the proposed cuts to Legal Aid.

(AQW 28347/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) Legal Aid is demand led and there are a number of factors which contribute to the increase in spending on Legal Aid. These include changes in the volumes of disposals of cases, more prompt submission of bills and their taxation and the disposal and assessment of costs in long running cases which have an impact on the overall level of Legal Aid expenditure.
- (ii) Many of these factors are outside the direct control of the Legal Aid system and are monitored by trends and expenditure profiles. For instance, from 2008-2012 the overall volume of Children Order applications dealt with by the courts increased by 50%, which will have increased spend in civil legal aid. Similarly, in respect of criminal legal aid, expenditure has increased this year as a result of the appointment last year of an additional judge to conduct Crown Court work. The Department has established a forecasting forum to enhance Legal Aid forecasting and has also published proposals for the introduction of standard fees for legal representatives in civil cases similar to the existing standard fees for criminal cases. One of the key benefits of introducing a

standardised fee is that it enhances the capacity of the Legal Services Commission to forecast civil legal aid expenditure in future years.

- (iii) Through the access to justice reform programme, the Department aims to create an effective, sustainable, affordable and accessible legal aid system. The current proposals for reform of Legal Aid are about ensuring that the people who need help receive levels of advice and representation that are appropriate and affordable.

Sexual Offences Prevention Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many people from outside Northern Ireland, including from Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland are currently (i) within the court system under application for Sexual Offences Prevention Orders; and/or (ii) subject to a Sexual Offences Prevention Order after it has been discovered they were convicted of a sexual offence in their native country, prior to arrival in Northern Ireland and for which, if committed locally, would have resulted in a Sexual Offences Prevention Order and/or have acted in such a way as to have an Order imposed.

(AQW 28349/11-15)

Mr Ford: Applications to the courts for Sexual Offences Prevention Orders are an operational matter for the Chief Constable who is accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. I am committed to respecting the operational independence of the Chief Constable and the role of the Policing Board.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the PSNI.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Facilities

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27655/11-15, to address the first part of the original question, particularly to detail the main obstacles in implementing reform to bring the Northern Ireland Prison Service facilities in question up to standard.

(AQW 28350/11-15)

Mr Ford: Reforming our prisons is a key priority and implementing the necessary change will take time and money. Reform must be delivered within the current financial restrictions; progress is dependent on securing approval of Business Cases and necessary funding.

Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27762/11-15 (i) given it is not within the scope or power of any Department, agency, or officer to 'pre-empt' these circumstances, could instead have been prevented had due consideration to previous offending behaviour and risk combined with diligence been applied; and whether using the term 'pre-empt' is disingenuous in reviews such as this as it is unattainable and cannot be disproved.

(AQW 28351/11-15)

Mr Ford: The comprehensive Review taken forward by the Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland has adequately considered all the issues in respect of this case. I do not agree that my previous response was disingenuous in respect of the outcome from that review.

Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27593/11-15, whether it is within the remit of the Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service to prevent Professor Phil Scraton access for independent research or admit him only on pre-set terms of what is documented.

(AQW 28352/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Prison Service encourages independent research within prison establishments and accommodates research proposals which meet the requirements of the researcher and which will prove of value to the Prison Service in terms of delivery of its core objectives.

Sexual Offences Prevention Orders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many Sexual Offences Prevention Orders, in place in each of the last three years, have been breached; and of these, how many were breached on more than one occasion, broken down per court division.

(AQW 28376/11-15)

Mr Ford: The table below details the number of Sexual Offences Prevention Orders (SOPOs) breached during the period 2010 to 2012 by County Court Division and includes the number of orders breached on more than one occasion.

NUMBER OF SOPOS BREACHED BY COUNTY COURT DIVISION DURING 2010 TO 2012

County Court Division	2010		2011		2012	
	Number of SOPOs breached on at least one occasion	Number of SOPOs breached on more than one occasion	Number of SOPOs breached on at least one occasion	Number of SOPOs breached on more than one occasion	Number of SOPOs breached on at least one occasion	Number of SOPOs breached on more than one occasion
Belfast	14	5	13	3	20	5
Londonderry	0	0	1	0	2	1
Antrim	2	0	2	0	5	1
Fermanagh and Tyrone	4	1	1	0	0	0
Armagh and South Down	0	0	2	1	3	1
Ards	1	0	7	0	2	1
Craigavon	2	0	2	0	2	0
Total	23	6	28	4	34	9

Prisoner Ombudsman for Northern Ireland Report

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27727/11-15, (i) given the Prisoner Ombudsman is the author of the report and that any subsequent dealings on its content fall within the remit of the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) and his Department, why he is unwilling to address this matter; and (ii) whether his Department or the NIPS have input into the decision not to publish this report.

(AQW 28431/11-15)

Mr Ford: As I explained in my response to AQW/27727/11-15, the Prisoner Ombudsman is an independent office holder and the Member may wish to write to him directly about this matter. The decision on whether or not to publish the report is taken solely by him and neither I nor the Northern Ireland Prison Service has any input into whether or not the report should be published.

Temporary Release of Prisoners Serving Life Sentences

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Justice to detail the average time spent on temporary release in the community of prisoners serving a life sentence, prior to reaching the minimum tariff period determined by the court, since 2010.

(AQW 28452/11-15)

Mr Ford: The information in the form requested is not readily available and could only be compiled at disproportionate cost.

Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Justice to outline the mechanism used by the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland to consult with victims prior to considering the release of prisoners serving a life sentence.

(AQW 28454/11-15)

Mr Ford: Parole Commissioners are independent office holders and the Chief Commissioner has suggested that you write to her directly on this issue. However, I can advise that the Probation Board for Northern Ireland provide Victim Impact Statements to Parole Commissioners for consideration.

Medal for PSNI Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department is considering a proposal to spend over £300,000 on a medal for PSNI staff, and if so, to detail how this proposal came to the Department, including the view expressed by the Policing Board.

(AQW 28464/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have received a proposal from the Chief Constable to introduce a PSNI Service Medal, the cost of which is estimated at £316,000.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board resolved to support the Chief Constable's proposal for a PSNI Service Medal.

Release of Prisoner

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27708/11-15, why the Public Protection Arrangements in Northern Ireland has not been notified of this matter; and whether he will instruct this agency to conduct their own review into the handling of this case since the first release.

(AQW 28490/11-15)

Mr Ford: Mr Douglas was not subject to the Public Protection Arrangements in Northern Ireland because he did not receive a qualifying sentence. The Review taken forward by the Northern Ireland Prison Service and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland has already comprehensively and satisfactorily considered all the issues in respect of this case.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 27855/11-15, why this information cannot be provided on the grounds of personal security when information was provided in the answer to AQW 27854/11-15, which relates to personal security.

(AQW 28547/11-15)

Mr Ford: Any intelligence reports that NIPS receive, including those that relate to the personal security of staff, are confidential. The details of any such intelligence reports including how many have been received cannot be shared. I am content that information regarding the Special Purchase of Evacuated Dwellings can be released as this will not identify any persons nor breach confidentiality.

National Crime Agency

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Justice what his Department will do to ensure Northern Ireland is not disadvantaged by the National Crime Agency not having appropriate power.

(AQW 28552/11-15)

Mr Ford: I am continuing to work to secure political agreement for the NCA to operate in Northern Ireland in the devolved arena with all the necessary powers available to it. That operation would be

subject to appropriate oversight from our policing architecture. Engagement with political parties is ongoing.

If the NCA is not empowered to operate in the devolved arena then Northern Ireland will be at a disadvantage.

Publicly Funded Assistance for Mediation

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Justice to detail the publicly funded assistance available for (i) family mediation cases; (ii) collaborative law cases; and (iii) the Bar Mediation Service in individual cases. **(AQW 28614/11-15)**

Mr Ford: Under the Assistance by Way of Representation and Civil Legal Aid Schemes, the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (the Commission) funds Family Mediation in applications under the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 as directed by the court.

The Commission does not currently fund Collaborative Law Cases.

The Commission does not fund cases under the Bar Mediation Service.

Department for Regional Development

Cancelled Road Projects

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost to his Department of cancelled road projects in each of the last two financial years. **(AQW 26059/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): I would advise the Member that no road projects have been cancelled in the last two financial years.

Traffic Attendants in Fivemiletown

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of days, excluding Sundays, that traffic attendants were patrolling in Fivemiletown; and (ii) the (a) minimum, (b) maximum and (c) average number of attendants patrolling on these days, in the last 12 months. **(AQW 26669/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: In the period from 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013, Traffic Attendants patrolled in Fivemiletown on 120 days, Monday to Saturday.

In providing these patrols, the minimum number of Traffic Attendants deployed per visit was 1 and the maximum number was three. The overall average was 1.4.

Regional Development Strategy 2035

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what action is being taken to address the certificate of general conformity for the Regional Development Strategy 2035, which is currently delaying the publication of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan. **(AQW 26763/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: Prevailing planning legislation requires my Department to decide whether or not a plan is in general conformity with the RDS within the period of 28 days beginning with the day on which it received the formal request from DOE. That request was submitted to my Department on 19 September 2013 and I can confirm that officials within my Department have completed the assessment within this statutory timeframe.

Damage to Vehicles Caused by Potholes

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of claims his Department has received for damage to vehicles caused by potholes, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 26764/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the number of claims received by my Department for damage to vehicles caused by potholes, in the last three financial years, are set out in the table below.

Year	Claims for damage caused by potholes
2010/11	2,101
2011/12	1,777
2012/13	984

Upgrading of the A26

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development, following the recent announcement by the Minister for Finance and Personnel regarding the upgrading of the A26, what steps he will take in preparation for the remainder of the scheme in future years.

(AQW 27581/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am pleased, that having made the case for the A26 project, to have secured funding of around £8 million in 2014/15 for the A26 Frosses Road Dual Carriageway scheme, which will enable construction to commence in late 2014.

I have now considered the Inspector's Report into the Public Inquiry for the scheme and tasked Roads Service to progress the project, taking into account the Inspector's recommended amendments. This will enable the Statutory Orders to be made and the procurement process to be publicised. It is anticipated the scheme will take 24 months to complete at an estimated cost of £65 million.

Integrated Transport Hub; Cycling

Mr McKay asked the Minister for Regional Development how cycling will be catered for in the new Integrated Transport Hub.

(AQW 27666/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink has advised me that, although its Transport Hub project team is currently undertaking a procurement exercise to appoint an Integrated Design Team, there is no specific design for the Hub at this point. However, cycling will be recognised as an important transport mode to be catered for within the Hub facility and the design brief will be drafted to reflect this.

Belfast - Coleraine - Londonderry Rail Line

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the potential for passenger growth on the Belfast - Coleraine - Londonderry rail line when the new Waterside passenger terminal is completed and the passing loop near Ballykelly is operational.

(AQW 27889/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The timing and scope of a new station at Waterside have not yet been finalised. A range of options are currently going through feasibility review, costing and Economic Appraisal.

Any Economic Appraisal on Waterside Station will not include passenger forecasts, as stations do not drive demand in quite the same way as service frequency.

In relation to the passing loop, the Translink 2007 New Trains Two Economic Appraisal projects a 90,000 passenger uplift once an hourly service has been delivered to Londonderry. Phase 2 of the

Londonderry to Coleraine track relay which will facilitate this is currently planned to complete by the end of 2016.

Dungannon Integrated Pilot Scheme

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the Dungannon Integrated Pilot Scheme.

(AQW 27925/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am pleased to be able to confirm that the pilot project in the Dungannon area is making good progress. My Department is co-ordinating the pilot, the aim of which is to prove that the concept of integrated planning and delivery of passenger transport can be achieved and offers better value for money and better services for passengers. There have been a number of notable achievements to date, including the rationalisation of a number of school services involving the Southern Education and Library Board and Translink in Dungannon and the introduction of an improved service to Craigavon Area Hospital involving Translink and community transport. The implementation of this new service has been supported by improved passenger information giving details to people living in rural areas on how they can avail of community transport to connect to the main Translink hub in Dungannon to travel to and from the hospital. This is exactly the type of integration that the pilot project is seeking to deliver and it is planned to build on this type of improvement to service delivery throughout the pilot period. The pilot will also assess other opportunities including an extended role for community transport in school transport provision in rural areas and in accessing healthcare facilities where there is a specific requirement. It is also planned to examine integration opportunities in the very complex area of special needs transport provision in the Dungannon area and to extend the analysis of school transport services to the Cookstown area and the remaining schools in Dungannon that have not been considered so far.

At the same time as planning and implementing the pilot, my Department is preparing for the development of an economic appraisal which will examine the totality of travel needs and develop proposals on how integrated planning and delivery of services could be delivered on a wider scale. The economic appraisal will consider the many issues that will need to be addressed across all the organisations involved. I am firmly of the view that a systematic and phased approach should be adopted for both the pilot and any subsequent wider implementation. This is the best approach to develop a sound evidence base for an integrated and sustainable service delivery model for the future. It will also enable participating organisations to consider the impacts on the services that they fund and enable proposals on the way forward to be agreed by Departments and the other organisations involved.

Unauthorised Mineral Extraction: Mobouy Road

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the extent to which Mobouy Road, Derry has been undermined by unauthorised mineral extraction; (ii) when unauthorised mineral extraction took place; (iii) whether this poses any danger to road users; and (iv) why his Department did not act to prevent this.

(AQW 28016/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has no information indicating that Mobouy Road has been undermined by unauthorised mineral extraction. However, there may have been a threat to Mobouy Road some time ago and it is understood DOE Planning may have taken action to address that situation. There are no visible defects to Mobouy Road that suggests undermining and there is no perceived danger to road users.

Pothole Repairs: Prioritisation

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development how pothole repairs are prioritised.

(AQW 28021/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Article 8 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 places a duty on Roads Service to maintain all public roads in a reasonable condition. In recognition of its duty of care, Roads Service has put in place a set of Maintenance Standards for Safety. These standards, which are designed to

ensure a consistent service level and a safe highway while offering value for money, are based on best practice, research and consultation with both the public and other professional bodies and Industry.

Essentially, the standards and procedures currently in operation, establish frequencies for road inspections which are dependent upon traffic volumes and specify response times for the repair of defects, including potholes. Inspection frequencies vary between daily cycles for motorways to four monthly cycles for carriageways carrying low volumes of traffic. Response times specified for the repair of defects, including potholes, are dependent upon the severity of the defect and range from one calendar day to routine inclusion in the next work programme for that particular route. If the relevant response time cannot be met, Roads Service has the option of installing signs to warn road users of a possible danger.

Volume of Traffic in Moira

Mrs Hale asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the daily volume of traffic passing through Moira.

(AQW 28026/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department collects data from automatic traffic counting sites located throughout Northern Ireland. Details of the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flow information recorded at two locations on the main route running through Moira, the A3, are provided in the table below:

Census Point	Route	Location	Channel 1	Channel 2	Total (7 day AADT)
235	A3	Moira Road, Lisburn, West of Lissue Industrial Estate	To Lisburn - 5,512	To Moira-5,725	11,237
409	A3	Magheralin - Moira	To Magheralin - 6,579	To Moira-6,491	13,070

Volume of Traffic in Toome

Mrs Hale asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the volume of traffic recorded in Toome in (i) 2003-2004; and (ii) 2004-2005.

(AQW 28027/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Traffic counts on the bridge in Toome taken during December 2003 indicated an average 7 day traffic volume of 22273 vehicles per day, whereas those in September 2004 indicated an average volume of 7121 vehicles per day.

The significant reduction in traffic volumes can be explained by the opening, in March 2004, of the Toome By-pass, which accommodated much of the through traffic.

Preparations for Winter Conditions

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Regional Development, in light of weather indicators predicting a colder than average winter for 2013/14, what his Department is doing to (i) prepare for this; and (ii) ensure there is enough grit, sand bags and other essential materials for all eventualities.

(AQW 28029/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service is well prepared for the incoming winter season and will be able to provide a high standard of service delivery for the salting of roads.

Prior to the start of each winter service period, Roads Service carries out a significant amount of planning to ensure a state of readiness for the coming season. In addition to a number of routine pre-season checks, planning includes ensuring adequate staffing arrangements are in place, including training for new staff, where required, and ensuring all winter service equipment is in working order.

Every night, from the end of October 2013 until the middle of April 2014, Roads Service will have almost 300 people on standby ready to salt main roads, helping drivers across Northern Ireland cope with the wintry conditions.

At the start of this season, Roads Service salt barns were at full capacity, with stocks in excess of 70,000 tonnes. Additional salt stock resilience, totalling 38,100 tonnes, is held at six strategic locations throughout Northern Ireland. The current Winter Service salt contract also provides for the supply of a further 15,000 tonnes per month from October 2013 to April 2014, if required.

During periods of heavy rainfall, my Department's primary objective is to deal with the impact of roads-related flooding caused by blocked or overwhelmed infrastructure, such as gullies or other road drainage systems, for which it has responsibility. I am satisfied sufficient quantities of sandbags are in store for emergency purposes and, in line with current policy, my officials will continue to assist other bodies deal with flooding incidents. This includes, for example, the prompt deployment of sandbags, particularly where properties are at risk of flooding.

Members of the public with concerns about flooding can contact the Flooding Incident Line on 0300 2000 100. This service provides a single number to report serious flooding and is available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Upgrade Works on the Craigantlet Crossroads

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on proposals for the Craigantlet crossroads.

(AQW 28076/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As you will be aware, I asked officials in my Department's Roads Service to consider all the alternative proposals put forward by local residents.

It is likely a consultation exercise will be required, to gauge the views of the local community, as well as the wider North Down travelling public, on the advantages and disadvantages of the options under consideration.

I would not, therefore, expect to be in a position to make any decision until this process is completed.

Upgrade Works on the Craigantlet Crossroads

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the work that is currently being carried out at Craigantlet crossroads.

(AQW 28079/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service is currently carrying out essential carriageway resurfacing to improve the structural integrity and ride quality at Craigantlet crossroads. In addition, some associated footway, kerbing and minor drainage improvement works are also being undertaken to strengthen the carriageway at the junction and the approaches to it.

Upgrade Works on the Craigantlet Crossroads

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the estimated cost of the work that is currently being carried out at Craigantlet crossroads.

(AQW 28080/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The estimated cost of the resurfacing scheme currently being completed at Craigantlet crossroads is £160k.

Car Parking for Spencer Street, Hollywood

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the steps his Department is taking to implement resident only car parking for Spencer Street, Hollywood.

(AQW 28115/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My officials are currently pursuing the introduction of Residents' Parking schemes within the four areas of parking restraint identified in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan 2015 (BMTP).

Efforts are currently being concentrated on schemes in inner Belfast and it is hoped, in due course, that residents' parking schemes will be progressed in Bangor, Carrickfergus and Lisburn. The timing of schemes outside Belfast will be dependent upon the progress of those being developed at present and a future prioritisation of the remaining areas.

Although Hollywood is not specifically identified within the BMTP in this respect, a number of requests have been received for the provision of residents' parking in residential areas of the town centre, including Spencer Street. Accordingly, officials have added these locations to its list of areas for future consideration, once all areas identified within the BMTP have been addressed.

As I have previously advised, I had asked officials to carry out an initial assessment of the eligibility of residential streets within Hollywood town centre. Officials indicate that surveys of a number of the residential streets in Hollywood town centre, including Spencer Street, to determine if they would benefit from the introduction of residents' parking schemes, should be completed by the end of January 2014.

Departmental Cycling Unit

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the total budget of the new departmental cycling unit.

(AQW 28128/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I announced the establishment of a new cycling unit in August 2013 to deliver the effective co-ordination and management of a range of cycling initiatives. The unit was formally established in November this year.

Senior officials in my Department are currently exploring budget and resource requirements to ensure the necessary funding is secured to deliver the Department's objectives. Given that the Unit has been set up in-year, the annual budget is estimated at around £800K for staffing and promotional costs. Discussions are also underway to identify what additional resource budget is required and the capital funding required for infrastructure measures.

Car Parking Charges in Bangor

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are plans to review car parking charges in Bangor.

(AQW 28129/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware I announced a freeze on any further increase to car parking charges in early November 2012 for the remainder of the current budget period; that is, up until 2015. This announcement also provides for a freeze on the introduction of charges in existing Roads Service operated car parks during this period.

Cycling Infrastructure: Giro d'Italia 2014

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the steps he is taking to ensure cycling infrastructure is in place ahead of the Giro d'Italia 2014.

(AQW 28131/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is represented on the Northern Ireland Local Steering Group, which is the overseeing committee organising the event. Roads Service is involved in the operational aspects of the

event through the Race Committee and officials have been liaising closely with the race organisers in agreeing the route of the 2014 Giro D'Italia in Northern Ireland.

Based on an inspection, the organisers were very content with the condition of the roads to be used for the three stages taking place in Northern Ireland. Whilst there are a small number of issues to be addressed by my Department prior to the event, no upgrades have been requested.

The delivery structure of the event has targeted 'legacy' as one of the primary objectives of the event. Whilst the Northern Ireland Tourist Board is leading this aspect of the event organisation, my Department will assist wherever possible.

NI Water: Charges Scheme

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 26977/11-15, on what basis the proposed charging scheme was calculated.

(AQW 28167/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: NI Water's annual Charges Scheme sets out the charges the Company makes for the services it provides. This includes notional household charges based on property capital values as recommended by the Independent Water Review Panel. The Executive has made a commitment that there will be no additional water charges for households during this Programme for Government period. As a result my Department pays a subsidy to NIW in lieu of domestic consumers' contributions.

Water Charges for Domestic Customers

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) whether he is satisfied with the methodology used to determine water charges for domestic customers as published on NI Water's website; (ii) what representations he has had about that methodology; (iii) whether these representations will be made public; (iv) whether he will instruct NI Water to make changes next year; and (v) whether any consultation will take place on the charging methodology.

(AQW 28173/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Executive has made a commitment that there will be no additional water charges for households during this Programme for Government period. Therefore, the questions of the methodology for household charging does not arise.

Park and Ride Facilities

Mr McNarry asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the Park and Ride facilities for which his Department has direct responsibility in (i) Strangford; and (ii) the rest of Northern Ireland.

(AQW 28178/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is not responsible for any Park and Ride facilities in Strangford.

The Park and Ride facilities located across the remainder of Northern Ireland, for which my Department has direct responsibility, are as follows:

- Limavady Bus Station, Station Road;
- Ballee Park and Ride, Ballymena;
- Millbrook Park and Ride, Larne;
- Paradise Walk Park and Ride, Templepatrick;
- Dunsilly Park and Ride/Share;
- Ballygroobey Park and Share;
- Toome Park and Ride;
- Drumahoe Park and Ride;

- Lough Road Park and Ride, Lurgan;
- Portadown Road Park and Ride/Share, Armagh;
- Sheepbridge Park and Share, Newry;
- Forkhill Road Park and Share, Cloghogue, Newry;
- Clough Roundabout Park and Share;
- Cairnshill Park and Ride, Saintfield Road, Belfast;
- Blacks Road Park and Ride, Upper Lisburn Road, Belfast;
- Sprucefield Park and Ride (adjacent to M1 motorway);
- Northside Park and Ride, Great Georges Street, Belfast;
- Eastside Park and Ride, Middlepath Street, Belfast;
- Hillhead Road Park and Ride, Castledawson;
- Magherafelt Road Park and Ride, Castledawson;
- Crevenagh Road Park and Ride, Omagh;
- Maghera Park and Ride; and
- Tullybryan Road Park and Ride, Ballygawley.

Parking Surveys

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the number of parking surveys attached to planning applications that have not been validated by NI Roads service staff in the last twelve months; and (ii) how his Department will ensure that all future surveys are properly validated. **(AQW 28183/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: Information on the number of parking surveys attached to planning applications that have not been validated is not readily available. It would require a lengthy and resource intensive exercise scrutinising the relevant database containing the consultation responses to obtain the information requested.

Officials are reminded of the importance of validating information received from applicants during the planning process and managers carry out a randomly 10% check of responses for quality assurance purposes.

South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen: A5 Western Transport Corridor

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister for Regional Development whether any bids for funding originally made for the A5 Western Transport Corridor have been redirected for the upgrade of the A32 servicing the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen and the new local Enhanced Hospital in Omagh. **(AQW 28211/11-15)**

Mr Kennedy: Following the court ruling in April of this year which delayed the A5 Western Corridor dualling scheme, I wrote to the then Finance Minister in May, highlighting other schemes that could commence construction in 2014/15. Unfortunately, none of the A32 schemes were included as they were not sufficiently developed and were not subsequently bid for in the 2014/15 Capital Budget Exercise.

The Member will be aware three schemes have already been completed along the A32 servicing the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen and the new local Enhanced Hospital in Omagh. These include:

- the £2m improvement scheme at A32 Drumskinny, which was completed in early 2012;

- the £7.3m realignment scheme at A32 Shannaragh, which opened to traffic in December 2012; and
- the £17m A32 Cherrymount Link in Enniskillen, which opened in June 2013.

Together these schemes have improved the quality of the route, enhanced road safety and reduced travel times for all road users.

Development work is progressing on a number of other proposed schemes along the A32 route, including at Cornamuck and Esker Bog. Delivery of these projects will, however, be dependent upon future budget settlements.

Departmental Cycle Unit

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are plans to increase the staff complement of the departmental cycle unit.

(AQW 28218/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: In order to give increased focus and priority to the needs of cyclists and to encourage greater participation in this healthy and sustainable form of transport, I established a new cycling unit early in November 2013 to ensure the effective progress of a range of cycling initiatives.

My officials are exploring how the new cycling unit can co-ordinate all cycling related matters in a coherent manner and are drawing up a work programme for the unit. The work programme will set out the staff requirements to carry out the programme.

Initially, I plan to keep the resourcing requirements of the unit under review and intend to carry out a formal review during 2014 which will consider whether it is adequately staffed or if additional resources need to be allocated to complement the new unit.

Cost of Spraying Weeds in North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the cost of spraying weeds in North Down in each of the last twelve months.

(AQW 28236/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department does not maintain an analysis of expenditure incurred specifically on weed spraying on a Constituency area basis.

Parking Restrictions which Indicate No Return within Two Hours

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 27711/11-15, if a driver parks in an area where parking is restricted to 1 hour, with no return within 2 hours, at 10:00 in the morning and leaves at 10:59 then returns at 13:00 and is observed by a traffic warden at 10:50 and 13:10, is the driver liable for a parking ticket, and if so, on what legal basis is the parking ticket issued.

(AQW 28243/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The enforcement of limited waiting is based on a Traffic Attendant's (TAs) first and subsequent observations in association with wheel valve positions. Independent Adjudicators have accepted that noting wheel valve positions is the most practical method for determining if a vehicle has moved from its original parking position.

In the situation described above, the TA will have made his/her first observation at 10:50, noted the wheel valve positions and carried on patrol. Upon returning to the vehicle which is in the same position at 13:10, the TA will note the wheel valve positions and if they have remained in the same position then a PCN will be issued for over-staying the maximum time. If the wheel valve positions have changed, then the vehicle will have been considered as being re-parked and this will also mark the commencement of a new first observation.

Kilcooley Estate, Bangor: Fence Repairs

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are plans to repair fencing along the Bangor to Belfast Road at Kilcooley Estate, Bangor.

(AQW 28274/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: You will be aware the fencing around the Kilcooley Estate, Bangor, was erected by the roads authority at the time the Belfast Road/West Circular Road, Bangor was being constructed. It was to provide accommodation works, delineation of the road boundary and to afford protection to footway users, where there is a difference in level between the footway and the adjoining property.

Responsibility for the fence would have reverted to the landowner abutting the road, namely, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, who would be best placed to advise if any repairs are planned.

Grit Boxes Allocated in North Down

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail how many grit boxes have been allocated in the North Down constituency, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 28285/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of salt bins provided by my Department in the North Down area, in each of the last five winter seasons, are provided in the table below:

Season	Number of Salt Bins
2009/10	Details not available
2010/11	172
2011/12	188
2012/13	184
2013/14	184

Publicly Owned Car Park in Fivemiletown

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the appropriateness of a publicly owned car park in Fivemiletown being used as a location to burn an effigy.

(AQW 28295/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I do not condone or support the unauthorised use of my Department's land or other property, for any purpose. The Road Traffic and Vehicles Off-Street Parking Order (NI) 2000 does not permit the lighting of fires in Roads Service car parks, however, it appears no physical damage occurred to the surface of the car park.

Resurfacing Work Carried out on A and B Roads

Mrs Overend asked the Minister for Regional Development what guidance is provided by Roads Service on the life expectancy of resurfacing work carried out on A and B roads.

(AQW 28306/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department generally accepts that structural maintenance in the form of resurfacing should be carried out on all roads once every 20 to 30 years. However, actual requirements vary from location to location, dependent upon a range of factors, such as traffic volumes, openings by utilities etc. Interim treatments, such as surface dressing, are frequently used to extend the serviceable life of a road, although these are not appropriate in all circumstances.

Whilst all road surfaces have finite life spans, research and observations carried out over many years have shown that roads generally do not deteriorate in a uniform way over their serviceable life. New

and properly constructed roads show little deterioration over the first half of their design life, but then deteriorate at an increased rate to a level where they are no longer fit for purpose and ultimately require reconstruction.

The most cost effective practice is to plan structural maintenance in the form of resurfacing work, towards the end of the first half of a carriageway's expected lifespan. Otherwise, additional reactive maintenance, normally in the form of patching, will become necessary.

Unfortunately, due to historical funding shortfalls, my Department has generally been unable to undertake the level of structural maintenance that has been independently assessed as necessary to maintain the integrity of the road network. Therefore, the actual lifespan for road resurfacing often far exceeds the recommended treatment frequencies.

Chief Executive of NI Water

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the process for the appointment of a chief executive of NI Water, including whether it is a board appointment that is subject to ministerial approval; and why an advisor has been appointed, and by whom, in respect of the selection.

(AQW 28366/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: NI Water and the Department are currently working together closely to determine the way forward on this issue. A recruitment consultant had been appointed by the company to assist with the initial recruitment process, however at this stage no further advisors have been appointed.

The NI Water Chief Executive is a member of the Board of the company, a role which is subject to Ministerial approval.

Easybus Services in Belfast

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the cost of operating the eleven Easybus services in Belfast; and (ii) the total revenue raised by the service, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 28403/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The table below provides (i) the operating costs and (ii) revenue in relation to Easibus services for the last five years.

Year	Operational Costs	Fare Revenue
2009	£163,354.52	£32,228.23
2010	£163,354.52	£31,770.23
2011	£163,354.52	£33,146.28
2012	£166,495.97	£31,824.66
2013*	£94,242.99	£18,215.15

* Year to date, i.e. up to end Period 7 (27.10.13)

Clogher Livestock Mart, Co Tyrone

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of parking tickets issued in the vicinity of the Clogher livestock mart, Co Tyrone on each Saturday, in the last twelve months.

(AQW 28555/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The parking restrictions in place near Clogher Cattle Market are on Station Road and Tullybroom Road. The parking restriction on Saturday applies from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

In the past twelve months, a total of 65 Penalty Charge Notices have been issued in the vicinity of the market.

Overcrowding on Trains: Ballymoney via Ballymena to Belfast

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Regional Development what action he can take to tackle overcrowding on trains travelling from Ballymoney via Ballymena to Belfast, leading up to the Christmas period.

(AQW 28627/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink officials have advised me that plans have already been put in place to operate a number of additional trains and longer trains on NIR's network over weekends running up to Christmas, commencing Saturday 30 November 2013.

Having subsequently experienced unprecedented passenger numbers on Saturday 23 November, timetable plans have been further enhanced.

On the Belfast-Coleraine-Londonderry line a number of Friday evening trains and the majority of Saturday and Sunday trains will be increased from 3-car to 6-car to meet anticipated loadings. Additionally 2 spare trains and crews will be rostered to provide auxiliary services where required.

Two additional trains will operate this Saturday night, 30 November 2013, from Londonderry to Coleraine and to Belfast to facilitate those attending the Lumiere event in Londonderry.

Service enhancements will also be implemented on Friday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays over the rest of the network.

Department for Social Development

Soft Services Functions

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 27129-11-15, to detail (i) the total number of staff currently employed in the Soft Services function; (ii) the location of each office that delivers Soft Services functions; (iii) the number of Soft Services staff in each office; and (iv) whether these staff will be redeployed within the Department after the planned outsourcing exercise.

(AQW 27641/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): Soft services is a term which refers to Facilities Management activities which relate to services within a building or a business, for example security, cleaning and catering functions; as opposed to hard services which relate to services relating to the building itself; for example maintenance or engineering.

Soft services is a term which refers to Facilities Management activities which relate to services within a building or a business, for example security, cleaning and catering functions; as opposed to hard services which relate to services relating to the building itself; for example maintenance or engineering.

The soft services to be included in the current procurement exercise for the NICS Security and Ancillary Services Contract relate to messengerial services across my department. Given their nature, these functions are undertaken across the Department rather than delivered from a particular office.

The attached table contains the detailed information requested. 150 posts across 48 sites will be directly affected by the outsourcing of these functions. 138 of these posts are currently filled via temporary contracts which will expire in advance of the transfer of function to a new provider. The 12 permanent NICS staff currently in post have the option to seek

transfer to a similar role in another NICS department or to an administrative role in my department or to opt to transfer to the new contractor. Any who remain in post when the new contract becomes operational may transfer to the contractor under the terms of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE).

Business area and location	Temporary Agency Worker	Temporary NICS staff	Permanent NICS staff	Total
DSD Core, Design Centre Premises, Belfast	2		1	3
DSD Core, James House Premises, Belfast	2	4		6
DSD Core, Lighthouse Building Premises, Belfast	1	4		5
DSD Core, The Appeals Service Belfast		1		1
DSD Core, The Appeals Service Omagh	1		1	2
DSD, North West Development Office, Londonderry	1			1
SSA Antrim Jobs and Benefits Office	2	2		4
SSA Armagh Jobs and Benefits Office	1	1	1	3
SSA, Andersonstown Jobs & Benefits Office, Belfast		2		2
SSA, Ballymena Jobs and Benefits Office	1	1		2
SSA, Ballymoney Jobs and Benefits Office	1	2		3
SSA, Ballynahinch Social Security Office	2			2
SSA, Banbridge Jobs and Benefits Office	1	2		3
SSA, Bangor Social Security Office	1	1		2
SSA, BBC LPU NMT Accommodation Team, Londonderry	1	1	1	3
SSA, Benefit Training Service, Belfast		2		2
SSA, Carrickfergus Jobs and Benefits Office	2	3		5
SSA, Castle Court Services Team, Belfast	7	6		13
SSA, Coleraine Jobs and Benefits Office		2		2
SSA, Compensation Recovery Unit, Belfast	2	1		3
SSA, Cookstown Social Security Office	2			2
SSA, Corporation Street Social Security Office, Belfast		2		2
SSA, Downpatrick Social Security Office		2		2
SSA, Dungannon Jobs and Benefits Office		3		3
SSA, Enniskillen Jobs and Benefits Office	1	1	3	5
SSA, Falls Road Jobs and Benefits Office, Belfast		3		3
SSA, Foyle Jobs and Benefits Office	2	7	1	10

Business area and location	Temporary Agency Worker	Temporary NICS staff	Permanent NICS staff	Total
SSA, Holywood Road Jobs and Benefits Office, Belfast	1	2		3
SSA, Kilkeel Jobs and Benefits Office		1	1	2
SSA, Knockbreda Jobs and Benefits Office, Belfast		2		2
SSA, Larne Jobs and Benefits Office		2		2
SSA, Limavady Jobs and Benefits Office		2	1	3
SSA, Lisburn Jobs and Benefits Office	1	1		2
SSA, Lisnagelvin Jobs and Benefits Office		3		3
SSA, Lurgan Jobs and Benefits Office	1	3		4
SSA, Magherafelt Jobs and Benefits Office	1	3		4
SSA, Newcastle Social Security Office		2		2
SSA, Newry Jobs and Benefits Office		3	1	4
SSA, Newtownabbey Jobs and Benefits Office		2		2
SSA, Newtownards Social Security Office	1	1		2
SSA, Omagh Jobs and Benefits Office		3		3
SSA, Pension Centre Operations, Londonderry		4		4
SSA, Portadown Jobs and Benefits Office		3		3
SSA, Royston House Processing Centre, Belfast		2		2
SSA, Shaftesbury Square Jobs and Benefits Office, Belfast	1	1		2
SSA, Shankill Jobs and Benefits Office	1	2	1	4
SSA, Standards Assurance Unit Falls Rd		1		1
SSA, Strabane Social Security Office		2		2
Totals	40	98	12	150

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Internal Audit Section

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development how many staff were in Internal Audit section of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive five years ago compared to current staffing levels; and how the resulting staff costs compare.

(AQW 28030/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they had 14 staff in Internal Audit in 2008 and at the end of November 2013 they had 13 staff in post and a further two positions covered by Agency employees. Costs now are broadly similar to those in 2008.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development how many Northern Ireland Housing Executive staff are engaged in community safety, community relations and good relations; and what is the annual budget for this work area.

(AQW 28031/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there are currently twelve staff engaged in community safety, community relations and good relations and that the annual budget for this work area is £763,000.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Social Housing Reform Programme

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development what additional staff have been taken on by, or on behalf of, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive as part of its Social Housing Reform Programme; and at what cost.

(AQW 28032/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that a Director of Transformation has been appointed by the Strategic Investment Board to lead the Housing Executive in its change programme and to prepare for any potential changes arising from the DSD Social Housing Reform Programme. The Housing Executive has further advised that a team will be established internally to support the work of the new Director at a projected total cost of approximately £500,000 per annum, which includes the Director's salary.

Housing Executive Applicants Registered as Homeless

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive applicants registered as homeless in each district office.

(AQW 28143/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that at 1 November 2013 there were a total of 12,270 Full Duty applicants. The table below details this number by Housing Executive District Office: -

NIHE District Office Area	Registered as Homeless (Full Duty Applicants)
Antrim Housing	319
Armagh Housing	85
Ballycastle Housing	114
Ballymena Housing	665
Ballymoney Housing	99
Banbridge Housing	92
Bangor Housing	472
Carrickfergus Housing	280
Castlereagh Housing	302
Coleraine Housing	377
Collon Terrace Housing	670
Cookstown Housing	56
Craigavon Lurgan Housing	129
Craigavon Portadown Housing	56

NIHE District Office Area	Registered as Homeless (Full Duty Applicants)
Downpatrick Housing	440
Dungannon Housing	357
East Belfast Housing	331
Fermanagh Housing	104
Larne Housing	80
Limavady Housing	103
Lisburn Antrim Street Housing	534
Lisburn Dairy Farm Housing	325
Magherafelt Housing	92
Newry Housing	652
Newtownabbey 1 Housing (Rathcoole)	216
Newtownabbey 2 Housing (New Mossley)	316
Newtownards Housing	395
North Belfast Housing	921
Omagh District Housing	42
Shankill Housing	217
South Belfast Housing	917
Strabane Housing	92
Waterloo Place Housing	606
Waterside Housing	380
West Belfast Housing	1434
Total	12270

As regards the definition of homelessness it is important to remember the legislative context as to how it is defined. The statutory definition of homelessness and threatened homelessness is at Article 3 of the Housing (NI) Order 1988 (as amended) and reads as follows:

- 3(1) A person is homeless if he has no accommodation available for his occupation in the United Kingdom or elsewhere.
- (2) A person shall be treated as having no accommodation if there is no accommodation which he, together with any other person who normally resides with him as a member of his family or in circumstances in which it is reasonable for that person to reside with him –
- a) is entitled to occupy by virtue of an interest in it or by virtue of an order of a court, or
 - b) has an expressed or implied licence to occupy, or
 - c) occupies as a residence by virtue of any enactment or rule of law giving him the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession.
- (3) A person shall not be treated as having accommodation unless it is accommodation which it would be reasonable for him to continue to occupy.

- (4) Regard may be had in determining whether it would be reasonable for a person to continue to occupy accommodation, to the general circumstances prevailing in relation to housing in Northern Ireland.
- (5) A person is also homeless if he has accommodation but –
- he cannot secure entry to it, or
 - it is probable that occupation of it will lead to violence from some other person residing in it or to threats of violence from some other person residing in it and likely to carry out the threats, or
 - it consists of a movable structure, vehicle or vessel designed or adapted for human habitation and there is no place where he is entitled or permitted to place it and to reside in it.
- (6) A person is threatened with homelessness if it is likely that he will become homeless within 28 days from the day on which he gives written notice to the Executive that he is threatened with homelessness.

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.

Housing Executive Applicants Waiting for Temporary Accommodation

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Housing Executive applicants waiting for temporary accommodation in each district office.

(AQW 28144/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they do not maintain waiting lists for temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation is provided in response to their statutory homelessness duties where required by homeless applicants.

Housing Executive: Temporary Accommodation

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number properties used as temporary accommodation in each Housing Executive district office.

(AQW 28147/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below provides, by Housing Executive District office, the number of properties which the Housing Executive can use in response to their homelessness duties. The Housing Executive has advised that the temporary accommodation bureau is fluid and properties can be removed and others added at any time.

NIHE District	Private Sector Accommodation Properties	Voluntary Sector Hostels	NIHE Hostels
Antrim	25		1
Armagh	5	1	
Ballycastle	14		
Ballymena	55	3	1
Ballymoney			1
Banbridge	5		
Bangor	22	2	1
Belfast East	8	1	1

NIHE District	Private Sector Accommodation Properties	Voluntary Sector Hostels	NIHE Hostels
Belfast North 4	12	3	2
Belfast North 6	25	5	
Belfast South	124	6	
Belfast West 1	40	2	
Belfast West 3	98	3	2
Carrickfergus		1	1
Castlereagh	38	1	
Coleraine	13	3	1
Collon Terrace	51		2
Cookstown		1	
Downpatrick	46	1	1
Dungannon	52	1	
Fermanagh	55	1	
Larne		2	
Limavady	1		
Lisburn Antrim Street	91	2	1
Lisburn Dairyfarm	45	1	1
Lurgan	8	1	
Magherafelt	4		
Newry	51	3	
Newtownabbey 2	1		1
Newtownabby 1	3		1
Newtownards	37		1
Omagh	4	1	
Portadown	15	4	
Strabane		3	
Waterloo Place	151	7	1
Waterside	19	3	1
Total	1118	62	21

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.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Staff

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister for Social Development why employees of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive have not yet received the pay increase of 1 per cent that was awarded in July 2013.

(AQW 28152/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Approval for the 1% pay increase has been granted by the Finance Minister on 14 November 2013. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is making arrangements to pay the increase, backdated to April 2013, to all staff as soon as possible.

Social Security Office Cheques to Purchase Vehicles

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of foreign nationals who have received a cheque from a Social Security Office to purchase a vehicle, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 28161/11-15)

Mr McCausland: No cheques have been issued in the last three years by Social Security Office/Jobs and Benefit Office to any benefit claimants for the purpose of purchasing a vehicle.

Welfare Fraud: Cost

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Social Development what was the cost of welfare fraud in each of the last five years; and what these figures represent as a percentage of the total welfare bill in each year.

(AQW 28175/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The most recently published information is set out in the tables below. Table 1 shows the estimated cost of benefit fraud for benefits administered by the Social Security Agency. Table 2 shows the estimated cost of Housing Benefit fraud. The estimated levels of benefit fraud are shown in terms of losses and also expressed as a percentage of benefit expenditure.

TABLE 1

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS: - ESTIMATED COST OF BENEFIT FRAUD

	2008 £ million	2009 £ million	2010 £ million	2011 £ million	2012 £ million
Total benefit expenditure	£3789	£4176	£4352	£4456	£4681
Estimated benefit fraud	£12.6	£17.2	£20.5	£19.4	£16.9
Estimated benefit fraud %	0.3%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%

The fraud levels reported in Table 1 in respect of Social Security Benefits are the responsibility of the Social Security Agency

TABLE 2

HOUSING BENEFIT: - ESTIMATED COST OF BENEFIT FRAUD

	2008 £ million	2009 £ million	2010 £ million	2011 £ million	2012 £ million
Total benefit expenditure	£467.9	£538.5	£606.8	£598.5	£653.2
Estimated benefit fraud	£3.0	£5.0	£1.7	£3.2	£10.0
Estimated benefit fraud %	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%	0.5%	1.5%

The fraud levels reported in Table 2 in respect of Housing Benefit are the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Flags on Departmental Property

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the buildings under his departmental remit on which the Union Flag has been flown in the last three years; and on which days, in each of these years, the flag has been flown.

(AQW 28223/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Arrangements for the flying of the Union flag from government buildings are contained in the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, as amended by the Flags Regulations (NI) Amendment 2002. The designated days for hoisting the Union flag on government building are set out in the Regulations.

Annex 1 provides a list of Departmental offices where the Union flag was flown on all designated days unless otherwise noted. This information covers the financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 and the period 1 April to 31 October 2013.

ANNEX 1

DEPARTMENTAL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICES

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| ■ Antrim Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Hollywood Rd. Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Armagh Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ James House |
| ■ Ballyclare Community Benefit Office ¹ | ■ Kilkeel Jobs & Benefits Office ² |
| ■ Ballymoney Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Knockbreda Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Ballynahinch Social Security Office | ■ Larne Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Banbridge Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Limavady Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Bangor Social Security Office | ■ Lisahally Processing Centre |
| ■ Belfast Benefit Delivery Centre | ■ Lisburn Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Carrickfergus Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Lisnagelvin Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Coleraine Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Lurgan Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Cookstown Social Security Office | ■ Magherafelt Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Corporation St. Social Security Office | ■ Newcastle Social Security Office |
| ■ Downpatrick Social Security Office | ■ Newtownards Social Security Office |
| ■ Dungannon Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Omagh Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Enniskillen Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Portadown Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Foyle Jobs & Benefits Office | ■ Shankill Road Jobs & Benefits Office |
| ■ Great Northern Tower | |

1 Office closed down on 31 March 2013

2 Flag was not flown on 15 August 2011 and 20 January 2012

Flags on Departmental Property

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development whether he has personally issued a Ministerial direction that the Union Flag be flown on designated days on all buildings under his departmental remit; and if so, on what date this direction was issued.

(AQW 28224/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have not issued a Ministerial direction that the Union flag be flown on designated days on all DSD buildings.

Flags on Departmental Property

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development how the flying of the Union Flag on buildings within his departmental remit is in line with his responsibility to ensure a neutral political environment for staff working in, and customers using, these buildings.

(AQW 28225/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Arrangements for the flying of the Union flag from government buildings is contained in the Flags Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000, as amended by the Flags Regulations (NI) Amendment 2002. My Department complies with these regulations.

My Department takes its responsibilities under the NICS Dignity at Work policy seriously and fully complies with its requirements.

Flags on Departmental Property

Ms Boyle asked the Minister for Social Development whether the practice of flying the Union Flag on buildings under his departmental control is undertaken in-house or through private contract; and if the latter, to provide a breakdown of the costs involved.

(AQW 28227/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Private contractors facilitated the flying of the Union flag at nine DSD premises during the period 1 November 2012 – 31 October 2013 at a cost of £2158.85.

Departmental staff facilitated the flying of the Union flag at 24 DSD premises.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Rent Arrears

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 27514/11-15 and given the differential in average between highest and lowest in arrears, what steps are being taken by the Housing Executive to reduce the overall arrears problem.

(AQW 28229/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they have seven specialist Accounts Units situated across Northern Ireland, who are dedicated to the collection of rent and arrears recovery. Staff in these Units apply the policy and procedures of the organisation, which aim to ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken when tenants fail to pay their rent and fall into arrears.

The appropriate actions taken to recover the arrears include early intervention through contact by letter and personal contact. Systems are in place to ensure that staff are prompted to take action at different levels where arrears continue to increase. At all opportunities, through various communications and personal contact, tenants are offered the services of specialist independent debt advice service, provided in partnership with Advice NI.

At all stages in the arrears recovery process, Housing Executive staff work with tenants to endeavour to come to a suitable voluntary repayment agreement. However, where arrears continue to increase and tenants continue to break agreements, it may be necessary to take legal proceedings to recover possession of the property and the debt. Repossession is taken only as an action of last resort,

Income collection and arrears recovery is a key landlord function and to ensure focus on performance, key performance indicators are reported on a monthly basis at corporate and divisional level across the Housing Executive's seven Accounts Units.

The Housing Executive is committed to continually reviewing processes to seek improvements in income collection and arrears recovery, and this involves sharing best practice and working both internally and externally with others to ensure effective service delivery.

Disability Living Allowance Claimants

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Disability Living Allowance claimants in each Constituency.

(AQW 28237/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below shows the breakdown of Disability Living Allowance claimants by constituency at 31st May 2013.

Constituency	Number of DLA Claimants
Belfast East	9,300
Belfast North	15,340
Belfast South	8,820
Belfast West	17,800
East Antrim	7,730
East Londonderry	9,010
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	9,090
Foyle	14,230
Lagan Valley	8,120
Mid Ulster	10,700
Newry and Armagh	12,730
North Antrim	8,960
North Down	6,610
South Antrim	8,540
South Down	11,590
Strangford	7,880
Upper Bann	13,170
West Tyrone	13,300
No Constituency specified	2,110
Total	195,010

The total number in the table is slightly out due to rounding's.

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 the UK Statistics Authority.

Employment and Support Allowance Claimants

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Employment and Support Allowance claimants in each Constituency.

(AQW 28238/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The latest published statistical information for Employment and Support Allowance covers the period ending 31 May 2013.

At 31 May 2013, there were a total of 74,190 people claiming Employment and Support Allowance. The table below shows the breakdown of this total, by Constituency.

Constituency	Number of ESA Claimants
Belfast East	3,540
Belfast North	6,270
Belfast South	3,610
Belfast West	6,130
East Antrim	3,100
East Londonderry	4,390
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	3,230
Foyle	5,710
Lagan Valley	2,840
Mid Ulster	3,940
Newry and Armagh	4,730
North Antrim	4,130
North Down	2,390
South Antrim	3,120
South Down	4,190
Strangford	2,840
Upper Bann	4,980
West Tyrone	4,320
No Constituency specified	730
Total	74,190

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 the UK Statistics Authority.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Staff

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development (i) why the 1 percent pay increase awarded to Northern Ireland Housing Executive staff in July 2013 has not been implemented; (ii) when staff will receive the pay rise; and (iii) whether it will be backdated.

(AQW 28247/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Approval for the 1% pay increase has been granted by the Finance Minister on 14 November 2013. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is making arrangements to pay the increase backdated to April 2013 to all staff as soon as possible.

Departmental Soft Services

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 26721/11-15, how many people are employed by his Department in Soft Services; and how many will be employed after the outsourcing takes place.

(AQW 28248/11-15)

Mr McCausland: 'Soft services' is a term used to refer to Facilities Management activities which relate to services within a building or a business, for example security, cleaning and catering functions; as opposed to hard services which refer to services relating to the building itself; for example maintenance or engineering.

The soft services to be included in the current procurement exercise for the NICS Security and Ancillary Services contract relate to messengerial services across my Department.

There are currently 150 messenger posts in the Department. The number of staff employed on messenger services under the outsourced contract will be a matter for the contractor to determine.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Houses in South Antrim

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the occupancy rates for Northern Ireland Housing Executive houses in South Antrim, broken down by (i) Antrim; (ii) Newtownabbey 1; and (iii) Newtownabbey 2 offices.

(AQW 28256/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The table below details the current stock and the number of voids in the Housing Executive's District Office areas of Antrim; Newtownabbey 1 and Newtownabbey 2 which covers South Antrim.

District Office	Awaiting Imminent Relet	Difficult to let *	Undergoing Major repairs Improvements/Decanting	Pending Sale	Pending Demolition	Squatters/ SPED	Total	Gross Housing stock
Antrim	6	18	19	2	1	4	50	2,364
Newtownabbey 1	1	5	84	1	13	0	104	2,160
Newtownabbey 2	7	2	4	0	0	3	16	2,134
Totals	14	25	107	3	14	7	170	6,658

* Under Rule 68 of the Housing Selection Scheme a property is deemed to be difficult to let if it meets the following criteria: -

- 1) It has been void for at least four weeks; and
- 2) No eligible Applicants have applied for it.

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.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Rent Arrears

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 27476/11-15, to outline the actions his Department is taking to reduce the number of Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants that are in rent arrears.

(AQW 28264/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that they have seven specialist Accounts Units situated across Northern Ireland, who are dedicated to the collection of rent and arrears recovery. Staff in these Units apply the policy and procedures of the organisation, which aim to ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken when tenants fail to pay their rent and fall into arrears.

The appropriate actions taken to recover the arrears include early intervention through contact by letter and personal contact. Systems are in place to ensure that staff are prompted to take action at different levels where arrears continue to increase. At all opportunities, through various communications and personal contact, tenants are offered the services of specialist independent debt advice service, provided in partnership with Advice NI.

At all stages in the arrears recovery process, Housing Executive staff work with tenants to endeavour to come to a suitable voluntary repayment agreement. However, where arrears continue to increase and tenants continue to break agreements, it may be necessary to take legal proceedings to recover possession of the property and the debt. Repossession is taken only as an action of last resort,

Income collection and arrears recovery is a key landlord function and to ensure focus on performance, key performance indicators are reported on a monthly basis at corporate and divisional level across the Housing Executive's seven Accounts Units.

The Housing Executive is committed to continually reviewing processes to seek improvements in income collection and arrears recovery, and this involves sharing best practice and working both internally and externally with others to ensure effective service delivery.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Properties in North Down: Gas

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in North Down that have had gas installed, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 28266/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that the number of gas installations in the last five years, through major heating schemes and Disabled Persons Adaptations heating were as follows:-

2008/09	11
2009/10	55
2010/11	186
2011/12	209
2012/13	13

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Properties in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) location; and (ii) timescales of plans to install gas in Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in North Down.

(AQW 28267/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that gas heating is being installed during 2013/14 financial year in the following estates in North Down:

Bloomfield/Rathgill	69 dwellings
Conlig	4 dwellings
Groomsport	12 dwellings
Kilcooley	88 Dwellings
Hollywood	29 dwellings
Whitehill	2 dwellings

The Housing Executive has also advised that during 2014/15 financial year a small number of gas back boiler units and 15 year old oil systems will be replaced but these have not been programmed yet.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Staff

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development when staff from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive will receive the one percent pay increase that was awarded in July 2013.

(AQW 28270/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Approval for the 1% pay increase has been granted by the Finance Minister on 14 November 2013. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive is making arrangements to pay the increase backdated to April 2013 to all staff as soon as possible.

Citizens Advice Bureau and Advice NI

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development to outline how the roles of the Citizens Advice Bureau and Advice NI differ.

(AQW 28302/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Citizens Advice is made up of a Regional Office and 28 Citizens Advice bureaux across Northern Ireland which are affiliated to Citizens Advice NI. These local bureaux provide a holistic advice service on topics including benefits, debt, employment, consumer, money and housing issues.

Advice NI is a membership organisation that provides a range of infrastructure support and development services to independent advice and advocacy organisations across Northern Ireland. Advice NI has 70 member organisations who provide a range of generalist and specialist information, advice and advocacy services to the public in the areas of social security, debt, housing, consumer issues, employment, tax, older people, people with disabilities, ex-offenders and their families, carers and victims.

Citizens Advice NI and Advice NI regional offices both provide support services to their members including provision of accredited training courses, social policy support, ICT and communications support. To maximise potential and the skills and individual expertise of both Citizens Advice NI and Advice NI these organisations, in partnership with the Law Centre NI, have formed The Northern Ireland Advices Services Consortium. The Consortium is funded by my department to deliver a range of regional support services to frontline advice providers.

Common Waiting List: Reduction

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 27763/11-15, what actions his Department has taken to reduce the Common Waiting List in the (i) Waterloo Place; (ii) Waterside; and (iii) Collon Terrace Housing Executive District Office areas.

(AQW 28330/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that from April 2012 - March 2013, 184 units of social housing were delivered and there were 456 units of social housing under construction across their Waterloo Place, Waterside and Collon Terrace District areas. Additionally, there are 788 units in the current Social Housing Development Programme 2013/14-2015/16.

The Housing Executive carries out annual housing need assessments and each year the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) is reviewed to take account of changing trends. While the Housing Executive project over a five year period, the budget for the SHDP is set within a three year period. Housing need over and above what is listed in the SHDP is contained within the unmet housing need prospectus. The prospectus is intended to guide housing associations in their search for sites. Waterloo Place, Waterside and Collon Terrace District Office areas are among the locations identified in this prospectus.

The Housing Executive is also actively reviewing land that it owns with a view to bringing forward land with development potential into the SHDP. A Housing Association is due on site for Phase 1 of Nelson Drive (17 unit scheme in the Waterside) while another Housing Association is working Housing Executive sites at Nixon's Corner and Fahan Street (combined 20 units in Waterloo Place) and another

Housing Association has submitted planning for a 17 unit scheme at Glen Court/ Cedar Court in Waterloo Place.

Additionally, the Housing Executive monitor public sector surplus land trawls to identify any opportunities for the development of social housing on surplus public sector sites. They are working with their colleagues in the City Council of Londonderry in relation to additional land at Glen Court/ Cedar Court and Corrody Road, with a view to delivering additional social housing in these locations.

Housing Waiting List for the Village Area

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many people are on the housing waiting list for the Village area; and (ii) how many have been removed from the waiting list since the commencement of the decanting associated with the housing regeneration scheme.

(AQW 28336/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Waiting List for the Donegall Road Common Landlord Area is set out below.

	Singles	Couples	Families	Elderly	Total
All Applicants	116	8	71	19	214
Housing Stress	48	3	21	10	82
Allocations Year to March 2013*	22	1	14	3	40

* These figures do not include the new build properties which have been allocated since March 2013.

87 New social dwellings have been completed or are nearing completion in the Village area. To date, 73 of these have been handed over and occupied, and the remaining 14 will be occupied before Christmas 2013. All of these properties have been allocated to applicants on the Donegall Road Common Landlord Area waiting list.

This information will be reflected in the next annual waiting list analysis.

Village Regeneration Area

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development what efforts his Department has made to garner interest in developing private housing within the Village Regeneration area.

(AQW 28338/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Two development phases of social housing are complete or nearing completion in the Village Regeneration area, with a third phase submitted for planning approval. It is the intention to develop the remaining land for affordable private sector housing, in consultation with the local community, once planning approval for Phase 3 is granted.

A scheme has also been introduced to support owner occupiers living in redevelopment areas who wish to return to the area post regeneration. This provides the opportunity to purchase a new home with any difference in the value of their old home and new home being carried by the relevant housing association. My Department is currently developing an information leaflet for distribution by the Housing Executive and community organisations in the Village area to increase awareness of this scheme.

Village Regeneration Area

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development to detail any discussions his Department has had with private construction or development companies regarding the sale of land or development of private housing within the Village Regeneration area.

(AQW 28339/11-15)

Mr McCausland: It was always intended that the development of social housing in the Village Regeneration area would be progressed first to meet rehousing requirements. Two development phases are complete or nearing completion with a third phase submitted for planning approval.

It is the Housing Executive's intention to develop the remaining land for affordable private sector housing and it will commence this process in consultation with the local community once planning approval for Phase 3 is granted, as this will determine the amount of land available.

At this time the Housing Executive will also continue to monitor the social waiting list demand and should this position change it will review the land use.

There have been no discussions with private construction or development companies or estate agents to date. The Housing Executive normally releases such land via an open development brief process.

Licensing (Conditions for Mixed Trading) Regulations (NI) 1997

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the timeline to amend the Licensing (Conditions for Mixed Trading) Regulations (NI) 1997.

(AQW 28355/11-15)

Mr McCausland: A public consultation on "Proposed changes to the law regulating the sale and supply of alcohol in Northern Ireland" ended on 12 November 2012. The consultation sought views on a wide range of proposals, including changes to the Licensing (Conditions for Mixed Trading) Regulations (NI) 1997 which set out the conditions under which alcohol is sold in supermarkets and other premises in addition to household goods.

A large volume of responses were received which highlighted a wide range of strongly held views from a variety of key stakeholders, including the alcohol industry, health bodies and the general public.

I am currently considering the content of the final report on the outcome of the above consultation in advance of making a decision on the way forward. The challenge is finding an appropriate balance between the promotion and protection

of population health while not disproportionately interfering in the market or affecting competition.

Regulation of Alcohol Sales Online

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Social Development what measures are in place to regulate alcohol sales online.

(AQW 28356/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Under the Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, alcohol may only be sold by retail in Northern Ireland in certain licensed premises. Any person wishing to sell alcohol to the public for consumption off the premises, including online sales, must hold a pub or an off-sales premises licence. Any person selling alcohol online in Northern Ireland without a licence is liable to a fine of up to £5000, or imprisonment for up to 6 months, or both.

Furthermore any person who sells alcohol online in Northern Ireland to a young person under 18 is committing an offence, as is any young person under 18 who attempts to buy alcohol online.

Neighbourhood Renewal Areas: Capital Projects

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 27896/11-15, to detail the (i) capital projects financed in the (a) Triax; (b) Outer North; (c) Outer West; and (d) Waterside Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in 2012/13; and (ii) funding allocated to each project.

(AQW 28391/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The information requested is provided in the attached tables.

The Member should note that the information presented for Triax Neighbourhood Renewal Area in AQW 27896/11-15 should be corrected to read as follows:

	Triax Spend	Triax Spend per Capita
Total Capital Spend	£3,693,136	£229.26
Total Spend (Revenue & Capital)	£4,833,136	£300.03

TRIAx CAPITAL SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Projects	(a) TRIAX £'000
Replacement City Centre Bollards (Public Realm)	21
Castle Street (Public Realm)	65
Lighting - Water St / Whittaker St (Public Realm)	138
Foyle Expressway (Public Realm)	140
Cathedral Quarter (Public Realm)	70
Custom House Link (Public Realm)	30
Hawkin / Horace / Fountain St (Public Realm)	180
Ulster Bank building (Urban Development Grant)	476
2 Clarendon Street (Urban Development Grant)	98
9 Artillery St (Urban Development Grant)	52
Guildhall (UK City of Culture)	204
City Dressing (UK City of Culture)	145
Queens Quay (UK City of Culture)	180
Clarendon Street (UK City of Culture)	336
Patrick Street (UK City of Culture)	110
Cathedral Quarter (UK City of Culture)	50
Foyle Street at Foyleside (UK City of Culture)	35
ReStore -revitalisation projects (UK City of Culture)	50
Apprentice Boys (UK City of Culture)	89
Londonderry Theatre Trust (UK City of Culture)	60
North West Carnival (UK City of Culture)	61
Londonderry Print Workshop (UK City of Culture)	1
Nerve Centre Enhancement (UK City of Culture)	1
Aras Colmcille (UK City of Culture)	14
Creative Village Arts (UK City of Culture)	140

Projects	(a) TRIAX £'000
Context Gallery (UK City of Culture)	45
Tower Museum (UK City of Culture)	153
Creggan Enterprises (UK City of Culture)	89
Eden Place Arts Centre (UK City of Culture)	32
Inner City Trust (UK City of Culture)	247
Echo Echo (UK City of Culture)	300
Playhouse (UK City of Culture)	20
Void (UK City of Culture)	34
Gasyard (UK City of Culture)	218
Other (accounting transactions)	-191
Total Capital	3,693

OUTER NORTH CAPITAL SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Projects	(b) Outer North £'000
Leafair Community Association (Community Arts Hub)	35
St. Columb's College (UK City of Culture)	8
Greater Shantallow (UK City of Culture)	223
Liberty (UK City of Culture)	134
Leafair Community Association (UK City of Culture)	70
Other (accounting transactions)	-1
Total Capital	469

OUTER WEST CAPITAL SPEND FROM APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Projects	(c) Outer West £'000
Brooke Park (UK City of Culture)	148
Total Capital	148

WATERSIDE CAPITAL SPEND FROM APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Projects	(d) Waterside £'000
City Council of Londonderry (Lapwing Way Park Regeneration)	160
Fountain Hill (Public Realm)	80

Projects	(d) Waterside £'000
Duke Street (Public Realm)	234
Duke Street Railings (Public Realm)	390
Waterside Footpaths (Public Realm)	63
155 Spencer Rd (Urban Development Grant)	1
46 Spencer Rd (Urban Development Grant)	50
Churches Trust (UK City of Culture)	256
Caw Cultural Centre (UK City of Culture)	62
ReStore -revitalisation projects (UK City of Culture)	46
Total Capital	1,342

Notes:

- Figures include; Neighbourhood Renewal Investment Fund capital expenditure, expenditure from physical regeneration programmes (Urban Development Grants, Comprehensive Development, Environmental Improvements Schemes and Public Realm).
- Caution is advised in making comparisons of expenditure across Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. The expenditure is influenced by factors such as; the population of the area, the historic expenditure and/ or proposed capital investment in an area from other initiatives or mainstream sources, geographical location and proximity to existing services and the needs identified in Action Plans.
- Triax Neighbourhood Renewal Area encompasses the city centre and this has a significant impact on the level of expenditure reported for the area.
- 'Funding allocated' has been defined as the accrued spend based upon resource accounting principles. Figures also include monies transferred to other statutory bodies to carry out work on the Department's behalf.
- Included under the heading 'Other (accounting transactions)' are accounting adjustments arising from under-spends in previous year allocations.

Neighbourhood Renewal Areas: Funding

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 27896/11-15, to detail the (i) organisations that received revenue funding in the (a) Triax; (b) Outer North; (c) Outer West and (d) Waterside Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in 2012/13; and (ii) funding allocated to each organisation. **(AQW 28392/11-15)**

Mr McCausland:**TRIAX REVENUE SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013**

Organisations / Projects	(a) TRIAX £'000
Bogside & Brandywell Initiative (Salaries & Running Costs)	150
Creggan Country Park Enterprises Ltd (Salaries)	63
An Gaelaras (Salaries & Running Costs)	25
Gasyard Development Trust (Salaries & Running Costs)	47
Creggan Pre-School & Training Trust (Salaries & Running Costs)	113

Organisations / Projects	(a) TRIAX £'000
Bloody Sunday Trust (Salaries)	21
Dove House Community Trust (Salaries)	76
Gasyard Wall Feile (Salaries & Running Costs)	29
Old Library Trust (Salaries & Running Costs)	53
Cathedral Youth Club (Salaries & Running Costs)	36
Fountain Primary School (Transport Costs)	16
Triax Ltd (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	65
Dove House Community Trust (Salaries)	25
Creggan Neighbourhood Partnership (Salaries & Running Costs)	30
Cathedral Youth Club (Salaries & Running Costs)	24
Bogside & Brandywell Initiative (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	10
Dove House Community Trust (Salaries)	53
Other (accounting transactions)	-22
Total Revenue	814

OUTER NORTH REVENUE SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Organisations / Projects	(b) Outer North £'000
Shantallow Community Residents Association (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	82
Galliagh Community Development Group (Salaries)	39
Liberty Consortium (Salaries & Running Costs)	33
The Resource Centre Londonderry (Salaries)	70
Resource Centre Londonderry (Salaries & Running Costs)	47
Greater Shantallow Area Partnership (Salaries & Running Costs)	85
Greater Shantallow Area Partnership (Salaries & Running Costs)	44
Greater Shantallow Community Arts (Salaries & Running Costs)	38
Greater Shantallow Area Partnership (Salaries, Running, Programme & Equipment Costs)	19
The Resource Centre Londonderry (Salaries, Running & Equipment Costs)	36
Greater Shantallow Area Partnership (Salaries, Running & Equipment Costs)	14
Galliagh Community Development Group (Salaries & Running Costs)	38
Other (accounting transactions)	-4
Total Revenue	541

OUTER WEST REVENUE SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Organisations / Projects	(c) Outer West £'000
Dunluce Family Centre Ltd (Salaries & Running Costs)	75
Ballymagroarty/Hazelbank Community Partnership (Salaries & Running Costs)	115
Rosemount & District Welfare Rights Group (Salaries & Running Costs)	88
Glen Development Initiative (Salaries & Running Costs)	84
Outer West Ltd (Salaries, Running Costs & Equipment Costs)	39
Dunluce Family Centre Ltd (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	30
Rosemount & District Welfare Rights Group (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	10
Other (accounting transactions)	-3
Total Revenue	438

WATERSIDE REVENUE SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Organisations / Projects	(d) Waterside £'000
Top of the Hill 2010 (Salaries & Running Costs)	65
Caw/Nelson Drive Action Group (Salaries & Running Costs)	59
Waterside Area Partnership (Salaries & Running Costs)	80
Curryrierin Community Association (Salaries & Running Costs)	59
Older People North West (Salaries & Running Costs)	60
Clooney Estate Residents Association (Salaries & Running Costs)	42
Irish Street Community Association (Salaries & Running Costs)	61
Hillcrest House Ltd (Salaries & Running Costs)	46
Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership (Salaries, Running Costs & Equipment Costs)	39
Clooney Estate Residents Association (Salaries & Running Costs)	22
Curryrierin Community Association (Salaries)	25
Top of the Hill 2010 (Salaries)	21
Irish Street Community Association (Salaries)	12
Curryrierin Community Association (Salaries)	26
Other (accounting transactions)	-96
Total Revenue	521

CITYWIDE PROJECTS REVENUE SPEND APR 2012 - MAR 2013

Organisations / Projects	(a) TRIAX £'000	(b) Outer North £'000	(c) Outer West £'000	(d) Waterside £'000
Shantallow Community Residents Association (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	6	6	6	5
City Council of Londonderry (Programme Costs)	27	27	17	18
City Council of Londonderry (Salaries)	13	12	7	8
Community Restorative Justice (NI) Ltd (Salaries & Running Costs)	64	60	36	
Gingerbread NI (Salaries & Running Costs)	14	13	8	8
St Columb's Cathedral (Salaries)	10	9	5	5
An Gaeláras (Salaries & Running Costs)	12	11	6	6
Enterprise North West Ltd (Programme Costs)		9		6
The Pink Ladies Breast Cancer Support Group (Salaries, Running & Programme Costs)	7	6	4	4
Greater Shantallow Area Partnership (Salaries, Running & Equipment Costs)	2	2	1	1
Triax Ltd (Salaries, Running, Programme Costs & Professional Fees)	82	76	45	46
Western Health & Social Care Trust (Salaries, Programme, Monitoring, Evaluation & Administration Costs)	43	40	33	32
DSD Housing Division - NIHE (Salaries)	4	4	2	2
Londonderry Citizens Advice Bureau (Salaries & Running Costs)	42	39	23	23
Total Revenue	326	314	193	164

Notes

- Caution is advised in making comparisons of expenditure across Neighbourhood Renewal Areas. The expenditure is influenced by factors such as; the population of the area, the historic expenditure, the revenue investment in an area from other initiatives or mainstream sources, and the needs identified in Action Plans.
- 'Funding allocated' has been defined as the accrued spend based upon resource accounting principles. Figures also include monies transferred to other statutory bodies to carry out work on the Department's behalf.
- Included under the heading 'Other (accounting transactions)' are accounting adjustments arising from underpends in previous year allocations. For funding to bodies spread across a number of Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, allocations have been made based upon the population as a proportion of the total area population.

Village Regeneration Area

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development whether he would consider further development of social housing in the Village Regeneration area, should private interest not be forthcoming.

(AQW 28400/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Based on current waiting lists, a third planned phase comprising 27 social dwellings will meet future social housing need in the Village area. Any additional social housing provision will

require a review of the original Economic Appraisal as this will deviate significantly from the original approval.

It is the Housing Executive's intention to develop the remaining land for affordable private sector housing, and it will commence this process in consultation with the local community once planning approval is granted for Phase 3 the Housing Executive will also continue to monitor the social waiting list demand and should this position change it will review the land use.

New Build Homes in the North Down

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many new build homes are planned by housing associations in the North Down constituency.

(AQW 28428/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Table attached details the social housing new builds that are currently programmed to be delivered within North Down over the period 2013/14 – 2015/16.

The Social Housing Development Programme is managed on the basis of a three year rolling programme. The Housing Executive is currently in the process of formulating the new draft Social Housing Development Programme for the period 2014/15 – 2016/17 which, subject to my approval, will be published on the Housing Executive's website early in 2014.

Year	Association	Scheme/ Location	Units	Needs Group
2013/14	Clanmil	117A Donaghadee Road/ 7 Summerhill Park, Bangor	10	General Needs
	Clanmil	South Circular Road, Extension, Bangor	4	General Needs
	Helm Housing	22 Croft Road, Holywood	20	General Needs
	Oaklee	Clifton Special Care School, Old Belfast Road, Bangor	106	General Needs
	Trinity	78 Rathgael Road, Bangor	6	General Needs
		Total	146	
2014/15	Ark	North Down Older People, Ravara, Bangor	24	Elderly Housing with Care
	Clanmil	Corner of Faulkner Road/ Clandeboye Road, Bangor	54	General Needs
	Habinteg	34-36 Bangor Road, Holywood	8	General Needs
	NIHE	Rathgill Greenfield, Phase 1 Site A	100	General Needs
	NIHE	Rathgill, Phase 2, Bangor	50	General Needs
	Triangle	PSNI Site, 5 Millisle Road, Donaghadee	10	General Needs
	Trinity	West Church, Bangor	18	General Needs
		Total	264	

Year	Association	Scheme/ Location	Units	Needs Group
2015/16	Apex Housing	Killoughey Road, Donaghadee	24	General Needs
	Apex Housing	Moss Road, Millisle, Phase 2	3	General Needs
	Fold	122-124 High Street, Holywood	18	General Needs
	Fold	High Bangor Road, Donaghadee	12	General Needs
	Fold	Rathgael Road/ Clandeboye Road, Bangor	30	General Needs
	NIHE	Kilclief Gardens, Bangor	13	General Needs
		Total	100	

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.

Number of Civil Service Posts in Department

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 28013/11-15, whether the information requested is available by constituency; and if so, to provide the information in this format. **(AQW 28435/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The information in response to AQW 28013/11-15 on the number of Civil Service posts that existed in the Department for Social Development on 1 January 2012 and 1 January 2013 at (i) Administrative Assistant; (ii) Administrative Officer; (iii) Executive Officer 2; (iv) Executive Officer 1; (v) Staff Officer; (vi) Deputy Principal; (vii) Grade 7; and (viii) Grade 6 levels, is not available by constituency.

Patients who are Applying for Employment and Support Allowance

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development what guidance has been issued to medical staff, including GPs and consultants, on what is required when completing reports on, or letters in support of, patients who are applying for Employment and Support Allowance, in particular the information that decision makers depend upon when considering such applications; and if there has been no such guidance, will he undertake to issue guidance. **(AQW 28438/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: My Department published detailed guidance for healthcare professions titled “ESA Medical Reports – A guide to Completion,” at the time of the introduction of Employment Support Allowance in 2008.

The guidance provides comprehensive advice to medical professionals in relation to the provision of medical evidence requested for Employment and Support Allowance claimants and the completion of the ESA113 medical questionnaire. The guidance is maintained on the Departments internet site at:

<http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/ssa/ssa-projects-and-initiatives/ssani-esa/esa-healthcare-professionals.htm>

Warm Homes Grant Scheme in the South Belfast

Mr Spratt asked the Minister for Social Development how many homes benefitted from the Warm Homes Grant Scheme in the South Belfast constituency, in the last 12 months. **(AQW 28449/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive does not collect statistical information at constituency level. The parliamentary constituency of South Belfast falls within the district council areas of Belfast and

Castlereagh. In the 12 months from November 2012 to October 2013, a total of 1,088 homes in those 2 council areas received help under the Warm Homes Scheme.

Mortgage Debt Advice Service

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of people that have contacted the Mortgage Debt Advice Service in each month since it was established.

(AQW 28458/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The number of people who have contacted the Mortgage Debt Advice Service in each month since the establishment of the formal contract in May 2011 are as follows:

May 2011	72
June 2011	100
July 2011	73
August 2011	121
September 2011	169
October 2011	159
November 2011	123
December 2011	24
January 2012	135
February 2012	168
March 2012	98
April 2012	42
May 2012	149
June 2012	116
July 2012	134
August 2012	160
September 2012	159
October 2012	151
November 2012	164
December 2012	97
January 2013	186
February 2013	197
March 2013	140
April 2013	156
May 2013	148
June 2013	83
July 2013	148
August 2013	118

September 2013	145
October 2013	150

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.

Boiler Replacement Scheme

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Social Development, given comments made by a departmental official at a recent meeting of the Committee for Social Development where it was indicated that the aim of the scheme was to make boiler replacement available to more households to stop them from entering fuel poverty and that the most vulnerable people should be picked up through the scheme, whether replacement boilers are available through the Warm Homes Scheme.

(AQW 28459/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Officials from the Department briefed the Social Development Committee on 14 November about the Boiler Replacement Scheme. Officials pointed out that the Boiler Replacement Scheme was targeted at low income households and was both an energy efficiency improvement scheme and a fuel poverty prevention scheme. Officials commented that households on lowest incomes could have old and inefficient boilers replaced through the Warm Homes Scheme and this was a reference to the Affordable Warmth Pilot which replaces boilers free of charge for households who receive Pension Credit.

Derry District Housing Plan 2013

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development whether all the new build schemes programmed for 2013/16 in the Derry District Housing Plan 2013 have planning permission.

(AQW 28466/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Social Housing Development Programme is subject to change. From the point of publication of the Derry District Housing Plan in June 2013 there have been some amendments to the proposed 3 year SHDP for the Derry City Council Area. The table attached shows the schemes currently proposed for delivery from 2013/14 to 2015/16 including their planning status. The delivery mechanism for a number of the supported housing schemes in later years has yet to be determined. Therefore it is possible that they may not require planning permission.

Year	Association	Location	Units	Scheme Type	Need Group	Planning Status
2013/14	Apex Housing	Londonderry Rehabs	3	RH	General Needs	Planning not required
	Apex Housing	Cedar Villa Replacement, Derry	17	NB	Mental Health	Planning application lodged
	Apex Housing	Old School Lane, Derry	12	NB	General Needs	Planning approved
	Apex Housing	ESP Acquisitions, Phase 20D, Londonderry	4	ES	General Needs	Planning not required
	Apex Housing	ESP Acquisitions, Phase 20F, Londonderry	5	ES	General Needs	Planning not required
	Clanmil	26 Beechwood Avenue, Londonderry	12	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	Clanmil	Foxhill, Londonderry	17	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	Oaklee	Braehead Road, Nixons Corner	8	NB	General Needs	Planning application lodged
	Oaklee	Fahan Street, Londonderry	11	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	Trinity	Nelson Drive, Phase 1, Derry	17	NB	General Needs/Fit Elderly	Planning approved
		Total	106			

Year	Association	Location	Units	Scheme Type	Need Group	Planning Status
2014/15	Apex Housing	St Peter's School, Creggan	127	NB	General Needs	Planning application lodged
	Apex Housing	EMI, Foyleville, Londonderry	0	NB	Elderly Housing With Care	Application yet to be made
	Apex Housing	Glen Court/ Cedar Court, Londonderry	55	NB	General Needs/ Learning Disabilities	Application yet to be made
	Habinteg	Foyle Road, Londonderry	25	NB	General Needs	Planning application lodged
	Habinteg	Springtown, Phase 6	15	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	NIHE	Ballyarnett Travellers, Derry	6	NB	Travellers	Application yet to be made
	NIHE	Nelson Drive, Phase 2, Derry	20	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	Oaklee	Londonderry Addictions	20	NB	Drug or Alcohol Related Problems	Application yet to be made
		Total	268			
2015/16	Habinteg	Main Street, Claudy	10	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	NIHE	Corrody Road, Phase 1 (T)	30	NB	General Needs	Application yet to be made
	Selection	Western Trust LD	20	NB	Learning Disabilities	Application yet to be made
	Selection	Western Trust MH	20	NB	Mental Health	Application yet to be made
		Total	80			

Derry District Housing Plan 2013

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Social Development whether finance is in place to construct all of the new build schemes programmed for 2013/16 as detailed in the Derry District Housing Plan 2013. **(AQW 28467/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The budget for the Social Housing Development Programme has been agreed for the financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16. It should however be noted that the gross programme is subject to change, e.g. in the event that planning permission is not secured for proposed sites in the programme.

Welfare Reform

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQO 5055/11-15, to detail which parties he met with on each of the dates listed; and the attendees at each meeting. **(AQW 28505/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The political parties I and my officials met with and the attendees at each meeting are set out below:

Date	Meeting
28/01/13	Executive Sub Committee on Welfare Reform: Attendees: Sammy Wilson MLA, Jennifer McCann MLA, Stephen Farry MLA, Danny Kennedy MLA
25/02/13	Executive Sub Committee on Welfare Reform: Attendees: Jennifer McCann MLA, Stephen Farry MLA, Danny Kennedy MLA, Edwin Poots MLA
19/03/13	Meeting with Mike Nesbitt MLA and Michael Copeland MLA to discuss Welfare Reform
22/04/13	Meeting with Sammy Wilson MLA to discuss implications for NIHE/HMRC NI staff re Universal Credit
03/06/13	Meeting with Margaret Ritchie MP to discuss Housing Benefit Reform
02/07/13	Meeting with Alex Maskey MLA, Paula Bradley MLA and Michael Copeland MLA to discuss the Launch of Discussion Paper: Welfare Reform and the Value of Independent Advice

The membership of Executive Sub Committee on Welfare Reform is represented by the following political parties: DUP, SDLP, Sinn Feinn, UUP, Alliance.

Value of the Homes to be Transferred to Housing Associations

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development what method is being used to calculate the value of the homes to be transferred to housing associations; and to detail the extent to which overhanging debt payments or gap funding is required. **(AQW 28526/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) use Land and Property Services to provide valuations (both market value and Existing Use Value Social Housing) for dwellings, and any associated land, in a stock transfer scheme.

In relation to debt, it is not possible to determine separately what portion of the current NIHE loan debt balance relates specifically to the properties included in the potential transfers. In the past, the NIHE raised loans on an annual basis and not for specific new build and improvement schemes. The debt, if any, will remain with the Housing Executive. The arrangement for rent arrears for any property in the stock transfer programme is that all arrears due to the Housing Executive from the tenants at the date of transfer will remain with the Housing Executive.

In terms of the economic viability of the transfer proposals, each scheme will be subject to an economic and technical appraisal and approval process to demonstrate that the proposed refurbishments deliver the necessary value for money.

Street Drinking Prosecutions

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many people in each council area have been prosecuted for street drinking in each of the last three years.

(AQW 28701/11-15)

Mr McCausland: While my Department is responsible for confirming bye laws made by councils prohibiting the consumption of intoxicating liquor in designated streets and public places, prosecution of offenders is a matter for the relevant district council. My Department does not hold records of prosecutions; the relevant information may be obtained from individual councils.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

Energy Performance Certificate Rating of Parliament Buildings

Mr Flanagan asked the Assembly Commission to detail (i) the Energy Performance Certificate rating of Parliament Buildings; and (ii) what action is being taken to improve this rating.

(AQW 28309/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Display Energy Certificate (DEC) rating for Parliament Buildings is currently D, which is a creditable achievement for a building of its nature. I have enclosed a copy of the certificate for your information.

Our Environmental Services Manager works closely with the DFP's Energy Unit in order to ensure that all reasonable steps are being taken to maintain and improve the energy performance of the building.

In addition, the forthcoming major roof refurbishment project will include a range of measures that will positively impact on the building's energy performance, including replacement of the roof insulation and replacing and/ or refurbishing and upgrading all of the existing roof mounted mechanical and electrical service plant.

I would be happy to provide you with further specific detail, particularly with regard to the roof project proposals, if you feel that would be helpful.

Heating in Parliament Buildings

Mr Flanagan asked the Assembly Commission what consideration has been given to heating Parliament Buildings using sustainable and renewable forms of energy.

(AQW 28310/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly Commission will shortly undertake a major project to repair the roof of Parliament Buildings during which all the existing roof mounted mechanical and electrical services will be replaced and/ or refurbished. The opportunity has been taken to consider appropriate sustainable and renewable initiatives to be incorporated in the project and these will include solar thermal tubes and photovoltaic panels.

The boiler plant in Parliament Buildings has been converted to dual fuel and natural gas is used to supply the majority of heat to the building, with oil as a back-up. The remainder of the heating in the building is by means of electrical convection heaters.

While it is not currently possible to obtain natural gas from a sustainable source, the electricity supply to the Stormont Estate does come from 100% renewable sources.

Consideration was previously given to the installation of a biomass boiler but difficulties with storage and supply for the boilers meant that this was not deemed to be a viable option.

I hope this provides you with the information that you require. Please do not hesitate to ask if you require anything further.

Private Members' Bills: Budget

Mr Flanagan asked the Assembly Commission to detail the annual budget allocated for drafting legislation for Private Members' Bills from 2007/08 to 2015/16.

(AQW 28311/11-15)

Mrs Cochrane (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The table below sets out the actual annual expenditure incurred on drafting Private Members' Bills in each of the financial years from 2007/08 to 2012/13. It also includes the budget allocation that was made available in each financial year. These costs are those associated with drafting the legislation only. It may be helpful to note that they do not include any costs incurred by Members' on consultation, etc. as these can be claimed from a Members' Office Cost Expenditure and, as such, are not recorded in a consolidated manner.

Financial Year	Actual Expenditure	Budget
2007/08	£0	£30,000
2008/09	£0	£40,000
2009/10	£20,874	£45,000
2010/11	£84,923	£84,923
2011/12	£2,925	£20,000
2012/13	£25,620	£33,850
2013/14 (to date)	£3,565	£80,000
2014/15	-	£70,000

The excess of Budget above Actual expenditure for 2007/08 to 2013/14 was largely re-allocated to other expenditure categories through the in-year monitoring processes. The figures for 2010/11 include £39,301.10 towards drafting a Committee Bill - Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Bill. Similarly, the 2012-13 figures include £1,536 towards drafter's advice in relation to a proposed Ombudsman Bill being developed by OFMdFM Committee. The budgetary allocations listed for the current and next financial years are intended to include expenditure on Committee Bills as well as PMBs also. The budget for 2014/15 corresponds to the final year of the Spending Review 2010 and the figure for 2015/16 has not yet been finalised.

The work undertaken in drafting Private Members' Bills is cyclical in nature and as such should be considered in the context of a full Assembly mandate rather than the amount of expenditure incurred in each financial year. The majority of Private Members' Bills are drafted in the second half of an Assembly mandate, due to the time required to draft proposals, conduct research and consult fully.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 29 November 2013

(AQW 28128/11-15)

I announced the establishment of a new cycling unit in August 2013 to deliver the effective co-ordination and management of a range of cycling initiatives. The unit was formally established in November this year.

Senior officials in my Department are currently exploring budget and resource requirements to ensure the necessary funding is secured to deliver the Department's objectives. Given that the Unit has been set up in-year, the annual budget is estimated at around £800K for staffing and promotional costs. Discussions are also underway to identify what additional resource budget is required and the capital funding required for infrastructure measures.

(AQO 5055/11-15)

The dates I and my officials met with political parties represented in the Assembly in relation to the Welfare Reform Bill are set out below:

28 January 2013
25 February 2013
19 March 2013
22 April 2013
3 June 2013
2 July 2013



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