

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

Friday 11 January 2013

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 11 January 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Copeland asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail (i) the number of Freedom of Information requests received by their Department in each year since 2007; (ii) the proportion of requests each year that were not answered within the time limit; (iii) the number of requests currently outstanding by more than (a) one to two months (b) three to four months; (c) five to six months; (d) seven to twelve months; and (e) more than twelve months.

(AQW 16779/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): The information requested at (i) and (ii) above is published in the FOI Annual Reports for the years 2007 to 2011, which can be accessed from the OFMDFM website at:

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

The information requested at (iii) is provided in the table below:

(iii)	Requests Currently Outstanding (At Mid-December)	Number of Requests
(a)	1-2 months	5
(b)	3-4 months	3
(c)	5-6 months	4
(d)	7-12 months	3
(e)	More than 12 months	25

Social Investment Fund

Mr Copeland asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the Social Investment Fund will address deprivation within the time period and the finance available.

(AQW 16867/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The issues associated with poverty and deprivation, which the Social Investment Fund aims to address, are not new. There are a range of other initiatives trying to impact on the same issues, which have had varying levels of success in the past.

Nonetheless, the problems persist in some areas and the Social Investment Fund not only provides enhanced funding to help tackle these historically difficult issues but also affords an opportunity to bind together and integrate work to achieve maximum impact.

It is not therefore intended that the Social Investment Fund alone will address all issues associated with deprivation in the current time period or with the existing resources. It will, however, provide vital funding to address identified, evidenced, objective needs within communities, enhance work already ongoing and better integrate efforts to the benefit of local communities.

If successful, we envisage it will be used to inform work going forward across government in the longer term to ensure better collaboration, and that funding is targeted at those interventions which demonstrate impact in communities most in need.

Programme for Government Commitment

Mr Swann asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Programme for Government commitment to facilitate delivery of the Executive's 20 percent target for increased drawdown of competitive EU funds.

(AQO 2965/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Progress against Programme for Government targets is assessed independently by the PfG Central Team and the Delivery Oversight Group, chaired by the Head of the Civil Service.

A comprehensive monitoring exercise has recently been completed and a report is being prepared. It would be unfair of us to pre-empt this work.

A baseline of £11 million was set against which to measure the Executive's target of a 20% increase in drawdown of competitive EU funds. Meeting our 20% target would result in £53 million of competitive European funding for the Executive. In 2011/12, which was the first year in which we measured progress against the target, almost £16 million was secured to benefit our businesses, groups and citizens.

We continue to drive this work through the Barroso Taskforce Working Group (BTWG). In November, Junior Ministers led a BTWG meeting to consider progress made by Executive departments – not just on funding – but against all of the objectives in our 2012-13 European Priorities. At the halfway point in the year, we can confirm that departments are on track to deliver 95% of targets set.

We will build on this work when we visit Brussels later this month to participate in an EU Peace conference at the invitation of Commissioner Hahn.

Crumlin Road Gaol

Mr McClarty asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how their Department is working with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to ensure the success of Crumlin Road Gaol as a visitor and conference centre.

(AQW 17302/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Belfast Tours Ltd have been appointed as the operator of the visitor attraction and conference centre, which opened to the public on 19 November. In the first two weeks of operation, over 2000 people took the tour and over 32 conferences have been booked for the months ahead.

Our officials have been working closely with some of DETI's agencies including the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) and Invest NI. Discussions are ongoing with the NITB on maximising access to the Gaol and promoting the Gaol as a major tourist attraction.

Invest NI is a key stakeholder on the public sector group which is considering the Gaol as a possible location for creative industries/digital hub and how this might impact on the tourist offer.

Belfast Tours Ltd continues to have extensive links with the Tourist Board. They are currently in discussions with NITB regarding the Gaol facility inclusion in their 2013 campaign and have just recently hosted the World Host Programme for NITB. Belfast Tours Ltd also works very closely with Belfast Welcome Centre, which uses their resources to promote the Gaol.

Childcare Strategy

Mr McGlone asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Childcare Strategy. **(AQO 2961/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The current Programme for Government includes a commitment to publish and implement a Childcare Strategy to provide integrated and affordable childcare. The Strategy will be aligned with the primary focus of the Programme for Government, which is to grow the economy and tackle disadvantage.

On 5 December 2012, we launched a public consultation on the Executive's proposed Childcare Strategy. The consultation document "Towards a Childcare Strategy" sets out the vision and principles for a future Childcare Strategy and provides an opportunity for those with an interest to help shape the development of the Strategy. The public consultation process runs until 5 March 2013 after which all comments received will be reviewed and a final Childcare Strategy developed. We have also recently taken decisions that would allow up to a further £4.5million to be allocated from the central ring-fenced Childcare Fund to support actions on the ground as the Strategy continues to be developed.

Quangos

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why there has been no action to reduce the number of operative quangos, in light of recent answers to AQs indicating that the number has risen since 2007.

(AQW 17433/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We stated in our answer to AQW 14782/11-15 that the number of public bodies sponsored by our Department increased by three between 8 May 2007 and 27 September 2012. It should, however, be remembered that, as indicated in our answer, three bodies already existed at 8 May 2007 but did not feature in our previous answer because the Community Relations Council was not at that time classed as a Non Departmental Public Body and the NI Judicial Appointments Commission and NI Memorial Fund were not then linked to our Department.

The functions of the NIMF will transfer to the new Victims and Survivors Service and the body will close on 31 March 2013. Victims and Survivors funding previously administered by the Community Relations Council transferred to the Victims and Survivors Service during November 2012.

Service Level Agreement

Mr Swann asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 17253/11-15, how many times they have had to use the services provided under the Service Level Agreement in each year since 2010.

(AQW 17770/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Central Investigation Service has undertaken two investigations on behalf of the Department. One in 2010 and one in 2011/12. The unit also provided six Fraud Awareness Workshops for the Department and its Arm's Length Bodies in 2011.

The Head of the Central Investigation Service attends the Department's Fraud Investigation Oversight Group meetings on a monthly basis.

30 Day Payment Performance Targets

Mr Frew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how each of their Department's arm's-length bodies has performed on the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and whether any sector has been paid more quickly than others.

(AQW 17924/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The table below shows the performance of our Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) against the 30 day prompt payment target during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 financial years.

Name of Arm's Length Body	2010-11	2011-12
Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission	98%	96%
Strategic Investment Board	96%	97%
Ilex Urban Regeneration Company Limited	74%	96%
Commissioner for Older People for NI	N/A	65%
Community Relations Council for Northern Ireland	47%	69%
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	95%	97%
Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland	97%	100%
Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland	97%	99%
Northern Ireland Memorial Fund	100%	100%
Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland	94%	N/A

The Commissioner for Older People for NI was established on 14 November 2011; therefore 2011-12 figures are for the period 14 November 2011 to 31 March 2012 inclusive.

The Economic Research Institute for Northern Ireland formally closed at the end of July 2011.

Our NDPBs do not differentiate between sectors with regard to the timeliness of payments.

Late Payment: Westminster

Mr Frew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how the late payment directive currently going through Westminster will affect their Department.

(AQW 17925/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The late payment directive currently passing through Westminster is not expected to significantly impact upon our Department.

The Department and all ALBs are legally bound to meet the terms of the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1988 as amended and supplemented by the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2002. This requires that all payments should be made within agreed terms or if no terms have been agreed, 30 days after receipt of a valid invoice.

OFMDFM and its sponsored bodies take all possible steps to pay suppliers as promptly as possible. The Department's prompt payment performance for 2011/12 was 95%.

Cross Sector Advisory Forum

Mr Flanagan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) for an update on the work of the Cross Sector Advisory Forum; (ii) when the forum has met in the last two years; and (iii) who attended each of these meetings.

(AQW 18006/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Since 2009, the Cross Sector Advisory Forum met five times, with the last meeting taking place on 3 February 2011. The Forum was set up as a time-limited response to the particular economic and financial circumstances at that time. As well as Ministers, members included the following organisations:

- Older People's Advocate
- NI Public Service Alliance (NIPSA)

- NI Children's Commissioner
- Firmus Energy
- Ulster Federation of Credit Unions
- NI Chamber of Commerce
- NI Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA)
- Institute of Directors
- NI Local Government Association (NILGA)
- Construction Industry Group
- Irish League of Credit Unions
- Phoenix Natural Gas
- Ulster Farmers' Union
- Ulster Bank
- Northern Bank
- NI Anti-Poverty Network
- Federation of Small Businesses
- First Trust Bank
- Irish Congress of Trade Unions
- Consumer Council
- NI Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR)
- NI Advisor on Employment and Skills
- Construction Employers' Federation
- Bank of Ireland
- NIE Energy Supply
- Energy Generators
- 4 Independent Members

The Forum played a pivotal role in drawing up the Executive's strategy for dealing with the economic downturn. It provided advice and recommendations when drawing together the Executive's Priority Measures to Deal with the Economic Downturn, which was published on 20 May 2010. The Priority Measures included 151 different recommendations aimed at alleviating the effects of the economic downturn. Significant achievements were made through the completion of recommendations in the areas of planning processes, information made available to the construction industry for public procurement, support for apprentices, support for the unemployed, benefits entitlement, addressing poverty, the social economy, support for local business and supporting the local housing market. A Post Programme Evaluation on the Priority Measures package is currently under way.

Community Relations Council: Funding

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, given that FAIR received a letter of offer, why it is now excluded from Community Relations Council funding.

(AQW 18007/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The responsibility for administering Victims and Survivors funding transferred from the Community Relations Council to the Victims and Survivors Service on 12 November 2012. Neither we nor our Department are involved in the assessment process and therefore cannot comment on any individual group's application.

The Service recently opened the application process for the 2013-15 Victims and Survivors Programme. The call for applications closed on Monday 17 December 2012.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

EU Commission Penalties

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how the resources, required to meet expected EU Commission penalties, in relation to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, have been sourced.

(AQW 17523/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): The total amount of the EU Financial Corrections is £88.3m and has been funded from a number of sources.

The majority (£54.5m) was absorbed by year-end underspends from other Government Departments. This was managed at Block level within End Year Flexibility.

Funding was also secured from DEFRA (£11.2m), non Budget cover (£14.2m) and a successful bid (£2.3m) in the 2009-10 financial year.

The Department made internal funding available (£8.6m) and benefited from an exchange rate gain (£2.5m).

North Down Tree Planting

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the level of proposed tree planting for the North Down area in the next 3 years.

(AQW 17836/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The Woodland Grant Scheme is a permissive scheme and provides the applicant with approval to plant new woodland. This approval does not commit them to plant.

Applications for the Scheme are usually made several months before the planting takes place. Currently there are 1.25ha of new woodland applied for in North Down. Forest Service expects further applications will be submitted in 2013 and 2014 prior to planting.

Forest Service: Caravan Parks

Mr McMullan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether any facilities in East Antrim will benefit from the recently announced £4 million investment by Forest Service for upgrading caravan parks.

(AQW 17840/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department has secured £4m under the Jobs & Economy Initiative to help with the development of recreation & tourism projects, including caravan sites, in forests over the next two business years. This presents a significant opportunity for strategic partners, including Councils such as Moyle to take forward proposals they may have to up-grade visitor provision in forests in their area.

Regarding your specific query about facilities in the East Antrim area, my Department is currently progressing a Memorandum of Understanding with Moyle District Council for the development of recreation and leisure products in forests within the Council area. I believe this provides an excellent framework and opportunity for projects such as upgrading and management of our caravan parks to be taken forward within the timeframe of this Fund.

Single Farm Payment

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department is taking to ensure that farmers who are subject to an inspection receive their Single Farm Payment without delay.

(AQW 17896/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As announced shortly before Christmas, my Department has completed 82.8% of 2012 Single Farm Payment claims and paid £184.1 million into farmers' bank accounts in December. The vast majority of these payments were received by farmers before Christmas. The claims that cannot be paid at this stage have queries that need to be resolved or require complex assessments which take longer to clear.

In relation to inspected cases, we have made good progress this year and have been able to pay over 500 claims involving inspections in December. This is a significant improvement on last year and is in the main attributed to the earlier commencement of inspections in 2012, the introduction of Control with Remote Sensing for some land inspections and additional human resource made available to process the findings of inspections.

The 2012 inspection programme identified a large number of changes to maps and land which is ineligible for payment. In many cases these changes date back a number of years and this means that entitlements and payments allocated to these farm businesses in previous years have to be recalculated in order to calculate the correct amount due for 2012. We are working to complete all the remaining claims at the earliest practical date, but we must also administer the scheme in a way that avoids further disallowances by the European Union and this means payments cannot be released until the correct amount due has been calculated.

Ash Dieback Emergency Hotline

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what response times are being achieved by the Forest Service Ash Die Back Emergency Hotline and what targets have been set.
(AQW 17996/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: If people are concerned about symptoms in ash they can contact DARD on 0300 200 7847 or email dardhelpline@dardni.gov.uk. At 14 December numbers of calls and emails to the helpline have been limited. All information provided is assessed and prioritised. Inspections of suspect tress, if appropriate, are factored into ongoing survey work associated with the Chalara dieback surveillance plan. At 14 December a total of 740 premises have been surveyed with 23 of these inspections having been initiated by helpline enquires.

Ash Dieback Disease

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how her Department is working with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, which manages designated forestry sites, to combat and help eradicate Ash Die Back; and (ii) whether any actions undertaken by her Department have been approved by the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and on what date.
(AQW 17997/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My officials are in regular contact with the Environment Agency here on a range of plant health issues. The Environment Agency is represented on the Department's Incident Management Team, which formulates and manages the actions we are taking in response to Chalara dieback in Ash.

Ash Dieback Disease

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why Forest Service's does not publish the sites where Ash Dieback has been found, given that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has published on this issue and how does this assist in advising the public to be vigilant of the disease.
(AQW 17999/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Sites where Chalara dieback in Ash has been found are published on the Department's website at www.dardni.gov.uk/ash-dieback. Our policy is to publish the precise location of publicly owned sites and the county for sites in private ownership, along with a map of current outbreak sites in the north. This map indicates the general location of outbreak sites, consistent with map produced by Defra. Other information is available on both the DARD and NIDirect websites, which will assist the public in being vigilant for the disease.

Relocation of Departmental Headquarters

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 17430/11-15, which specific sites within each listed District Council area were considered as options when making the decision to relocate the Department's headquarters.
(AQW 18036/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The shortlisting process considered District Council areas, not specific sites. This process resulted in the top two District Council areas being in the North West. It was the availability of the

Executive owned site at Ballykelly that was the final determining factor that I used to decide on the location.

Woodland Cover

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department has taken to increase woodland cover in the last 12 months.

(AQW 18064/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: During 2012 we provided £0.77 million in grant aid up to the end of November under the Rural Development Programme to encourage farmers and landowners to plant 235 ha of new woodland and to maintain plantations established in previous years.

Forest Service publicised the support available for planting at Balmoral Show, the Green Living Fair, the Ulster Farmers Union Spring Farm Focus event, the Practical on Farm Renewable energy event, Planting Native Trees in Environmental and Woodland Schemes event and other agricultural shows and events.

I was able to visit some older woodland to learn about the experience of tree planters, which was reported in the press. I also met stakeholders to discuss forestry proposals under the next EU Rural Development Regulation. I jointly launched the Future Trees Trust with my southern counterpart, Shane McEntee, and the work of the Trust to improve the quality of our future broadleaved woodland was reported in the press. During the year I replied to a number of written and oral questions from Members of the Legislative Assembly on woodland creation.

Forest Service met afforestation stakeholders on two occasions during the year to discuss the draft Rural Development Regulation and proposals for forestry measures under the next Rural Development Programme.

Forest Service Board

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) to detail the current make up of the Forest Service Board; and (ii) whether she will consider nominating or appointing individuals from the private sector onto the Forest Service Board.

(AQW 18065/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill:

- i The Forest Service Chief Executive is advised by a Management Board comprising four Executive Directors and a Non-Executive Director.

The four Executive Directors are senior Forest Service Managers;

- 1 John Joe O'Boyle - Director of Forestry
- 2 Sheryl Henderson - (Acting) Corporate Services Director
- 3 Stuart Morwood - Woodland Development & Strategies Directorate
- 4 Ian Irwin - Forest Management Directorate

The Non-Executive Director is Pauline Keegan, who is also a Senior Civil Servant, working in another part of the Department. The Non-Executive Director role is to provide objective and constructive challenge, as necessary, and expertise and advice to assist the Board to take executive decisions.

- ii. The Forest Service Chief Executive is responsible to me for the Agency's performance and operations. As such, he is responsible for the arrangements for effective governance, and keeps these under review.

Woodland Planting

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how the planting approvals for new woodland is currently being processed, considering the pressure on her Department from containing and investigating Ash Dieback; (ii) how many planting approvals have been granted in the last four weeks compared to the same period last year; and (iii) what are the reasons for any differences.

(AQW 18067/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Planting approvals for new woodland are currently being processed by Forest Service. There have been some delays as a result of (a) amending planting approvals to remove ash and substitute with other tree species due to Chalara die-back and (b) to engage with stakeholders to agree a revised approval and claim process to comply with EC regulation.

During the 4 weeks prior to the Christmas holiday period Forest Service approved 34 new woodland approvals in 2012 (26 November – 21 December) and 13 new woodland approvals in 2011 (28 November – 23 December). More new woodland approvals were issued in the 4 weeks prior to Christmas in 2012 compared with 2011 because Forest Service had held approval documents to ensure that they were issued without a specification to plant ash and complied with the revised approval and claim process.

Woodlands: Native Seeds

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what has her Department done to promote the use and production of more native seeds for woodlands.

(AQW 18068/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Forest Service participated in the Seeds of Time and Place Steering Group, which promoted the local collection of seeds of native trees for nursery production and produced practical guidance for growing trees from seed.

As chair and facilitator of the NI Native Woodland Group, Forest Service published a collaborative booklet, Native Woodlands Definitions and Guidance, to inform and advise practitioners involved with planning and planting new native woodland. The booklet includes advice regarding the preferred use of planting stock grown from Irish seed sources.

Pig Producers

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, what action she has taken to protect and support pig producers. given that the latest figures suggest that only 5 Member States, including the UK, are fully compliant with the EU's partial ban on sow stalls.

(AQW 18078/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department has published several articles to remind pig producers of the requirements of the Pig Welfare Directive which came into force on 1 January 2013. A letter has been issued to every pig keeper in the north of Ireland and articles have appeared in the farming press, the Pig Bulletin which is produced by CAFRE pig technologists, and the "Helping You Comply Bulletin" which is produced by the Department's Farm Advisory Service.

My Department's Veterinary Service has inspected a number of pig holdings in 2012, including smaller holdings, to remind farmers of the need to take the necessary steps to comply with the Directive and to help address any issues that they may have.

The use of sow stalls has been banned here and in Britain since 1999 and the main provisions of the Pig Welfare Directive are contained within the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2012. From the provisional data submitted to the European Commission, I understand that 14 Member States expect to be in full compliance with the sow stall ban from 1 January 2013 in addition to Britain and the north, and Sweden and Luxembourg where there is already a complete ban on sow stalls.

Under the first two tranches of the Farm Modernisation Programme (FMP), financial support totalling just over £0.20m was made available to 39 businesses here where the main activity was pig farming. I have been informed that 45 pig farmers have applied to Tranche 3 of the FMP seeking financial support of some £0.15m.

Discussions are on-going at EU level to ensure early compliance with the Directive. The European Commission has been clear all along that it will not allow Member States to impose unilateral trade restrictions and it has said that it will impose infraction proceedings immediately in January 2013 against non compliant Member States.

Funding Schemes for Capital Projects

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail all the funding schemes her Department makes available for capital projects

(AQW 18079/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The capital projects/schemes funded by my department in 2012/13 are shown in the tables below, being:

- Table 1. Capital Projects funded by DARD
- Table 2. Capital Grant Schemes funded by DARD.

TABLE 1. CAPITAL PROJECTS FUNDED BY DARD

Business Area	Project Description	Project Description
Rivers Agency	Flood Alleviation	Connswater Community Greenway Project. Ballygawley Scheme Coleraine Lodge Burn
Rivers Agency	Drainage Infrastructure	Portna – Lower Bann Culverts Upgrading
Rivers Agency	Flood Risk Management	Flood hazard and Flood Risk Maps
Rivers Agency	Accommodation.	Omagh Regional Office
Rivers Agency	Recurrent Capital	Plant, Vehicles and Machinery
Forest Service	Construction	Access road, Glenderg Forest
Forest Service	Recurrent Capital	Plant, Vehicles and Machinery
CAFRE	Construction	Silos at Greenmount Campus
CAFRE	Construction.	Dairy Unit at Greenmount Campus
CAFRE	Minor projects.	Minor projects (16) under £100k
Area Based Schemes Development Unit	DARD Direct Offices	Refurbishment to meet DARD Direct specifications. (Funds transferred to DFP Properties Division).
Finance Division Estate Branch	Refurbishment	Installation of switch gear, cabling and ducting.
Finance Division Estate Branch	Minor projects.	Minor projects (5) under £100k

Business Area	Project Description	Project Description
Information Systems Branch	Graphical Information System (GIS).	Provision of Corporate GIS Solution
Information Systems Branch/ Forest Service	Survey Equipment	Survey equipment for Ash Dieback Disease
Information Systems Branch/ Veterinary Service	APHIS System	Security improvements and enhancements
Information Systems Branch/ Veterinary Service	Slaughter Line Post Mortem Recording.	Replacement of old equipment.
Information Systems Branch	Minor projects.	Minor projects (4) under £100k

TABLE 2. CAPITAL GRANT SCHEMES FUNDED BY DARD

Business Area	Scheme Title	Scheme Description
Forest Service,	Woodland Grant Scheme	Woodland expansion Sustainable management of existing woodlands
CAFRE	New Entrants Scheme	Interest Relief for Farmers on borrowings for capital projects
Rural Development	Tackling Rural Poverty	DSD Warm Homes Scheme. Power NI Free Insulation Scheme Rural Borewells Scheme
Rural Development	NIRDP Axis 1	Processing & Marketing Grant Scheme Farm Modernisation Programme Manure Efficiency Technology Scheme. Focus Farms Scheme
Rural Development.	NIRDP Axis 3	Farm diversification Small business creation and development Tourism activities Improving basic services in rural areas Village renewal projects Conservation of rural heritage
Rural Development	Interreg IVA	Developing a dynamic economy. Supporting infrastructure. Promoting innovative ways of addressing specific cross-border problems.

Business Area	Scheme Title	Scheme Description
Fisheries and Environment	European Fisheries Fund (EFF)	Support for the NI Fishing Industry, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ adaptation of the fishing fleet, ■ aquaculture, ■ processing and marketing, ■ measures of collective benefit ■ sustainable development of fisheries areas
Fisheries and Environment	Electronic equipment.	Electronic Logbook Software Systems.
Climate Change and Renewable Energy	Biomass Processing Challenge Fund	Installation of biomass-fuelled renewable energy technologies.

Capital Project Support

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the support for capital projects awarded to (i) farmers; and (ii) processors by her Department in each of the last 5 years.

(AQW 18082/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The financial support for capital projects awarded to farmers and processors by my Department in the last five years are included in the table below:

Table 1: DARD Capital Grants

	2007-08 £'000	2008-09 £'000	2009-10 £'000	2010-11 £'000	2011-12 £'000
Farmers	33,576	90,811	7,000	9,393	17,538
Processors	207	633	2,552	3,890	1,914
Total	33,783	91,444	9,552	13,283	19,452

Department Telephone Bills

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the cost to her Department of telephone bills in each of the last three years.

(AQW 18084/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: The cost of telephone bills, which includes the costs of calls, line rental, installation and provision of hand sets and equipment at all sites operated by my Department over the last three financial years are as follows: -

2009/2010	£478,890
2010/2011	£533,935
2011/2012	£532,469

Bovine TB

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for a breakdown of the costs associated with bovine TB in each of the last three years. (AQW 18138/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department holds this information by financial year. The latest full year for which data is available is 2011/12. The table below provides a breakdown for each element of expenditure on the TB eradication programme.

Year	AFBI Costs	Private Veterinary Practitioner Costs	TB Compensation Costs	DARD Staff Costs	DARD Funded Research	Haulier Costs	Misc	Tuberculin	Salvage	Total
2009/10	844,369	6,500,752	9,910,768	5,581,846	289,723	135,326	139,734	724,205	-1,079,579	23,047,144
2010/11	1,045,583	6,286,278	8,593,038	5,792,472	457,385	57,527	132,233	558,740	-826,347	22,096,909
2011/12	1,185,654	6,540,225	12,910,656	6,181,800	452,695	71,685	136,491	560,740	-1,381,225	26,658,721

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Derry City Football Club

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure how much funding her Department and its arm's-length bodies have committed to spending on Derry City Football Club.

(AQW 15513/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): Neither my Department nor its arms-length bodies have committed any funding to be spent on Derry City Football Club.

Brandywell Sports Stadium

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why (i) Derry City Council was not previously informed that the £36m funding for sub-regional stadium development would only be available from 2015 onwards; and (ii) why it has taken nearly four months to acknowledge receipt of the business case for the Brandywell Stadium, Brandywell Showgrounds and the Daisyfield and to inform the council that no funding currently exists.

(AQW 16217/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Facts around funding for sub-regional stadium development and in particular how this impacts on the Brandywell Stadium continue to be misrepresented.

You will be aware that I have not only consistently kept Derry City Council, Derry City FC and local politicians fully informed of the position in relation to funding for sub regional stadium development, but I also met with Derry City Council officials on 21 September 2011 and 01 March 2012 where the Brandywell redevelopment was specifically discussed.

I enclose copies of previous correspondence issued to Derry City Council and you personally in this regard. I fail therefore to see how this message has been misinterpreted in the way it has been.

The Derry City Council letter, enclosing its Business Case, sought a meeting with me to present the case. Given the above position it was clear that such a meeting would not be productive, however, I wished to consider how best my Department might engage with the Council on other aspects of its proposal. Having done so, I concluded that my officials, and those of SportNI, should meet with Derry City Council in relation to the Showgrounds and Daisyfield elements of the redevelopment since these have specific socio-economic and equality implications beyond sub-regional stadium considerations. I am awaiting the report of this and will continue to focus on it closely.

Brandywell Sports Stadium

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in light of Derry City Football Club's recent FAI success and consequent qualification for Europe, whether she will reconsider her decision and provide funding at a sub-regional level to assist with the development of the Brandywell stadium.

(AQW 16298/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have already issued a public statement congratulating Derry City FC on their Cup Final win. I would point out that I have made no decision on funding at sub regional level to assist with the development of the Brandywell or any of the other sub regional stadia nor is any decision possible at this stage.

I have consistently stated that the Brandywell Stadium development will be considered in due course, in the context of a funding programme for local stadium development. I have also consistently stated that there is currently no Executive money available to fund such development in the immediate term, but that this will remain a DCAL objective in the forthcoming Budget.

I have also insisted that my Department approaches the Brandywell Masterplan on a progressive and positive basis. DCAL officials have been instructed, in the first instance, to meet with Derry City Council about the Showgrounds and Daisyfield elements, since these have specific socio-economic and

equality implications beyond sub-regional stadium considerations. I am awaiting a report of this and will continue to focus on it closely.

Capital Spend on Football Grounds

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for an update on the plans for capital spend on football grounds.

(AQW 16492/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: As you will be aware the redevelopment of Windsor Park is being taken forward under my Department's Regional Stadium Development Programme with capital spend from Government of up to £25.2m by 2015. The Irish Football Association, in conjunction with my Department's Stadium Programme Director and his team, are making good progress in taking forward the key aspects of the development, including design, planning, consultation and procurement.

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

Funding for Projects in the Belfast Area

Mr G Kelly asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the level of funding that his Department and its arm's-length bodies has allocated to each project in the Belfast area since 2007, broken down by constituency.

(AQW 16716/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: This response has been delayed due to the need to seek clarification on the question, the volume of information required to answer it and IT problems at a participating arm's length body.

The total amount of funding spent on projects in the Belfast area since 2007 is summarised in the tables below, divided between resource and capital:

RESOURCE

Constituency	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
North Belfast	2,541	3,605	3,561	3,145	3,592
South Belfast	4,720	5,351	6,882	6,542	7,592
East Belfast	91	248	491	793	887
West Belfast	1,933	2,286	3,274	1,998	2,972
Total	9,285	11,490	14,208	12,478	15,050

CAPITAL

Constituency	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
North Belfast	170	550	1,036	871	386
South Belfast	15,832	2,289	2,568	341	410

Constituency	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
East Belfast	0	0	1,519	234	4
West Belfast	602	824	558	1,284	241
Total	16,604	3,663	5,681	2,730	1,041

Detailed breakdowns by project are provided in **Annex A**

I should make the following observations. First, the costs of ongoing service provision have not been included in the answer (eg the running costs of individual libraries in the constituencies) as these are not considered to meet the definition of a project.

Second, certain spend has been excluded on the grounds that, while it is possible to associate it with a constituency, its primary objective is not to benefit any particular constituency but to promote and provide benefits generally for the north of Ireland. For instance, spend by World Police and Fire Games falls into this category.

Third, in comparing allocations across constituencies, it is important to appreciate that my Department sometimes provides funding through intermediary parties and does not, therefore, hold information on subsequent allocations across constituencies. For example, Sport NI provides funding to Belfast City Council (BCC) under its Active Communities programme. For the purposes of your question and in the absence of more detailed information, this funding has been allocated in total to the South Belfast constituency (the physical location of BCC HQ).

Fourth, it should be appreciated that, in the case of Arts funding, the pattern of allocation reflects the fact that a number of major venues and organisations are located in the South Belfast constituency (Lyric Theatre, Grand Opera House, Crescent Arts Centre and the Ulster Orchestra). This is particularly evident in 07/08 when, of the total capital spent in that year of £16,604k, £9,237k was attributable to the Lyric Theatre and £4,500k to the Crescent Arts Centre both of which are situated in the South Belfast constituency.

I hope these comments contribute to your understanding of the data.

Irish League Football Ground Infrastructure

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

(AQW 17609/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The IFA, with the help of SportNI, have developed a draft Strategic Outline Case (SOC) to examine potential proposals for sub-regional development which has been approved by the IFA Board. The SOC will now be considered by SportNI, DCAL and ultimately DFP who will assess if the proposals merit the production of Outline Business Cases for the various projects within the sub-regional development programme. These OBCs will be used to inform possible bids for funding in the next CSR period (2015).

I would stress that no funding is available in the current CSR period for sub-regional development for football. It is not anticipated that sub-regional funding will become available until 2015 at the earliest.

Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what lessons her Department has learned from the demise of the Northern Ireland Events Company.

(AQW 17730/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Following the demise of the Northern Ireland Events Company in 2007 independent professional financial advisers KPMG were engaged to carry out a comprehensive and authoritative

review of the financial affairs of the company, to advise on meeting the existing liabilities of the NIEC and the most appropriate method of winding-up the Company in an orderly manner; and to carry out a comprehensive review of all the circumstances surrounding the deficit accumulated by the NIEC. Furthermore, the Department commissioned the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy, a professional accountancy body which specialises in the public sector to conduct an external review of the monitoring arrangements between the Department and the other arm's length bodies for which the Department is responsible. As a result of this review, a number of recommendations were made relating to identifiable areas of improvement required to address areas of weakness in DCAL's sponsorship of its Arms Length Bodies. The Department has taken extensive actions in recent years to strengthen its systems of internal control by identifying and incorporating lessons learned. Annex A provides a table of the recommendations and actions taken by the Department.

Annex A

Recommendations	Improvements/Actions
Review Sponsor Organisation Structure	Establishment of Governance Support Unit (GSU) within DCAL who provide a central pool of expertise on the issues of finance, governance and accountability to ALBs and sponsor branches; centralisation of ALB drawdown process; development of sponsorship manual and training for sponsor staff; regular accountability meetings held with attendance at the appropriate senior level by the Department and ALB.
Ensuring sound Corporate Governance in sponsored ALBs	Board skills considered in the public appointments process and skills audit completed; attendance at ALB Board and ALB Audit Committee by appropriate Department senior sponsor level; risk assessments completed on ALBs to inform the sponsorship arrangements; completion of quarterly assurance statements by ALBs.
Financial Planning	Review and update of the Corporate plan and business planning procedures
Financial Control and monitoring	Accountability meetings held and attended at appropriate senior level within ALB and Department; centralisation of ALB drawdowns managed by GSU; monthly monitoring of ALB expenditure by sponsor branch and finance and reported to Departmental Board
Audit and Accounts	Tracking system of ALB Internal and External Audit recommendations

Northern Ireland Events Company

Mr D Bradley asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether her Department has changed its procedures in relation to its arm's-length bodies as a result of lessons learned from the demise of the Northern Ireland Events Company.

(AQW 17731/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Please refer to the answer to your previous question AQW 13131/11-15.

Department of Education

Manhattan System

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW16332/11-15, when he plans to implement the capital planning module of Manhattan in his Department.

(AQW 17517/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): I can confirm that my Department has access to information on the condition and suitability of schools which is contained in the Manhattan system. This information is used by the Department in the ongoing prioritisation of maintenance, minor and major works across the Estate and will continue to inform capital investment in the coming years.

Ballee High School Closure

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Education what plans his Department or the North Eastern Education and Library Board has for the Ballee School site after its closure in August 2014.

(AQW 17929/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The North Eastern Education and Library Board has embarked on the statutory consultation process as to the future of Post Primary provision at Ballee High School. At this point in time no decision has been made on the publication of a Development Proposal recommending the closure of the school.

However should that transpire, and the Board has no other educational use for the property, it would be declared surplus to requirements.

The Board will dispose of the premises in accordance with the Land and Property Services Guidelines on the disposal of Public Sector Properties.

Ministerial Advisory Group

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education to detail the current membership of the Ministerial Advisory Group; and the circumstances of each change of membership since the group's inception.

(AQW 18157/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The members of the Shared Education Ministerial Advisory Group are Professor Paul Connolly, Head of School of Education, QUB (Chair), Dawn Purvis, Independent Consultant and former MLA and PJ O'Grady, Founder member of Catholic Principals Association and recently retired Principal of St Patrick's College.

There has been no change to the membership since the Group's inception.

Department for Employment and Learning

Higher Education Expansion Catalyst Project

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 17499/11-15, (i) whether he supports the One Plan commitment to expand student numbers at the Magee campus to 9,400 Full-time Equivalents by 2020; (ii) how many additional Full-time Equivalents are required annually at the Magee campus to reach the target of 9,400 by 2020; (iii) to detail the annual cost of providing these additional student places; and (iv) whether he will seek funding from the Executive to ensure that student numbers at the Magee campus reach 9,400 by 2020.

(AQW 18063/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):

- (i) In its Programme for Government, the Northern Ireland Executive has undertaken to “develop the ‘One Plan’ for the regeneration of Derry/Londonderry, incorporating the key sites at Fort George and Ebrington”. As a member of the Executive, I share this commitment.
- (ii) The One Plan has an aspiration for a university campus which serves 9,400 Full-Time Equivalents including 6,000 full-time undergraduate students. In the 2010-11 year, the last year for which figures are available, there were 2,870 full-time undergraduate students and 565 part-time students at Magee. This would equate to around 3,152 full-time equivalents. By 2015-16 this number will have risen to 3,724 once the 572 additional full-time places allocated in December 2011 and November 2012 have been made available. This means that an additional 5,676 full-time equivalent students would be required to reach the 9,400 target by 2020. This represents an average increase of 1,419 places in each of the four years between 2015-16 and 2019-20.
- (iii) The average cost to support one full-time undergraduate place in the current academic year is £7,313. This includes both institutional grant and student support costs. The full annual cost of an additional 5,676 full-time students would be in the region of £41.5m (assuming each full-time equivalent costs the same as a full-time undergraduate place), or around an additional £10.4m accumulating each year over the four years.
- (iv) I understand that the One Plan has a target of 1,000 additional undergraduate places by 2015. Towards that I have been able to allocate funding for 572 additional places to the University of Ulster. I will take every opportunity to secure additional funding for higher education in Northern Ireland and the University of Ulster and by implication its Magee campus should benefit from this.
- (v) I would also point out that it is for the University of Ulster to determine the overall allocation of student places across each of its campuses and therefore the extent of provision at Magee versus other locations.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Quinn Insurance: Job Losses

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the job losses within Quinn Insurance/Liberty at the Enniskillen site, since the company went into administration.

(AQW 17817/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): Following the appointment of joint administrators in March 2010 and their subsequent review of the Quinn Insurance business, a total of 900 redundancies across all sites were announced in April 2010 to safeguard the future of the business, 179 of which affected the Enniskillen site. The majority of job cuts were made through voluntary redundancy.

Liberty Insurance acquired the Quinn Insurance ROI business in November 2011 and continued to service the Quinn Insurance UK business, on behalf of the Administrators, with no further job losses.

In November 2012, Liberty Insurance announced its plans to exercise a right under the 2011 deal to acquire the renewal rights to Quinn policies in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. In making its announcement, Liberty also confirmed that as a result of a sharp decline in the Quinn Insurance Limited UK business in recent years, a total of 285 redundancies across the company's 3 sites in Cavan, Blanchardstown and Enniskillen would be required in order to position Liberty for sustainable profitability and to protect the remaining jobs in the company. A total of 70 jobs will be lost at the Enniskillen site as a result, mostly through a voluntary redundancy programme which is currently underway.

Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) how many tourism related planning applications the Northern Ireland Tourist Board considered in each of the last five years; (ii) the number it supported; and (iii) the number it refused to support.

(AQW 17830/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information is not readily available, however I will write to the member in due course with the information.

Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Mr Wells asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline why the Northern Ireland Tourist Board supports planning applications for holiday cottages in areas where there is already sufficient provision.

(AQW 17832/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information is not readily available, however I will write to the member in due course with the information.

Broadband UK

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 17573/11-15, what process will be in place to make sure that there is an open and transparent decision procedure including the right to appeal,

(AQW 17900/11-15)

Mrs Foster: As outlined previously the process has already commenced and the intervention area for the project will be informed by the responses to the postcode consultation which was undertaken over the period 12 September to 19 October 2012. The feedback from this exercise is currently being analysed with an intention to publish the outcome on the DETI website. This will include an explanation on how the final intervention area was reached. Opportunities for the general public and the telecommunications industry to inform on this decision have already been provided.

Broadband UK

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 17573/11-15, (i) what performance matrix will be used to assess the areas for consultation; and (ii) what weighting will be given to each.

(AQW 17937/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The intervention area is defined on a postcode basis and a postcode is considered within the area if it is listed in information supplied to DETI by BDUK. If a postcode was highlighted in response to the consultation exercise then that postcode was included. Based on local information a postcode is excluded if there are other broadband services in the area such as cable or radio broadband. Steps are now being taken to finalise the intervention area.

In prioritising the roll-out of broadband infrastructure under the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project, my Department will consider matters such as the quality of solution designs, value and pricing, efficiency and economic viability, achieving the best value for money and providing services that are sustainable in the long term.

Fishing-Related Tourism

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) what consultation there has been between her Department and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure on the impact on fishing-

related tourism if mandatory catch and release is introduced in respect of salmon fishing; and (ii) for her Department's assessment of the potential impact.

(AQW 17953/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) I am aware that the Department of Culture, Arts & Leisure (DCAL) issued a Public Consultation on Salmon Conservation on 1 May 2012. NITB Officials did not reply in keeping with both OFMdFM guidelines on responding to public consultations, and my Department's guidance regarding same.
- (ii) NITB is planning to meet all angling bodies and DCAL on 17 January 2013. Neither my Department nor NITB have received any queries about the potential issue of mandatory catch and release. We will ask to have this subject raised at a future meeting with DCAL to assess the potential impact.

Broadband UK

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 17573/11-15, (i) whether there are any financial profiling issues; and (ii) whether monies will be available in the 2013 fiscal year.

(AQW 17963/11-15)

Mrs Foster: There are no significant profiling issues however in a project as complex and involving as many stakeholders as this I want to ensure that the best outcome is achieved for Northern Ireland. I anticipate that a contract will be in place in 2013 and that monies will be made available for that fiscal year.

Tourism Development Fund

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the 23 projects that will receive assistance through the Tourism Development Fund and how the £5.7 million referred to in the recent Jobs and Economy Initiative will be allocated.

(AQW 17964/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The £5.7 million capital secured through the Executive's Economy and Jobs Initiative will be allocated to shortlisted and reserve projects from the last Tourism Development Scheme open call. These projects will now proceed to the next stage of assessment. Projects must be able to demonstrate economic viability and sustainability, value for money and ability to support the delivery of key tourism priorities. In addition, these projects will also be required to confirm the availability of sufficient match funding and relevant statutory approvals etc. before approval can be granted and a letter of offer issued.

Currently these projects are at various stages in the process outlined above and some have yet to receive and/or accept a letter of offer. It therefore would be premature for me to publish or release a list of projects that may or may not accept and therefore may or may not receive financial assistance through the Tourism Development Scheme.

Quinn Group: Job Losses

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 17524/11-15, to detail (i) the dates on which the engagements took place; (ii) who was present at each of these meetings; and (iii) what matters were discussed.

(AQW 17967/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Meetings between Senior Management of Quinn Manufacturing Limited and representatives of Invest NI took place on the following dates:

01 June 2011, 24 August 2011, 16 November 2011, 14 February 2012 & 31 October 2012.

I attended the meetings on 16 November 2011 and 31 October 2012. Representatives from DETI Energy Branch also attended the meeting on 31 October 2012.

Matters discussed at these meetings were ongoing operations following the change of control; consolidation and growth plans; potential gas-line extension into the West/North West; transport costs and roads infrastructure.

InvestNI

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether any senior executives in Invest NI, apart from the Chief Executive, have (i) benefited, or are due to benefit, from salary increases above the level of inflation and; (ii) by how much any such salaries are rising.

(AQW 17990/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Senior executives of Invest NI are subject to the terms and conditions, including salary levels, as applicable to the wider NICS senior staff.

Provision for future increases are in line with the Northern Ireland Civil Service Reform of arrangements for Senior Civil Service Pay and Pay Strategy 2012 and 2013, which is available on the DFP website.

www.dfpni.gov.uk/2012_scs_pay_award_strategy_final_version.pdf

InvestNI

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the level of the employer and employee pension contributions within Invest NI in regard to (i) the Chief Executive; (ii) other senior executives and; (iii) generally across other staff.

(AQW 17992/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) The Chief Executive, (ii) other senior executives and (iii) generally across other staff, are subject to the same arrangements relating to employer and employee pension contributions as equivalent grades within the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

China: Trade Missions

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) how many trade missions to China have been undertaken by her Department and/or Invest NI in the last 10 years; and (ii) which companies from Northern Ireland have accompanied these trade missions.

(AQW 18019/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Since November 2004 Invest NI has organised 16 missions to China; on average two per year. Over this period 206 separate companies have participated on Invest NI trade missions with these companies listed below for your information:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ■ Agri Food and Biosciences Institute | ■ Amtec |
| ■ AJ Power | ■ Andor |
| ■ A1 Power | ■ Andronics |
| ■ Academy of Educational Studies | ■ Anglo Beef |
| ■ Adamsez | ■ Antrim Hills Spring Water |
| ■ Adria | ■ Applied Silicate Tech |
| ■ Aepona | ■ APT |
| ■ All Ireland Chinese Travel | ■ APT Fabrics |
| ■ Allclear Environmental | ■ Autogen |
| ■ Alpha Environmental | ■ Avalon Guitars |
| ■ Amphion | ■ Axis Three |

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- AXT.
 - Base 2000
 - Belfast Distillery
 - Belfast Metropolitan College
 - Biocolor
 - Biotancia
 - Biznet
 - Boyd Bedding
 - Bridgedale Outdoor
 - Brookvent
 - Bubble.
 - C+ Advanced
 - Caldwell & Robinson
 - Canyon
 - Cape Mist Gloves
 - CEM
 - Ciga Healthcare
 - CJ Higgins
 - Clearway
 - Clinical Trial Services
 - Clonallon
 - Cocoon Europe
 - Contact Marketing NI
 - Cooneen Textiles
 - Cooneen Watts and Stone
 - Crane Stockham Valve
 - Cross Refrigeration
 - CSR PLC
 - Cutting Industries
 - CWS Waste
 - Dairy Produce Packers
 - Dale Farm
 - Daly Golf
 - Delta Print & Packaging
 - Deluxe Group
 - Diet Express
 - DSV Campbell Freight
 - Dunbia
 - Dunore Diagnostic.
 - Edge
 - EDS Ireland
 - Elmgrove Foods
 - Environmental Products and Services,
 - Eurosprings
 - Exclaim
 - Exmac.
 - Fane Valley Co-operative Society
 - Fast Engineering
 - Fayrefield Foods
 - Fern Computer
 - Finisco
 - Finrone
 - Fintec,
 - Fleming Agri
 - Flite Software NI
 - FM Environmental
 - Foyle Language School
 - FSL.
 - General Cabins
 - Glanbia Cheese
 - Glenronics
 - Glover Site Investigations
 - Grafton
 - Greenfields Ireland
 - Grosvenor Shirts
 - H Ireland
 - Hackett Hall McKnight
 - Hamilton Architects
 - Hamilton Shipping
 - Hampton Conservatories
 - Hanna IP (Quaylane Ltd)
 - Harco
 - Harland and Wolff
 - Haughey Metals
 - Hawk Protection
 - Hawthorne Contracts
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- Hetal Heating Solutions
 - HMC Global
 - Howden UK
 - Huco Lightronic
 - Hutchinson Power Products.
 - IBC Trading, Industria
 - Protection Systems
 - Ireland Resource
 - Irish Polymers
 - ISL Waste management
 - J Wilson Agriculture
 - James Leckey Design
 - John Burke & Co
 - John J Doyle.
 - Kerry Foods
 - Kingspan Renewables
 - Kiverco
 - KMC Engineering
 - Knox & Clayton
 - Latens
 - Liddell Linens
 - Linden Foods
 - Linwoods
 - Lowe Refrigeration
 - Mackle Pet Foods
 - MacNabb
 - Mallaghan
 - Marlborough Engineering
 - McCloskey
 - McCord Machinery
 - McCrory Engineering
 - Mindready Solutions
 - Mivan
 - MJM Marine
 - Mobile Cohesion
 - Moon and Spoon
 - Moneymore Supplies
 - Moy Park
 - Munster Simms
 - MWM.
 - Nacelle Systems
 - Neil Mathew Architects
 - NI Chamber
 - NI Space
 - Niche Drink
 - NiSoft UK
 - North West Academy
 - NuTech
 - NWP Recycling
 - OCO Consulting
 - Omiino.
 - Paradox Oil
 - PF Copeland
 - Plaswire
 - Portapig
 - Pritchitts.
 - Queens University of Belfast
 - Qwizdom UK.
 - RA Irwin & Co
 - Radox Laboratories
 - Rapid Wall
 - ReGen Waste
 - RFD Beaufort
 - Richard Atkinson
 - Rubber and Plastics
 - Rutledge Recruitment.
 - Salmor Industries
 - Schrader
 - Screenspares Direct
 - Scruttons
 - Sepha
 - Singularity
 - Smiley Munroe
 - Spence Bryson
 - Sports Crest
 - Synergy Learning
-

- Taskmaestro
- Tayto
- Team Air Power
- Team Industries
- Telestack
- Texthelp Systems
- The Creativity Hub
- Thermomax
- Thompson Aerospace
- Thompson Solutions
- TOM
- TR Group
- Tractormatic
- Tughan Solicitors
- Turkington Engineering
- Ulster Carpets
- Ulster Pork and Bacon Forum
- Ulster Weavers Apparel
- Ulster Weavers Home Fashions
- University of Ulster
- Urban Forest.
- Valpar
- Visual Edge
- Vion
- Waste Beater
- Watts and Stone
- Wellington IT
- Whale
- White's Speedicook
- Wombat
- Woodwin Catering
- Wrightbus

Tourism Development Scheme

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many applications for Tourism Development Scheme (TDS) grants submitted by each local council, in the last two years, have been (i) placed on a reserve list to be re-assessed should additional capital funding become available to the Northern Ireland Tourist Board; and (ii) how many applications have been unsuccessful and will not be further assessed.

(AQW 18024/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) A total of 6 applications from local councils have been placed on the reserve list over the last two years.
- (ii) A total of 5 applications from local councils were unsuccessful over the last 2 years.

A summary of the district council areas is shown in the table below.

District Council Area	Reserve List	Unsuccessful
Antrim	-	-
Ards	-	-
Armagh		3
Ballymena	-	1
Ballymoney		-
Banbridge	-	-
Belfast	1	-
Carrickfergus	-	-
Castlereagh	-	-

District Council Area	Reserve List	Unsuccessful
Coleraine	1	-
Cookstown	-	-
Craigavon	-	-
Londonderry	-	-
Down	-	-
Dungannon	2	-
Fermanagh	-	1
Larne	-	-
Limavady	1	-
Lisburn	-	-
Magherafelt	-	-
Moyle	-	-
Newry & Mourne	-	-
Newtownabbey	-	-
North Down	-	-
Omagh	-	-
Strabane	1	-
Total	6	5

Tamboran Resources

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why her Department failed to announce that (i) Tamboran Resources intended to operate outside its petroleum licence when it was first made aware of this; and (ii) that it intended to permit Tamboran Resources to operate outside these conditions when it made this decision.

(AQW 18033/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The issue, to which the Member refers, is a technical variation to the Work Programme of a Petroleum Licence. My Department does not routinely make announcements about amendments to the detailed nature of exploration work programmes.

The variation proposed by Tamboran Resources was assessed by officials in my Department who concluded that the proposal was technically sound and did not alter the purpose of the drilling which is to obtain and analyse rock core.

Prior to any drilling taking place, Tamboran Resources will be required to submit an application to my Department for consent to drill, at which stage the exact details of the proposed borehole will be examined and assessed. Only once all the relevant consents and planning permits are in place, will the company be able to proceed.

Tourist Accommodation Ratings System

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of tourist premises that have registered for the Tourist Accommodation Ratings system since its inception in 2011.

(AQW 18061/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Since its inception in 2011, 732 premises have joined NITB's tourist accommodation rating system, a break-down of which by category of tourist accommodation is as follows:

- 96 Hotels;
- 51 Guest Houses;
- 43 Bed and Breakfasts;
- 4 Guest Accommodation premises; and
- 538 Self Catering.

Northern Ireland Tourist Board: Ratings System

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many tourist premises registered for the general Northern Ireland Tourist Board ratings system in the 5 years up to 2011.

(AQW 18062/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The number of tourist premises which joined NITB's tourist accommodation rating system in the five years up to 2011 is as follows:

Up to 2011, only hotels, guest houses and self catering premises were able to join NITB's rating system. In 2010 there were 1,214 rated premises, a break-down of which by category of tourist accommodation, is as follows:

- 112 Hotels;
- 105 Guest Houses; and
- 997 Self Catering.

In 2009 there were 1,138 star rated premises as follows:

- 111 Hotels;
- 108 Guest Houses; and
- 919 Self Catering.

There are no records of the number of star rated guest houses and self catering prior to 2009. In 2008, there were 113 Hotels. In 2007, there were 115 Hotels. In 2006, there were 115 Hotels.

Shale Gas: Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions she has had with the Energy Secretary regarding hydraulic fracturing for shale gas.

(AQW 18066/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I have not had any direct discussions with the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change regarding hydraulic fracturing for shale gas. Officials in my Department are in regular contact with their counterparts in the Department of Energy and Climate Change on this subject and they keep me informed of developments in this area.

Shale Gas: Hydraulic Fracturing

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the lifting of the ban on hydraulic fracturing for shale gas by the Energy Secretary and the ramifications of this for Northern Ireland

(AQW 18069/11-15)

Mrs Foster: A moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in Great Britain was agreed between the Department of Energy and Climate Change and the operator, Cuadrilla Resources, pending an investigation into a series of small earthquakes associated with the company's hydraulic fracturing operations in their

Preese Hall exploration well. Following the publication of a report by DECC's panel of independent experts, and the results of a subsequent public consultation, DECC has concluded that it is safe for Cuadrilla to resume hydraulic fracturing operations in their exploration programme.

I welcome the announcement made by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change on 13 December 2012 regarding the introduction of a new control system designed to reduce the risks from induced seismicity and to minimise disturbance to those living and working nearby.

As far as Northern Ireland is concerned, should an application to carry out hydraulic fracturing be made, it will be assessed on its individual merit, taking into account the details of the proposed methodology and the specific characteristics of the area, including the geology and hydrogeology.

Shale Gas Reserves

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the potential benefits from the tax incentives for the exploitation of reserves of shale gas as outlined in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn statement.

(AQW 18071/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Any new tax incentives have the potential to attract greater investment into the shale gas sector in the UK. However, it is impossible to predict what the effects might be on the exploitation of shale gas reserves ahead of the outcome from the government's recently announced consultation on the fiscal regime for shale gas.

Shale Gas: Extraction

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline what involvement her Department will have in the study commissioned by the Energy Secretary to assess the possible impacts of shale gas extraction on greenhouse gas emissions

(AQW 18073/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, in his statement of 13 December, announced his intention to commission a study into the possible impacts of shale gas extraction on greenhouse gas emissions. He has invited Professor David Mackay, DECC's Chief Scientific Adviser and Dr Tim Stone, the Expert Chair of the Office of Nuclear Development to undertake the study.

At this stage no further information is available about the scope of the study or the involvement of other organisations. My Department will, of course, take a close interest in the progress and results of this study.

InvestNI

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail all the properties and land owned by InvestNI including (i) location; (ii) date acquired; (iii) purpose of acquisition; and (iv) approximate current value.

(AQW 18075/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI's land is acquired and held in support of economic development projects brought forward by qualifying businesses with an approved business case and immediate property need.

Invest NI employs a long term strategy in respect of its land and property holdings and does not hold land or properties in reserve.

The table attached at Annex A provides information in respect of Invest NI's land holding, including location, date acquired and the valuation of the land as at 29th March 2012 as valued by DFP Land & Property Services.

The table attached at Annex B provides information in respect of Invest NI's property holding, including location, date constructed and the valuation of the property as at 29th March 2012 as valued by DFP Land & Property Services.

ANNEX A

Estate/Business Park	Town/City	Date Acquired	Valuation as at 29/3/12
Aghanloo (East & West)	Limavady	1968/1994	645,000
Antrim Technology Park	Antrim	1985	2,165,000
Balloo South Business Park	Bangor	1974-1976	2,532,500
Global Point Business Park	Newtownabbey	1970-1972/1995	9,150,000
Ballyreagh Business Park	Cookstown	1995	585,000
Campsie	Londonderry	1971-1975/1996	3,000,000
Carnbane Business Park	Newry	1996-1997/2010	7,875,000
Charlestown	Craigavon	1992	2,450,000
Craigavon Food Park	Craigavon	1982-1985	1,142,500
Creagh Business Park	Magherafelt	2001	2,505,000
Carran Business Park	Enniskillen	1996-1997	1,440,000
Ballyharry Business Park	Newtownards	1995	532,500
Doogary (East & West)	Omagh	1994	430,000
Down Business Park	Downpatrick	1998	1,715,000
Dungannon Business Park	Dungannon	2002-2004	4,220,000
Edenaveys	Armagh	1995/2009	1,235,000
Garryduff Road	Ballymoney	1982/1991	305,000
Glenbank Business Park	Belfast	1998	200,000
Hightown	Mallusk	1966-1975	1,520,000
Killough Road	Downpatrick	1974	720,000
Knockmore	Lisburn	1971	1,445,000
Lackaghboy	Enniskillen	1974	845,000
Leyland Road	Ballycastle	1996	90,000
Lissue	Lisburn	1971-1974	450,000
Mandeville	Craigavon	1996	3,825,000
Maydown	Londonderry	1957	950,000
Milbrook	Larne	1969	320,000
Orchard Road	Strabane	1995	42,500
Halfpenny Valley	Craigavon	1996	2,600,000

Estate/Business Park	Town/City	Date Acquired	Valuation as at 29/3/12
Silverwood	Lurgan	1975-1976/ 1981-1982	55,000
Skeoge	Londonderry	1994-1995	2,615,000
Springbank	Belfast	1981/1992/1998	1,185,000
Strabane	Strabane	2010	2,145,000
Forthriver Business Park	Belfast	2001	1,525,000
Springvale	Belfast	1995-1998	250,000
Trooperslane	Carrickfergus	1973-1975	1,165,000
Wattstown	Coleraine	1974	3,360,000
Whiterock	Belfast	1972	315,000
Woodside Road (East and West)	Ballymena	1980	1,330,000

Annex B

Building	Town/City	Date Constructed	Valuation as at 29/3/12
ATP Unit 11	Antrim	1987	2,635,000
ATP Unit 1	Antrim	1986	485,000
ATP Unit 10	Antrim	1990	985,000
ATP Unit 5	Antrim	1989	550,000
Factory at Glen Road	Belfast	1991	425,000
ATP Unit 2	Antrim	1986	432,500
ATP Unit 3	Antrim	1987	470,000
ATP Unit 4	Antrim	1988	505,000
ATP Unit 6	Antrim	1990	457,500
ATP Unit 7	Antrim	1990	657,500
Factory No. 3 at Ballygomartin	Belfast	1996	550,000
Factory at Springbank	Belfast	1998	765,000
Factory at Springvale	Belfast	1998	2,050,000
Factory at Duncairn Gardens	Belfast	1998	1,525,000
Whiterock Business Centre	Belfast	2001	950,000
Glenbank Business Centre	Belfast	2003	775,000
Factory at Down Business Park	Downpatrick	2003	315,000
10 Lissue Road Lisburn	Lisburn	1971-1974	100,000

InvestNI

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, with regard to all the currently vacant land and properties owned by InvestNI, to detail (i) the length of time each has been vacant; (ii) the potential annual rental income of each; (iii) whether InvestNI has any immediate plans to utilise them in the future; and (iv) whether her Department would consider transferring any vacant properties to local community/business groups.

(AQW 18077/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Invest NI holds c2838 acres of land across Northern Ireland with c749 acres available in support of economic development projects brought forward by qualifying businesses. Invest NI currently has no vacant properties in its ownership.

Invest NI lands are developed as industrial estates/business parks. Of these lands there are 5 estates currently totally vacant which includes 1 being developed. The remainder are occupied either in part or in full.

Annex A details all Invest NI land holdings, the amount of available land and the length of time each has been vacant. Invest NI property is valued by DFP's Land and Property Services. Industrial estates/business parks are valued quarterly on a per acre basis for an industrial use. This information is also included at Annex A.

All Invest NI land and property is held in support of economic development and is proactively marketed to both foreign and indigenous investors, although the final decision on location rests with the investor.

Invest NI, in accordance with Department of Finance and Personnel guidelines, keeps its landholding under continual review.

Any lands deemed surplus to requirements would be considered for disposal as per the 'Disposal of Surplus Public Sector Property in Northern Ireland' guidelines as issued by DFP Land & Property Services (LPS)/Central Advisory Unit (CAU).

http://www.dfpni.gov.uk/lps/index/property_valuation/valuation-public-sector-bodies/disposal_of_surplus_public_sector_property.htm

ANNEX A

Industrial Estate	Town/City	Date Acquired	Length of Time Vacant	Landholding (acres)	Available land (acres)	125 Year Lease Rent Per Annum (per acre)*	999 Year Lease Premium (per acre)*
Mandeville**	Craigavon	1996	Since Acquisition	99.00	97.20	4,400	55,000
Global Point BP	Newtownabbey	1970-1972/1995	Since Acquisition	149.72	91.09	11,250	125,000
Campsie IE	Londonderry	1971-1975/1996	Partially Occupied	244.52	61.00	5,600	70,000
Wattstown BP	Coleraine	1974	Partially Occupied	74.19	48.80	7,600	95,000
Halfpenny Valley IE	Lurgan	1996	Partially Occupied	60.37	44.70	5,500	70,000
Skeoge IP	Londonderry	1994-1995	Partially Occupied	75.18	32.40	6,000	75,000
Down BP	Downpatrick	1998	Partially Occupied	81.87	32.10	5,400	67,500
Woodside Road East and West IE	Ballymena	1980	Partially Occupied	80.52	29.23	5,200	65,000
Dungannon B Park***	Dungannon	2002-2004	Since Acquisition	40.287	28.5	10,000	125,000
Antrim Technology Park	Antrim	1985	Partially Occupied	75.13	26.50	6,000	75,000
Charlestown Road IE	Portadown	1992	Partially Occupied	60.16	22.30	7,600	95,000

Industrial Estate	Town/City	Date Acquired	Length of Time Vacant	Landholding (acres)	Available land (acres)	125 Year Lease Rent Per Annum (per acre)*	999 Year Lease Premium (per acre)*
Carran	Enniskillen	1996-1997	Partially Occupied	65.50	21.60	4,800	60,000
Balloo South	Bangor	1974-1976	Partially Occupied	51.17	20.10	8,400	105,000
Creagh	Toome	2001	Partially Occupied	54.20	19.90	7,600	95,000
Killough Road	Downpatrick	1974	Partially Occupied	28.63	18.80	3,000	37,500
Trooperslane	Carrickfergus	1973-1975	Partially Occupied	108.06	18.80	4,400	55,000
Lackaghboy	Enniskillen	1974	Partially Occupied	57.70	14.82	4,000	50,000
Springbank	Belfast	1981/1992/1998	Partially Occupied	76.18	13.50	5,650	70,000
Aghanloo (East & West)	Limavady	1968/1994	Partially Occupied	51.34	16.5	2,400	30,000
Craigavon Food Park	Portadown	1982-1985	Partially Occupied	43.36	13.00	6,000	75,000
Forthriver	Belfast	2001	Since Acquisition	23.08	12.70	8,000	100,000
Maydown	Londonderry	1957	Partially Occupied	66.34	11.07	5,600	70,000
Knockmore Hill	Lisburn	1971	Partially Occupied	75.00	8.20	10,800	135,000

Industrial Estate	Town/City	Date Acquired	Length of Time Vacant	Landholding (acres)	Available land (acres)	125 Year Lease Rent Per Annum (per acre)*	999 Year Lease Premium (per acre)*
Edenaveys Business Park	Armagh	1995/2009	Partially Occupied	24.00	7.00	7,600	95,000
Hightown	Mallusk	1966-1975	Partially Occupied	127.76	6.30	15,500	195,000
Ballyreagh	Cookstown	1995	Partially Occupied	31.33	5.14	7,600	95,000
Doogary	Omagh	1994	Partially Occupied	46.79	4.80	5,600	70,000
Millbrook	Larne	1969	Partially Occupied	34.37	4.70	4,800	60,000
Garryduff Road	Ballymoney	1982/1991	Partially Occupied	12.75	4.50	4,400	55,000
Ballyharry Business Park	Newtownards	1995	Partially Occupied	21.40	4.10	7,250	90,000
Glenbank	Belfast	1998	Partially Occupied	11.06	2.90	4,000	50,000
Whiterock	Belfast	1972	Partially Occupied	12.13	2.58	5,500	70,000
Springvale	Belfast	1995-1998	Partially Occupied	47.91	2.10	10,500	130,000
Leyland Road	Ballycastle	1996	Partially Occupied	4.90	2.00	2,400	30,000

Industrial Estate	Town/City	Date Acquired	Length of Time Vacant	Landholding (acres)	Available land (acres)	125 Year Lease Rent Per Annum (per acre)*	999 Year Lease Premium (per acre)*
Silverwood	Lurgan	1975-1976/1981-1982	Partially Occupied	44.12	0.50	5,500	70,000
Carnbane Business**** Park	Newry	1996-1997/2010	Partially Occupied	138.24	0.00	13,250	165,000
Strabane B Park*****	Strabane	2010	Since Acquisition	43.10	0.00	6,000	75,000
Fully Developed & Fully Occupied Estates	Various	Various	Fully developed and occupied	496.89	0.00	n/a	n/a
Totals				2838.29	749.43		

* Figures correct as at 1st September 2012 as advised by DFP Land & Property Services and based on industrial use.

** Initial infrastructure works completed in 2009 and the site is being proactively marketed

*** Development Works completed in 2009 and is currently subject to 9 interests

**** Extension lands acquired in 2010 with Phase 1 development works due to complete Spring 2013 and the site is being proactively marketed

***** Development works are due to complete early 2013 and is currently subject to 7 interests

Titanic Signature Project

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) to provide the most up to date numbers on visitors to the Titanic Signature Project, broken down into visitors from Northern Ireland and from outside Northern Ireland; and (ii) how this compares with projected figures.

(AQW 18091/11-15)

Mrs Foster:

- (i) Titanic Belfast has attracted 621,829 visitors by the end of November with 220,496 (35.51%) from Northern Ireland and 401,333 originating from outside Northern Ireland, representative of 64.49% of the total visitor number.
- (ii) Annual projected visitor numbers were forecast to be 395,000 in 2012 and between 363,000 and 376,000 thereafter.

Hydro Power

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail what percentage of electricity is generated by hydro power.

(AQW 18092/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In the twelve months to 31 October 2012, electricity generated from hydro power accounted for 0.85% of all electricity generated from renewable sources and 0.12% of total electricity generation.

Department of the Environment

Drumclay Crannóg Excavation Work

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the discussions he has had with the Minister of Finance and Personnel and the Minister for Regional Development on securing agreement to complete the excavation work at the Drumclay Crannóg.

(AQW 17670/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): I acted decisively both in putting an exclusion zone around the crannóg and in allowing time for the excavation of the site. This has been recognised far and wide. The excavation is a once in a hundred year opportunity and this work will reshape understanding, nationally and internationally, of such settlements and the lives of their inhabitants, stretching back over 1000 years.

My office and that of Minister Kennedy have worked well in managing the situation that evolved. In my view, there are lessons to be drawn in terms of archaeological excavation and heritage for the future, but there have been good practice and good outcomes over the last number of months because of the DRD/DOE liaison.

I have announced that the excavation of the crannóg is to be extended to the end of March 2013.

Enforcement Staff

Mr Wells asked the Minister of the Environment whether enforcement staff working in planning offices are permitted to resign from their posts and commence employment with developers that they were taking action against a few days earlier.

(AQW 17767/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The NICS HR Handbook sets out that within two years of leaving the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), Civil Servants must obtain Departmental approval before taking any form of full, part-time or fee-paid employment.

However, legal advice is that the NICS Human Resources Handbook assumes that when an officer resigns from the NICS, the individual reports the job offer to the Department and accepts the restrictions within the NICS Human Resources Handbook. This is important given that the above condition is enforceable only if agreed by both parties. It is the case that once an officer has left the NICS there is no hold over the individual. Given this, it is uncertain if the above condition is enforceable when an officer has resigned from the NICS.

If a member of staff within the Department decides to resign the Department cannot refuse to accept a letter of resignation.

I have asked for a copy of the legal advice on this matter and will advise further.

Littering

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the responses he has received to his letter to local councils concerning their lack of action on littering; and what additional action councils are now taking.

(AQW 17795/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Department wrote to all District Council Chief Executives on 18 October 2012 highlighting the fact that annual fixed penalty notice figures indicate that some Councils are much more proactive than others in taking enforcement action against litter offenders and to ascertain why the figures are as they are.

18 of the 26 Councils responded to the Department, namely Limavady, Larne, Belfast, Newtownabbey, Fermanagh, Coleraine, Magherafelt, Craigavon, Antrim, Ballymoney, Ballymena, Dungannon, Cookstown, Omagh, Lisburn, North Down, Moyle and Carrickfergus. Detailed and informative responses were received from many of these Councils. The following table provides details of key points made by each Council. The table also provides details of additional action by the Councils.

Council	Litter Fines Issued 2011/12	Extracts/summaries of key points made by Councils
Antrim	30	Strongly committed to a policy of robust enforcement and environmental education programmes. A small number of complaints are received concerning cleanliness issues and Council is of the view that current balanced approach of enforcement and education is appropriate.
Ballymena	30	Employs 2 enforcement wardens covering a wide range of duties, including litter enforcement. Resources for litter related work is carefully targeted to gain maximum benefit. Enforcement is only one arm of the battle against litter proactive work includes community clean-up operations; targeting hot spots to educate rather than criminalise children; to introduce an educational "yellow card" scheme to be followed by a fine for reoffending. Additional action: currently exploring the possibility of identifying sufficient funding to allow a dedicated resource to be put in place.
Ballymoney	4	The approach taken as regards litter enforcement is proportionate to the "problem" within the Borough and available resources are targeted to need in light of intelligence obtained from a number of sources...The use of fixed penalty notices is but one approach to addressing the litter issue and its use within this Borough reflects that fact.

Council	Litter Fines Issued 2011/12	Extracts/summaries of key points made by Councils
Belfast	1534	<p>....there is a dedicated enforcement team consisting of Enforcement Officers and Litter Wardens. The Enforcement Officers are based in districts throughout the city and have a remit covering domestic and commercial waste, littering, graffiti and fly-posting. The Litter Wardens are based in the city centre and detect littering and fly-posting offences. One of the Council's key service performance outputs is to determine an annual target in respect of the number of fixed penalty notices issued for littering in a financial year.</p> <p>Additional action: The target for fixed penalty notices in 2012/13 is 2000.</p>
Carrickfergus	19	<p>...recently undergone a number of staff changes within the Pollution Control Team which has impacted on ability to undertake litter patrols.</p> <p>Additional action: Developing a litter and dog fouling strategy aimed at looking at how the Council can better target its resources in order to address this type of low level environmental crime. The Council recently committed to recruiting a second Enforcement Officer to educate the public in order to improve the environmental quality of the Borough and to increase the number of fixed penalties issued by Council. Targets are to be set for the issuing of fixed penalty notices. Enforcement Officers will undertake a wide range of duties including litter enforcement. Litter enforcement is being taken seriously by the Council and it is anticipated that there will be a reduction in litter and fouling complaints and resultant improvements in environmental quality through greater numbers of fixed penalty notices being issued in 2013.</p>
Coleraine	16	<p>Employs 2 enforcement wardens undertaking a wide range of duties including litter enforcement. Zero tolerance policy for litter offenders over the age of 18. Figures for 2011/12 were down due to long term sickness of one of the enforcement wardens. The Council's Environment Officer concentrates on education within schools, youth groups and community groups promoting anti litter and coastal awareness.</p> <p>Additional action: will be reviewing work procedures to adopt a more pro-active approach in taking enforcement action against litter offenders.</p>
Cookstown	12	<p>The Council does not have any dedicated litter wardens, however, all officers are authorised for the purposes of Clean Neighbourhoods legislation and the Litter Order. The Council takes a zero tolerance approach to all littering offences that are detected. Council is of the view that a proactive and robust enforcement mechanism must be in place to ensure that the regulatory message is clear and succinct. The Council has been proactive in taking forward its Clean Neighbourhoods Programme which focuses on education, community engagement and regulation.</p>

Council	Litter Fines Issued 2011/12	Extracts/summaries of key points made by Councils
Craigavon	1046	<p>The Council takes a zero tolerance approach to litter throughout the Borough. It employs 4 environmental wardens to help to address the litter problem.</p> <p>Additional action: currently looking at the possibility of appointing another warden in the next financial year.</p>
Dungannon & South Tyrone	1	<p>The Council does not have a written litter strategy. All complaints received are investigated and action taken as appropriate in each individual case. The Council does not employ litter wardens and as a result any action in respect of litter is dependent on Environmental Health Officers being a witness to the offence. The pressures on current resources are also likely to have had an impact on the level of fixed penalties served.</p>
Fermanagh	8	<p>The Council believes that a major contributory factor to the success in the cleanliness of our streets is the Council's initiative where orderlies have responsibility for a range of duties in all our towns, villages and hamlets. Each, generally living in his/her own area, develops a sense of pride and ownership, which is rarely adopted by those remote from their area. The issue of fixed penalties is not the only method of changing attitudes to litteringThe Council has adopted an approach whereby the natural environment is improved, good facilities provided and users educated in responsible behaviour.</p> <p>Additional action: will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the entire initiative going forward.</p>
Larne	23	<p>The Council takes a proactive and robust approach to enforcement and whilst the number of fixed penalty notices issued in 2011/12 reduced considerably from the previous 2 years, this was a result of the long-term absence of a member of staff.</p>
Limavady	4	<p>The Council employs one Enforcement Officer who is also responsible for a wide range of duties and therefore the resources to proactively patrol the Borough to detect litter offences is restricted. The Council has always taken a consistent approach in dealing with litter offences. Complaints are always investigated thoroughly and if there is sufficient evidence a fixed penalty notice will be issued.</p> <p>Additional action: the Council is in the process of developing a litter enforcement policy.</p>

Council	Litter Fines Issued 2011/12	Extracts/summaries of key points made by Councils
Lisburn	42	<p>The Council does not have any litter wardens and instead it utilises staff that are authorised under the legislation to issue fixed penalty notices in addition to their other duties. Any comparison between councils is skewed by the scale of the resources dedicated to this areaLisburn City Council has achieved a commendable performance with the resources available to us. While the increased level of fine may act as more of a deterrent against offending, the additional income generated is insignificant when compared to the cost of employing dedicated litter wardens...</p>
Magherafelt	40	<p>The Council administers the issuing of fixed penalty notices for litter through its enforcement officer whose duties cover a wide range of issues in addition to litter enforcement. The Council targets areas where litter has been reported as an issue and has been more proactive since the introduction of the Clean Neighbourhoods legislation.</p> <p>Additional action: during the 6 month period (April to September 2012) it issued 38 fixed penalty notices for litter which is a significant pro rata increase on previous years.</p>
Moyle	5	<p>The Council takes the issue of litter enforcement very seriously and regular patrols to detect littering offenders are carried out. Fixed penalty notices are issued in all cases where littering offences are detected. The Council has the smallest population in Northern Ireland and this is reflected in the number of fixed penalties issued.</p>
Newtownabbey	150	<p>The Council employs 2.5 full time employment enforcement officers. It carries out all enforcement activities in line with its Enforcement Policy. The Council believes in firm but fair regulation. The number of fixed penalty notices issued does not reflect the level of educational initiatives undertaken by the Council to curb littering.</p> <p>Additional action: the Enforcement Policy is reviewed every 2 years to ensure that it remains relevant to new legislation for which the Council has enforcement responsibilities.</p>
North Down	4	<p>While the actual number of fixed penalty fines issued is low, it does not necessarily indicate that this Borough is strewn with litter. The Council has a firm, responsible and fair approach to dealing with those who litter and approaches this through education, appropriate street cleaning and enforcement. The Council undertakes limited targeted patrols in the Borough to detect littering offences. The Council does not have the resources to employ specific litter wardens unlike other Councils such as Belfast and Craigavon. The Council Enforcement Officers have a demanding workload and deal with a wide range of issues, including littering.</p>

Council	Litter Fines Issued 2011/12	Extracts/summaries of key points made by Councils
Omagh	24	The Council employs 1 litter warden who patrols the district to enforce Council policy regarding litter abatement. The figures for 2011/12 are down from the previous year and this is attributed to a more rigorous awareness campaign. The litter warden also issues formal warnings and carries out an education programme with the local schools.
Ards	12	No response
Armagh City & District	14	No response
Banbridge	12	No response
Castlereagh	26	No response
Derry	41	No response
Strabane	22	No response

It is disappointing that 6 Councils did not respond to this exercise. However, the information received so far helps to put the figures from Councils into a local context, and factors such as the employment of dedicated litter wardens would appear to equate to a more proactive enforcement policy with higher numbers of fixed penalty notices issued for littering offences.

I am satisfied that Councils take their duties in respect of litter enforcement seriously and other initiatives such as education and awareness have an important role to play. However, evidence of robust enforcement of the anti-litter laws in local neighbourhoods across all of Northern Ireland is necessary in order to send out a clear and consistent message that littering will not be tolerated, it is an offence to drop litter and those who commit that offence are likely to be fined, and if fines are not paid offenders will face prosecution in the Courts. I am not satisfied that this is the message which has applied in some Council districts over recent years in view of the very small numbers of fines actually issued in those districts. Litter fines are a valuable and effective deterrent and there is clearly room for improvement in their use to tackle littering in some Council districts.

I will therefore be carrying out a further assessment of the overall Northern Ireland situation after the end of this financial year by which time I would expect to see some improvements.

There is already some evidence of a more proactive and focussed approach being adopted in some Council districts in view of the additional action highlighted in the above table. For example, the challenging targets set by Belfast City Council, interim results from Magherafelt for the first 6 months of this financial year, significant plans to take effect in Carrickfergus, the possibility of a dedicated resource in Ballymena and an additional enforcement officer in Craigavon and the development of a litter enforcement policy in Limavady. I also note that reviews are taking place in Coleraine, Newtownabbey and Fermanagh. These are all encouraging developments and I am hopeful that my next assessment of the situation after the end of this financial year will provide further evidence of more effective action against littering offenders.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Easton asked the Minister of the Environment for an estimate of the number of new homes that will be required for North Down as part of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan.

(AQW 17956/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The adopted version of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan will set out the Department's conclusions on the number of new houses required for North Down. I am currently working closely

with officials to finalise the plan policies and proposals. The Department is currently assessing the recommendations contained within the Planning Appeals Commission's reports which were produced following the Public Inquiry.

It would be inappropriate to release the figures you requested ahead of the publication of the adopted plan.

High Hedges Act (NI) 2011

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment how many complaints about high hedges have been (i) lodged; and (ii) dealt with by councils since the law came into effect.

(AQW 18043/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The High Hedges Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 became operational on 31 March 2012 and responsibility for its implementation transferred to District Councils from that date. My Department intends to review this legislation within two years of its commencement. The High Hedges Act has only been operational for 8 months. I will wait a further period before collating statistics.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether the final Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan report and proposals will be subject to Ministerial approval.

(AQW 18057/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I am currently working closely with my officials to ensure that adoption of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan is completed by the end of March 2013. The published reports and proposals will be subject to Ministerial approval.

Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment whether the final Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan proposals can be amended by his Department.

(AQW 18058/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Any development plan adopted by my Department, including the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan which I intend to adopt by the end of March 2013, may be subject to alteration through the statutory process.

Protection of Development Limits between Bangor and Crawfordsburn

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what steps his Department is taking to ensure the protection of development limits between Bangor and Crawfordsburn in order to maintain the integrity of both.

(AQW 18059/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The development limits for Bangor and Crawfordsburn and the setting of the 2 settlements are matters for planning policies and proposals contained in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP).

I am working closely with my officials on the adoption process for this development plan which is scheduled for completion by the end of March 2013.

The planning matters above are being fully and carefully examined during the Department's consideration of the recommendations made by the Planning Appeals Commission following the BMAP Public Inquiry.

Social Housing Schemes

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of the Environment whether there has been an increase in planning applications for new social housing schemes, especially of one and two bedroom properties, in advance of the introduction of Welfare Reform.

(AQW 18095/11-15)

Mr Attwood: In advance of the introduction of the Welfare Reform Bill I can advise that there has been no increase in planning applications received for new social housing schemes.

Comparing April-June of 2012 with the same period last year indicates that there has been a reduction of 1 planning application received. In the 2011/12 business year a total of 47 applications for social housing were received. The majority of these applications related to two and three bedroom properties.

I believe that this question is very important. The London Government does not acknowledge fully and certainly does not act in relation to the small number of one bedroom properties that exist in the NI social housing sector, the historic reasons why there is a large number of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom properties and how the 'bedroom tax' under welfare reform will have such a disproportionate and adverse impact here.

Department of Finance and Personnel

SEUPB

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 17093/11-15, (i) to list the additional projects with a value over £17m which have been approved by the PEACE III Steering Committee; (ii) when letters of offer will issue; and (iii) whether there will be sufficient time to complete projects without the risk of incurring penalties and loss of funding.

(AQW 17941/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): Since answering AQW 17093/11-15, one of the additional projects, Inner City Trust's City Centre Garden of Reflection, has been issued with a Letter of Offer to the value of £2,129,978. The value of the Letter of Offer is a reduction from £2,579,070 which had earlier been proposed.

Two further projects approved by Steering Committee under PEACE III Theme 2.1 are awaiting the approval of the relevant accountable government departments prior to the issue of Letters of Offer. These are detailed in the table below.

Lead Partner	Project Name	Value
Belfast City Council	The Girdwood Community Hub	£9,597,370.00
Donegal County Council	Reconciliation Through The Riverine	£4,853,798.40
Total		£14,451,168.40

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) is aware of the challenges faced by projects to complete their aims and objectives within the lifetime of the PEACE III Programme. Project Lead Partners are required to have a viable implementation plan in place at the time the Letter of Offer is issued that demonstrates that the project can be implemented within the PEACE III Programme timescales.

Net Fiscal Balance Report

Ms Fearon asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail in full the calculation used to estimate the share of corporation tax in the Net Fiscal Balance Report 2009-10 and 2010-11, including references to the source data.

(AQW 17994/11-15)

Mr Wilson: I previously outlined the methodology used in the Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report 2009-10 and 2010-11 to estimate Northern Ireland's share of corporation tax in my response to your Assembly question AQW 17382/11-15 where I indicated that the Report's corporation tax estimate has been produced in line with GERS methodology by apportioning a share of UK corporation tax receipts on the basis of Northern Ireland's share of UK profits.

As stated in Annex B of the report, the UK figure for total corporation tax is taken from the PSAT2 databank published by ONS. The estimate of NI corporation tax excludes North Sea corporation tax payments and these are deducted using data from tables on corporation tax published on the HMRC website. Information on profits (less holding gains) is directly supplied by ONS.

I must re-emphasise again that this report has been developed applying the methodology originally designed to produce the "Government Expenditure and Revenue in Scotland" (GERS) publication and is not intended to provide an accurate estimate of individual revenue items. The report provides an overall assessment of Northern Ireland's aggregate fiscal position, and as such, the report indicates that individual estimates should be interpreted with caution.

Garden of Remembrance, Stormont Estate

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, given the approach of the centenary of The Great War and the Battle of the Somme, whether he will make arrangements for a permanent Garden of Remembrance, or other suitable memorial, in the Stormont Estate to commemorate citizens from Northern Ireland who fell in the 1914/18 War and subsequent conflicts, including the victims of terrorism.

(AQW 18031/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There are two existing commemorative areas on the Stormont Estate which reflect on conflict, one of which relates specifically to the Battle of the Somme.

There are no plans for the creation of a further memorial.

Rate Relief: Vacant Industrial Buildings

Mr Dunne asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the rate relief that is available to the business sector for vacant industrial buildings.

(AQW 18045/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Rates (Unoccupied Hereditaments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 which deal with the rating of empty properties state that a property can be excluded from vacant rating liability when it is a qualifying industrial property.

The definition of a qualifying industrial property is:

"Any hereditament other than a retail hereditament in relation to which all buildings comprised in the hereditament are constructed or adapted

(a) in the course of a trade or business; and

(b) for one or more of the following purposes, or one or more such purposes and one or more purposes ancillary thereto—

(i) the manufacture, repair or adaptation of goods or materials;

(ii) the working or processing of minerals;

(iii) the generation of electricity."

In Northern Ireland, it is worth noting that aside from this exemption, empty property rate relief of 50% applies here for non industrial buildings, so 50% rates are levied. This compares to the 100% charge in England and Wales for all commercial properties.

Peace III Programme

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total funding that has been committed to (i) Priority sub-Measure 1.1: - Building positive relations at the local level; (ii) Priority sub-Measure 1.2: - Acknowledging the past; (iii) Priority sub-Measure 2.1: - Creating shared public spaces; (iv) Priority sub-Measure 2.2: - Key institutional capacities are developed for a shared society; and (v) Priority 3: - Technical Assistance.

(AQW 18096/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The table below details commitment under each Theme of the PEACE III Programme as at 30 November 2012.

Theme	Overall Budget (£)	Total Commitment To Date (£)
1.1	112,734,640	112,837,034
1.2	40,000,000	34,291,896
2.1	65,600,000	64,220,736
2.2	32,000,000	29,417,611
3.1	15,978,806	13,802,119
Total	266,313,446	254,569,396

Commitment includes all projects which have accepted Letters of Offer, projects with Letters of Offer issued, and all completed projects. Projects which have been approved by Steering Committee but which have not yet been issued with a Letter of Offer have not been included.

Peace III Programme

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the total actual expenditure to date on (i) Priority sub-Measure 1.1: - Building positive relations at the local level; (ii) Priority sub-Measure 1.2: - Acknowledging the past; (iii) Priority sub-Measure 2.1: - Creating shared public spaces; (iv) Priority sub-Measure 2.2: - Key institutional capacities are developed for a shared society; and (v) Priority 3: - Technical Assistance.

(AQW 18097/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The table below presents the expenditure at 30 November 2012 under each Theme of the PEACE III Programme, along with the budget available under each Theme.

Theme	Overall Budget (£)	Total Expenditure To Date (£)
1.1	112,734,640	65,376,845
1.2	40,000,000	18,486,653
2.1	65,600,000	23,696,376
2.2	32,000,000	4,895,458
3.1	15,978,806	9,358,657
Total	266,313,446	121,813,989

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Training Psychiatric Nurses

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail how many psychiatric nurses are currently in training broken down by gender.

(AQW 18081/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The University of Ulster has confirmed that for the academic Year 2012/13 there are a total of 104 females and 26 males studying Nursing Mental Health in Years one, two and three.

Queens University, Belfast, School of Nursing has advised that the detailed information requested is unavailable at this time and will be forwarded to the Department in the New Year. My officials will provide this to you in due course.

Cataract Operations

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many cataract operations have been carried out in the last year in (i) Lagan Valley Hospital; (ii) Mater Hospital; (iii) Royal Victoria Hospital; and (iv) Northern Ireland.

(AQW 18143/11-15)

Mr Poots: The number of cataract operations carried out in 2011/12 in Lagan Valley Hospital, Mater Hospital, Royal Victoria Hospital and in all HSC Hospitals in Northern Ireland, are displayed in the table below.

Hospital	Cataract Operations
Lagan Valley	956
Mater	3,049
Royal Victoria	1,235
Northern Ireland*	7,951

Source: Hospital Inpatient System

*Includes Lagan Valley Hospital, Mater Hospital and Royal Victoria Hospital.

Cataract Operations: Waiting Time

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for a cataract operation in (i) Lagan Valley Hospital; (ii) Mater Hospital; (iii) Royal Victoria Hospital; and (iv) Northern Ireland.

(AQW 18144/11-15)

Mr Poots: The average number of weeks waiting for cataract surgery, at 30th September 2012, the most recent quarter for which official data are available, for each of the specified hospitals, and Northern Ireland as a whole, is detailed in the table below.

	Average Waiting Time (Weeks Waiting)
(i) Lagan Valley	4.7
(ii) Mater	15.1
(iii) Royal Victoria	14.0
(iv) Northern Ireland	13.3

Source: DHSSPS Inpatient Waiting Times Dataset

Department of Justice

Sexual Offences

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will instigate a serious case review in the case of John Stanfield to ascertain why he was able to commit further sexual offences on two occasions whilst on probation for sexually assaulting a child.

(AQW 17771/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): I refer the Member to the answer I gave to question 16244/11-15, which applies equally in this case. In addition, this case did not fall within the parameters for multi agency management of risk as set out in paragraph 3.11 of the statutory guidance on the public protection arrangements.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Projects

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail all the Northern Ireland Prison Service projects that consultants are working on which may result in contracts for which their firms could bid.

(AQW 17772/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Business Consultancy Service (BCS) currently provides a consultancy service to the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) on the Review of Offender Management Administrative Functions Project. BCS is a directorate within the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) and the central consulting group within the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Consistent with DFP guidance on the classification of professional services, there are no other consultancy services currently being provided to NIPS.

Legal Aid Costs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the total Legal Aid costs paid in respect of Barry McCarney including legal firm, junior counsel, senior counsel, expenses and any reports supplied/obtained for his defence.

(AQW 17773/11-15)

Mr Ford: All claims for payment have not yet been submitted as this case is not yet concluded. A sentencing hearing is due to take place on 11 January 2013.

To date, the total amount paid in respect of magistrates' court proceedings is £31,102.97 (including VAT £5,183.83). Of that amount, £329.03 (including £54.84) was paid to counsel.

To date, the total amount paid in respect of the Crown Court trial is £5557.61 (including VAT of 926.27).

Sexual Offenders Prevention Order

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice what monitoring was in place in the case of 12/134273 (Daryl Geoffrey Kelly), who has been charged with breaching the terms of his Sexual Offenders Prevention Order on 2 April 2012.

(AQW 17775/11-15)

Mr Ford: As this case is still before the courts it would be inappropriate for me to make any comment.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 12222/11-15, and numerous answers prior to this in which he states Northern Ireland Prison Service is currently developing a new Professional Code of Conduct and Discipline, can he confirm (i) when this process commenced; (ii) how

many people are working on it and from which agencies or bodies in addition to the Northern Ireland Prison Service; and (iii) when is it likely to be completed and operational.

(AQW 17821/11-15)

Mr Ford: The development of a new Code of Conduct and Discipline for the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) commenced several months ago. As I have stated in previous answers, this is a complex piece of work. A range of key stakeholders from NIPS; the Department of Justice; the Department of Finance and Personnel ; the Prison Governors' Association ; and the Prison Officers' Association are contributing to the process which is being led by a member of NIPS staff.

The new system will become operational when the consultation process with key stakeholders is complete.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice pursuant to AQW 16744/11-15 to provide a copy of the Risk Assessment procedure for those who are likely to self harm and to indicate at what level in the Prison Service the risk assessment is carried out.

(AQW 17822/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no specific Northern Ireland Prison Service Risk Assessment procedure, however where a prisoner presents as being at risk of self harm, they will be managed under the Supporting Prisoner at Risk process. Upon referral each prisoner will have an assessment interview which is carried out at Senior Officer level.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16983/11-15, in how many individual cases has this been authorised for other prisoners, particularly in the Pre-Release Unit or Prisoner Assessment Unit.

(AQW 17826/11-15)

Mr Ford: There have been no other authorised cases.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16744/11-15, whether prisoners at risk of self harm are always supervised by prison officers specially trained and qualified for the purpose, and to indicate the number of officers in the Northern Ireland Prison Service currently available for such duties.

(AQW 17850/11-15)

Mr Ford: Prison Officers do not have to be specially trained or qualified to supervise prisoners at risk. Supervision of prisoners is an integral part of the role of a prison officer.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many Northern Ireland Prison Service staff are (i) brought in from outside Northern Ireland; (ii) travel in and out of Northern Ireland on a weekly basis and, if so, to detail (a) the cost of travel and accommodation to date; and (b) and the projected final cost.

(AQW 17863/11-15)

Mr Ford: Four Northern Ireland Prison Service staff travel to and from Northern Ireland on a weekly basis. The total cost incurred to date for travel and accommodation is £58,653.88. It is not possible to provide projected final costs due to differing contractual time periods and varying weekly costs.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16931/11-15 and AQW 16111/11-15; (i) to explain why he is unable to provide a total figure for Northern Ireland Prison Service staff trained;

and (ii) whether he will provide an explanation for his previous answer when he stated PAR1 Awareness Sessions were made available to all staff.

(AQW 17869/11-15)

Mr Ford: Prior to the introduction of SPAR training in May 2009, staff training officers provided briefing/awareness sessions on Prisoner at Risk 1(PAR1) with each session lasting approximately two hours. Although these awareness sessions were made available to all staff, attendance at each session was not recorded on the NIPS training database.

Non-Natural Deaths in Custody

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16393/11-15, to provide a breakdown of the 15 non-natural deaths that have not been subject to an inquest, including the date of death.

(AQW 17870/11-15)

Mr Ford: Having given due consideration to the families involved, I have not included individual names of the non-natural deaths that have not been subject to an inquest. I have provided the date of death and the establishment where the death occurred or the establishment to which the prisoner was last recorded.

01/08/2008	Maghaberry Prison
29/08/2009	Maghaberry Prison
03/10/2009	PAU
03/08/2010	Hydebank Wood YOC
25/12/2010	Maghaberry Prison
04/05/2011	Hydebank Wood YOC
04/05/2011	Hydebank Wood Prison
22/05/2011	Maghaberry Prison
23/06/2012	Maghaberry Prison
31/12/2011	Maghaberry Prison
31/01/2012	Maghaberry Prison
25/06/2012	Maghaberry Prison
08/07/2012	Maghaberry Prison
15/10/2012	Maghaberry Prison
06/11/2012	Maghaberry Prison

Sexual Offences Prevention Order

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether he will launch an inquiry into the level of Sexual Offences Prevention Order breaches over the last two years to establish how sex-offenders are being monitored, and to develop a more effective way of managing such offenders in the community.

(AQW 17872/11-15)

Mr Ford: A Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPo) is a civil order made by the court for the purpose of protecting the public from serious sexual harm from an offender. It is only one of a range of measures which the relevant agencies can use to assist in managing risk in the community.

The order prohibits an individual offender from doing anything described in the order. Breach of those prohibitions is a criminal offence carrying a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment, with the option for the court to impose an extended sentence for public protection.

Breach of an order is not an indication of sexual reoffending. Breach action is taken when an offender does not adhere to the conditions in the order and is an indication of the effectiveness of enforcement by the agencies. I have, therefore, no plans to specifically review the level of SOPO breaches or the use of SOPOs in managing risk.

I am, however, proposing, in the Criminal Justice Bill, which is currently before the Assembly, to extend the remit of a SOPO to enable the court to order the offender to undertake a specific course of action.

Death in Custody Reports

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16744/ 11-15, in light of the Prisoner Ombudsman's recent publication of Death in Custody Reports concerning Samuel Carson and Mrs Frances McKeown at Hydebank Wood, to detail how prison management seeks to ensure compliance with prison rules and best practice.

(AQW 17887/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) has in place a performance management system which sets key objectives for operational managers and staff and performance is managed and reported on throughout the year.

NIPS is also subject to inspections from a range of scrutiny bodies with responsibility for monitoring performance, including the Criminal Justice Inspectorate, Her Majesty's Inspector of Prisons and the Prisoner Ombudsman. In addition, NIPS has an internal Performance & Standards Unit which has responsibility for auditing performance against baseline standards.

Northern Ireland Prison

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) how many consultants are involved with the Northern Ireland Prison Service Change Team; (ii) what type of firms are they based with; and (iii) what is the cost to date of each consultant.

(AQW 17940/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Business Consultancy Service (BCS) currently provides a consultancy service to the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) Change Team on the Review of Offender Management Administrative Functions Project. BCS is a directorate within the Department of Finance and Personnel and the central consulting group within the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Consistent with the Department of Finance and Personnel guidance on the classification of professional services, there are no other consultancy services currently being provided to the NIPS Change Team.

However, the NIPS Change Team has engaged the temporary services of a secondee from Deloitte to work on several projects in an advisory capacity, and three other Deloitte employees on a staff substitution basis, to provide specialist advice, and transfer of knowledge, to help develop and embed essential skills on a range of areas within NIPS. The costs incurred to date for the above-mentioned Deloitte staff is as follows:

Secondee	£48,310
Staff substitute (Programme and project management)	£66,800
Staff substitute (Organisational design/performance management)	£51,230
Staff substitute (Communications)	£62,620

Supporting Prisoners at Risk

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to confirm (i) how many of those, by rank, trained in Supporting Prisoner at Risk passed the related examination at the end of their training session; (ii) how many failed the examination; and (iii) of those who failed, are they now deemed unfit to provide the requirements of Supporting Prisoner at Risk, or are they to be re-trained and examined.

(AQW 17942/11-15)

Mr Ford: Prior to the review and updating of the Supporting Prisoners at Risk training materials in June 2012, there was no examination or assessment at the end of the training sessions.

Prisoner Pre-Release Scheme

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 17146/11-15 to clarify where Kenneth Douglas spent Phase 2 of the Northern Ireland Prison Service pre-release programme.

(AQW 17943/11-15)

Mr Ford: Mr Douglas was admitted to Phase 2 of the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) pre release scheme on three occasions.

In May 2006, Mr Douglas commenced phase 2 of the pre-release scheme, whereby he resided in the Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) on week days and in approved accommodation at weekends.

In September 2008, Mr Douglas commenced his second period on phase 2 of the pre-release scheme by spending week days at an approved address and weekends in the PAU.

In February 2012, Mr Douglas again commenced phase 2 of the pre-release scheme while residing at an approved address on week days and returning to Maghaberry Prison at weekends.

Supervised Residency in the Community

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 17146/11-15, and prior to being placed in supervised residence in the community, (i) whether the prisoner spent time in the pre release unit or any other similar facility; and (ii) how long he spent in that facility before being deemed fit to reside in the community under supervision.

(AQW 17944/11-15)

Mr Ford: I can confirm that Mr Douglas spent two periods of time in the Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) while he was on the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) pre-release scheme, from which he progressed (on both occasions) to reside in approved accommodation.

The first period in the PAU was between May 2006 and May 2007 during which time he resided in the PAU on week days and at approved accommodation in the community on weekends.

The second period in the PAU was between September 2008 and March 2009 where he again progressed from residing there on a full time basis to weekend release in the community. On 12 March 2009 he was released on licence. In November 2010 he was returned to prison.

In January 2012 Mr Douglas was permitted short periods of unaccompanied temporary release from Maghaberry Prison (6-8 hours) on week days to an approved address, progressing to further temporary release following him satisfying further risk assessments.

In October 2012 he was recalled to prison following arrest for a number of serious criminal offences.

Legal Aid paid to Marion McGlinchy

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) total amount of Legal Aid paid to date for Marion McGlinchy shown by legal firm and counsel costs with their relevant expenses; and (ii) expert fees including medical costs and any other associated expenditure.

(AQW 17945/11-15)

Mr Ford: The legal aid payments made to Mrs McGlinchey's legal team are detailed below, broken down by Criminal, Civil and Legal Advice and Assistance (Green Form) legal aid categories.

Criminal Legal Aid

A total of £1,124.61 (including VAT of £179.58 and disbursements of £47.13) was paid to Mrs McGlinchey's solicitor in respect of PACE advice provided at the police station.

Fees have been paid to Mrs McGlinchey's solicitor totalling £1,700.46 (including VAT of £283.41) for work done in the Magistrates' Court. The counsel who represented Mrs McGlinchey also represented one of her co-accused, so the fees paid are in respect of both defendants. It is not possible to disaggregate the payment. The total paid to counsel in respect of both defendants is £1,273.01 (including VAT of £212.17).

CIVIL LEGAL AID

Profit Costs	£1,257.72 (including VAT of £209.62 VAT).
Counsel Fees	£360.00 (including VAT of £60 VAT).
Outlay	£18.80, solely in respect of photocopying.
Total	£1,636.52

LEGAL ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE (GREEN FORM) SCHEME

Advice Type	Amount paid	VAT
PACE	£139.74	£23.83
Complaints against PSNI	£64.11	£12.82
PACE	£945.03	£179.58
Criminal Charge	£673.20	£132.14
Bail	£72.08	£14.42
Judicial Review	£88.00	£17.60
Life Sentence Review	£409.99	£75.16
Judicial Review	£184.55	£31.91
Total	£2576.70	£487.46

There were no fees paid in respect of expert witnesses or doctors.

Marian Price

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) which MLAs have made representations to his Department in the last 2 years in relation to Marian Price; and (ii) which have called for her release. **(AQW 17951/11-15)**

Mr Ford: In the last two years, MLAs from Sinn Fein and SDLP have made representations to my Department in relation to Mrs Marian McGlinchey on a range of issues including consideration of her release on compassionate grounds.

In addition, MLAs from the DUP have made representation to my Department in relation to the resource implications associated with the detention of Mrs McGlinchey.

Northern Ireland Policing Board

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice whether his Department's direction that Policing Division Circular 6/2007 must not be relied upon in how the Northern Ireland Policing Board initiates and conducts Percentage Disablement Reviews for retired police officers aged over 65 has resulted in any changes.

(AQW 17955/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the Member to my answer to AQW/17706/11-15.

Camera Hidden in a Prisoner's Watch in HMP Maghaberry

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16987/11-15, (i) whether this prisoner will face criminal charges at a public court or whether it will be dealt with by Northern Ireland Prison Service internally; and (ii) whether any charges have been made to date.

(AQW 17979/11-15)

Mr Ford: The matter has been dealt with by the governor under prison rules. The prisoner was found guilty of the offence of possession of an unauthorised article.

Professional Standards Unit

Lord Morrow asked suant to AQW 16619/11-15, to outline the core functions of the proposed Professional Standards Unit; (ii) where the unit will be based; (iii) the date in 2013 in which it will be operational; (iv) how many staff by grade will be employed in the unit; and (v) when training will be provided to staff and by whom or what Agency.

(AQW 17980/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Professional Standards Unit will investigate the conduct of all prison service staff, including alleged or suspected misconduct or gross misconduct, and will be based at Prison Service Headquarters in Dundonald House.

With regard to when it will become operational, I refer the Member to the response I gave to AQW 17821/11-15.

The final numbers and grading of staff in the Unit will be agreed as part of the overall consultation process. When staff have been appointed, the Police Service of Northern Ireland will provide investigation training tailored to meet the specific needs of the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

Legal Aid in Northern Ireland

Mr I McCrea asked the Minister of Justice whether a person who lives in the Republic of Ireland can receive Legal Aid in Northern Ireland and to outline the circumstances where this may be possible.

(AQW 17987/11-15)

Mr Ford: Legal Aid may be granted to an individual regardless of nationality or residence. All applicants for both civil and criminal legal aid must however pass the relevant merits and means criteria and the legal proceedings for which legal aid is sought must originate within Northern Ireland.

Edward Connors' Release

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice why was convicted rapist Edward Connors permitted to be released from custody prior to completion of, and/or participation in, a sexual offender's treatment programme.

(AQW 18025/11-15)

Mr Ford: As Mr Connors received a Custody Probation Order sentence (determinate period in custody followed by a period of supervision in the community) there was no discretion to release him from custody other than on his earliest date of release.

Prisoner Assessment Unit

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 17146/11-15 and AQW 16983/11-15, whether he wishes to revise his answer on whether or not this prisoner resided in the Prisoner Assessment Unit,
(AQW 18026/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) wishes to revise its response to AQW 17146/11-15 as follows and apologises for not providing a full and accurate answer to the questions raised. Mr Douglas did reside in the Prisoner Assessment Unit (PAU) on two separate occasions while on the pre-release scheme, prior to its closure in April 2011. The timeline for his periods in the PAU and other pre-release facilities are as follows:

- 11 May 2006 – 17 May 2007: Mr Douglas resided in the PAU on weekdays and in approved accommodation at weekends.
- September 2008 – 12 March 2009: Mr Douglas resided in the PAU. He was initially spending weekdays in the PAU and weekends at an approved address. Eventually this changed to weekdays at an approved address and weekends in the PAU.
- 12 March 2009: Mr Douglas was released on licence to live in the community on a full time basis. He was subsequently returned to Maghaberry Prison in November 2010.
- 22 March 2011 to January 2012 (which includes a period of home leave): Mr Douglas was permitted a series of short (6-8 hours) unaccompanied temporary release periods (UTR) from Maghaberry. Following monitoring by Maghaberry this increased to a number of overnight periods in approved hostel accommodation.
- 13 February 2012 to 22 April 2012: Mr Douglas entered phase 2 of the pre-release scheme allowing him to spend week days in Belfast with a relative and returning to Maghaberry at weekends.
- On 23 April 2012 he entered phase 3 of the pre-release scheme to live in the community with a relative in Belfast on a full time basis. He was subsequently returned to Maghaberry Prison on 28 October 2012.

Dog Fighting

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Justice to detail the (i) number of reported cases of; and (ii) successful prosecutions for, dog fighting in each of the last five years.
(AQW 18028/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is no specific offence of ‘dog fighting’, however it can be prosecuted under a range of animal fighting offences. The table below gives the number of animal fighting cases reported to PSNI in 2005-2011 and the number of convictions for the calendar years 2005 to 2009 (the latest year for which conviction figures are currently available).

Animal fighting offences can be prosecuted under Sections 19(1) and 19(2) of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, Article 19(2) of the Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 and Sections 8(1), 8(2) and 8(3) of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

NUMBER OF REPORTED CASES AND CONVICTIONS FOR ANIMAL FIGHTING OFFENCES: 2005-2011

Year	Number of cases reported to PSNI	Number of convictions
2005	0	1
2006	0	0

Year	Number of cases reported to PSNI	Number of convictions
2007	0	1
2008	0	0
2009	0	0
2010	1	N/A
2011	3	N/A

Conviction data are collated on the principal offence rule; only the most serious offence for which an offender is convicted is included.

Conviction data for 2005-2006 should not be directly compared with data from 2007 to 2009 as the data sets are sourced from different systems.

Illegal use of Lead

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Justice to detail the number of prosecutions and convictions for illegal use of lead shot since it was banned in 2009.

(AQW 18044/11-15)

Mr Ford: The use of lead shot over wetlands by hunters was prohibited by the Department of the Environment (DOE) with effect from 1 September 2009, through the Environmental Protection (Restriction on use of Leadshot) Regulations (NI) 2009.

Responsibility of enforcing the Regulations rests with the police. The DOE is not aware of any specific prosecutions or convictions relating to non compliance with the Regulations.

The introduction of the restrictions in 2009 was accompanied by guidance produced jointly by the Department and the main bodies representing shooting interests in Northern Ireland as a means of promoting compliance. In addition, the Department, through the auspices of the Northern Ireland Partnership Against Wildlife Crime, continually works with relevant interests to promote compliance with the law.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Prisoner Transfers

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice how many prisoners, that have been transferred from Northern Ireland Prison Service facilities to HMP Magilligan towards the end of their custodial sentences, have been returned to their original facility in each of the last five years.

(AQW 18049/11-15)

Mr Ford: Table A below sets out the number of prisoners transferred from Magilligan to Maghaberry prison in each of the last five years:

TABLE A

Year	No of Prisoners
2012	23 (inc 1 to Hydebank)
2011	30
2010	22
2009	19
2008	33

Decisions to transfer prisoners to and from Magilligan Prison are based on operational requirements and if the prisoner meets the criteria for that establishment. Whether, or not, a prisoner is nearing the end of their custodial sentence is not a critical factor when deciding on transfer to or from Magilligan prison.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16983/11-15, did the couple in question marry whilst the male was in the Pre-release Unit or similar custody and at what point after this did the therapy commence.

(AQW 18053/11-15)

Mr Ford: The marriage took place on 7 June 2006 while the male prisoner was residing in the Prisoner Assessment Unit.

A therapy programme for the male prisoner commenced prior to his marriage. Joint therapeutic sessions involving the prisoner's wife commenced in October 2007.

Sisters of Charity

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16979/11-15, (i) whether the Sisters of Charity facility in Armagh is accredited by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and approved by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland; and (ii) whether this facility has been inspected and approved as suitable for housing persons charged with sexual offences, or those with previous convictions of a sexual nature, particularly against minors, given the close proximity to a number of schools.

(AQW 18055/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Sisters of Charity facility is not required to, and has not sought, accreditation and financial assistance from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive under its Supporting People strategy. It is also not one of the six premises required to be approved by the Probation Board and inspected in relation to the accommodation of offenders or alleged offenders requiring additional levels of supervision. The Department of Justice has no power to approve or inspect any private homes or other facilities that choose to offer accommodation to a homeless person. The decision as to whether to grant bail to an alleged offender to a specific address is a matter for the judge hearing the bail application.

Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 16744/11-15, to detail how management seeks to ensure compliance with prison rules and best practice especially in light of the Prisoner Ombudsman's Death in Custody Reports on Mr Samuel Carson and Mrs Frances McKeown at HMP Hydebank Wood.

(AQW 18056/11-15)

Mr Ford: I would refer the Member to the reply I gave to AQW/17887/11-15 on 31 December 2012.

Department Telephone Bills

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Justice to detail the cost to his Department of telephone bills in each of the last three years.

(AQW 18083/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Department of Justice (DOJ) came into existence on 12th April 2010.

Expenditure on telephone (land line and mobile) calls and line rental for the DOJ, including its Agencies but not its arm's length bodies, for the financial years 2010/11 and 2011/12, and the current financial year up to the end of November 2012 are shown in the table below:

2012/13 (April to November 2012)	2011/12	2010/11
£687,196.41	£956,955.22	£971,519.59

Legal Services Commission

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether the Legal Services Commission has issued a communication to legal representatives or professional bodies indicating that legal aid funds are becoming depleted and that further funding has been sought to cover the period up to the end of the financial year; (ii) whether legal aid payments will be restricted or delayed; (iii) whether sufficient additional funding has been secured; and (iv) whether he plans to launch, and publish the outcome of, an investigation into how this situation has arisen.

(AQW 18098/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission wrote to the Law Society of Northern Ireland and the Bar Council of Northern Ireland on 18 December advising them that it did not have sufficient funds to meet its projection of the sum required to pay the bills likely to fall due for payment during the current financial year and that the Commission had sought additional funding from my Department to meet the anticipated in-year pressure.
- (ii) In response to this pressure, the Commission has decided that while it will continue to assess claims in the normal way it will only issue payments up to a monthly financial ceiling. This means that payments will be delayed.
- (iii) My Department is currently considering the Commission's request for additional funding as part of the January in-year monitoring round. An additional £10m has already been committed and the scope for providing further funding is under consideration. A decision on additional funding is expected during January.
- (iv) This situation arose primarily due to an unforeseen increase in civil legal aid expenditure during the current financial year. My officials are working with the staff of the Commission to establish the reasons for this. I published my first proposals to reform civil legal aid in November 2012 and will be publishing further proposals to address the remaining problems, including those which gave rise to the current situation, later this year.

Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 17638/11-15, if he would direct the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland to inspect the Central Investigation Service within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

(AQW 18189/11-15)

Mr Ford: The list of organisations that the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland can inspect is specified in section 46 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002. The Central Investigation Service within the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is not one of those specified and as such I have no authority to require the Chief Inspector to carry out an inspection.

Department for Regional Development

Wellington Park, Bangor: Footpaths

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has to resurface the footpaths in the Wellington Park area of Bangor.

(AQW 17610/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): My Department's Roads Service has advised the footway in the Wellington Park area of Bangor is in a safe and it doesn't currently require resurfacing. Roads Service will continue to inspect this footway on a regular basis and any defects identified will be dealt with in accordance with the Roads Service Maintenance Standards.

New Development Road Standards

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what provision is in place to bring roads up to standard for adoption in cases of new developments, where the developer who has responsibility has gone bankrupt and who is responsible for bringing these roads up to standard.

(AQW 17895/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise that The Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980 includes provisions which enable my Department to bring roads in new developments up to adoption standards, in cases where the developer has gone bankrupt.

It is the developer's responsibility to make provision for the costs of providing new roads in housing developments. Prior to starting building works on any development where the layout of roads and footways has been determined under the Private Streets (Northern Ireland) Order 1980, a developer is required to enter into an agreement with my Department's Roads Service to provide the roads, footpaths and street lighting to the appropriate standards. This agreement is secured by a bond that allows Roads Service to complete the road works, if a developer defaults.

Where a developer has gone into administration, my Department's Roads Service will initially liaise with the administrator to seek completion of the development's roads infrastructure. If this is not possible, Roads Service will call upon the road bond and arrange for another contractor to complete the necessary works.

However, I should advise that Roads Service is not notified once a developer has gone into liquidation/administration and it may be some months before officials are aware that an individual or his company has gone into receivership.

New Bangor Grammar School: Road Safety

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Regional Development if his Department considered the road safety of residents living in the area around the new Bangor Grammar School site.

(AQW 17898/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that during the planning process for the new 850 pupil grammar school the developer was requested to carry out a Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) to show the likely impact the development would have on the public road network and to identify those measures necessary to mitigate any adverse consequences. The TIA took into account that there had previously been a school at this location.

The following improvements to the road environment have subsequently been made as part of the scheme:

- widened footways at the site frontage along Gransha Road;
- a new Puffin enhanced road crossing;
- the relocation of two pedestrian islands on Gransha Road;
- a right turn pocket and new road markings on Gransha Road;
- 'Safe Routes to School' solar signs installed;
- the provision of a pedestrian guard rail at entrance to channel pupils and other pedestrians towards preferred crossing points;
- school bus boarding and drop off points within the school premises;
- a dedicated bus lay-by, with lowered kerbs, for easier access along Gransha Road for general public transport;

- drop-off lay-bys for parents to use on Gransha Road; and
- a new bus shelter on Gransha Road.

I am also advised that road junctions serving residential areas close to the school entrance were reviewed and were considered to have adequate sight splays and footway provision to provide safe access.

It should be noted that previously the Gransha Road in the vicinity of the school site had been provided with central hatching, right turn pockets and central pedestrian refuge islands, which channel the traffic and allow pedestrians to cross the road more safely. In addition, Roads Service has also recently widened the junction of Cranley Road to allow a left turning vehicle to safely pass a right turning vehicle.

I can assure you that Roads Service is aware of public concern relating to this issue and it intends to monitor the operation of the junctions to determine if any further measures are deemed necessary.

Late Payment: Westminster

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development how the late payment directive currently going through Westminster will affect his Department.

(AQW 17909/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received with payment generally due within 10 working days of receipt of a valid invoice.

In addition, my Department is currently bound by the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1988 as amended by the Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2002 which requires that payment should be made within agreed terms or if no terms have been agreed, 30 days after receipt of a valid invoice.

Performance against the 10 day and 30 day requirements is monitored on an ongoing basis.

In the current year, to the end of November, my Department has paid 94% of invoices within 10 days, with 98% paid within 30 days.

It is therefore anticipated that the new directive will not have a significant impact on my Department.

30 Day Payment Performance Targets

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Regional Development how each of his Department's arm's-length bodies has performed on the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and whether any sector has been paid more quickly than others.

(AQW 17910/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's arms-length bodies' 30 day prompt payment performance during the financial year 2011-12 is set out below.

Arm's-Length Body	Prompt Payment %
Translink / NITHCo	97
NI Water	90

In processing payments the Department's arms length bodies make no distinction between invoices received from different sectors, as such no sector is paid more quickly than another.

Removal of Salt Bins

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Regional Development why Roads Service have removed several salt bins from rural roads following a review made at the end of last season's winter season, and instead placed grit piles at several locations, adjacent to large towns such as Bangor and Holywood.

(AQW 17915/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I should advise the Member that my Department's Roads Service has no statutory obligation to salt carriageways or footways. However, to assist the safe movement of traffic in wintry conditions, Roads Service gives consideration to placing salt bins in urban areas and grit piles in rural areas, at hills, bends or junctions on roads that are not salted. These are provided for use by the public on a self help basis.

Roads Service has advised that following a review in January 2012, it was found that salt bins were provided at the following five rural sites in North Down:

- Creighton's Green Road, Holywood (3 locations)
- Ballymoney Road, Holywood
- Ballygrainey Road, Holywood

The provision of salt bins at these locations was deemed not to be in accordance with Roads Service's policy and therefore, the salt bins were removed. However, the sites did meet the criteria for the provision of grit piles, which are now in place.

Bus Shelters Contract

Mr Dunne asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans are in place to recommence the contract for the supply and construction of bus shelters before 2015.

(AQW 17916/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the current contract with Adshel for the provision and maintenance of bus shelters in Northern Ireland, which was approved whilst Peter Robinson was Minister, has delivered over 1,350 new bus shelters since 2001, at no cost to my Department. Whilst the contract does not expire until the end of 2015, it does not make provision for any new shelters after 2010.

To ensure the future provision of bus shelters, my Department is currently working towards establishing new contractual arrangements, to be in place for the end of 2015 when the current contract expires.

Roads Service currently has no plans to provide additional bus shelters until a new contract is awarded in 2015. In the interim, any requests for shelters will be given priority when the new contract is in place.

I should advise that local councils can also provide bus shelters, should they wish to do so.

Winter Gritting

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister for Regional Development whether Largy Road, Crumlin will be included in the winter road gritting programme as many large businesses operate from this road and there is also a large residential area.

(AQW 17949/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that Largy Road has been assessed but does not meet the criteria required for inclusion on the Winter Service salting schedule. The Largy Road does not meet the criteria as it is a cul-de sac and therefore is not a through route.

The Largy Road will be assessed for the provision of grit piles, however, it is unlikely that gradients along the road will meet the criteria of a "gradient equal to or greater than 5%".

Special Train for Christmas: Belfast to Coleraine

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps have been taken to advertise the late Christmas shopper's special train from Belfast to Coleraine.

(AQW 17950/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Translink advise that the enhanced rail services between Coleraine and Belfast were promoted as follows:

- (i) Christmas special offers and services press release issued to press and broadcast media on 12 November 2012. This included issue to daily papers –Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, News Letter, Daily Mirror and Press Association. A press release was also tailored for regional weekly press. A press release was also sent to broadcast media and broadcast on U105 and Q Network radio.
- (ii) A safety message press release issued on 26 November 2012 to agricultural press including Farm week and Farming life and regional papers relevant to the rail network including the Belfast-Coleraine corridor publications.
- (iii) Combined press release including the enhanced services between Coleraine and Belfast, the new NI Railways Journey Check and the provision of Wi-Fi on the Enterprise, issued to press and broadcast media on 3 December 2012 including Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, News Letter, Daily Mirror, Press Association, and weekly press in areas situated along the railway network. Broadcast media included BBC, UTV, RTE, Daybreak, Radio Ulster, U105, Cool/Downtown, with interviews conducted on Citybeat and Q Network.
- (iv) Press release and picture sent to Communications manager Coleraine Borough Council on 7 December 2012.
- (v) Press release issued to all Coleraine Borough councillors and MLA's on 4 December 2012.
- (vi) A3 posters distributed to all stations on the rail network and station posters were distributed to Londonderry line stations and main Belfast stations from 27 November 2012.
- (vii) Service also publicised on Translink website and via social media Twitter and Facebook.

Road Gritting

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development in the aftermath of the recent school bus accident in County Londonderry, whether he will assure parents and children that all the roads that are used by school transport are sufficiently gritted to ensure, as far as possible, the safety of drivers, staff and pupils.

(AQW 17966/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware that, following the severe wintry conditions experienced at the start of December 2008, my predecessor asked my Department's Roads Service to carry out an examination of its operational response to areas around rural schools. This examination resulted in Roads Service introducing enhanced communication arrangements and priority "secondary" salting to the 46 rural schools most affected by weather conditions throughout the winter of 2008/09.

The examination also provided for change in the list of these schools as it was appreciated that the list of sites benefiting from these actions was likely to vary over time to include more schools, to take account of the extent to which adverse weather can affect different schools at different times. As a result of the impact of road conditions on other schools during 2009/10, six additional schools were added to the list in the 2010/11 season. The list now contains 50 schools.

At the same time as this review of its operational response, Roads Service amended the criteria for the provision of grit/salt piles and salt bins, so these can be provided to affected schools, if requested.

Roads Service is committed to managing the road network to promote its safe, efficient operation and to improve the network where possible within the available budget. Under this commitment, safety is always afforded the highest priority.

While I understand and appreciate the Member's concerns for those who use lightly-trafficked roads which are not on the salted network, it simply is not feasible to salt all roads. There is a fine balance to be drawn between putting even more funds into salting, or into the many other worthwhile demands on Roads Service's limited resources, many of which are also safety-related.

Road Service Repair Requests

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development how many requests for repair work in the North Down were received by Road Service in each of the last 3 years.

(AQW 17982/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that the information requested is not held in a readily available format. However, should the Member wish to request information for specific roads within North Down, he should contact Mr George Montgomery, Section Engineer, Bangor Section Office, 72 Balloo Road, Bangor BT19 7PG (Tel: 028 9127 9805).

Road Service: Total Spend

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development for a breakdown of the total spend by Roads Service in the North Down area in each of the last 3 years.

(AQW 17984/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of expenditure by my Department's Roads Service in the North Down Borough Council area in the financial years 2009/10 to 2011/12 are provided in the table below:

North Down Spend	2009/10 £k	2010/11 £k	2011/12 £k
Operations & Maintenance	£1,735	£2,190	£1,749
Capital	£2,569	£2,062	£3,145
Total	£4,304	£4,252	£4,894

I should advise that Roads Service does not simply split its total budget for capital expenditure on roads across all the district council areas. Major road improvements are prioritised on a countrywide basis taking account of a broad range of criteria such as strategic planning policy, traffic flow, number of accidents, potential travel save times, environmental impact, accessibility and value for money. While the actual spend on a major works scheme may be within one district council area, the benefits of such schemes are not confined to the district council, constituency or county in which they are located.

Replace Gritting Vehicles

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development what is the projected capital spend for replacing gritting vehicles in each of the next 3 years.

(AQW 17985/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has advised that an estimate of the capital allocation for plant and fleet procurement is £1.5 million in 2013/14 and £2 million in 2014/15. The availability of capital funding in 2015/16, which is not yet known, will be dependent on the next budget outcome.

The confirmed funding covers all fleet procurement, including gritting vehicles. The amount to be invested in new gritting vehicles, which has still to be determined, will be dependent upon strategic requirement and age and condition.

Given the levels of funding, it is estimated that 8 - 10 gritting vehicles will be replaced during 2013/14 and 10 -12 during 2014/15.

George Best Belfast City Airport Rail System

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) for his assessment of the convenience of the rail system for users of George Best Belfast City Airport; and (ii) whether he has any plans to put in place an additional rail halt to serve the airport and improve pedestrian access.

(AQW 18017/11-15)

Mr Kennedy:

- (i) Translink advise that the current access for rail users wishing to avail of travel from Belfast George Best Belfast City Airport is via Sydenham rail halt, and then the pedestrian Roads Service footbridge. Whilst not as convenient for intending airport passengers as Translink would like, alternative access arrangements have been considered on a number of occasions in the past but there have been constraints given the infrastructure of the surrounding area and difficulties involved in acquiring adjacent land to facilitate any such development. Finally, it should also be noted that Translink provide a frequent bus service from Great Victoria Street Station to George Best Belfast City Airport (20 minute service at peak times). Details relating to fares and timetable information can be found on Translink's website.
- (ii) There are no plans at present to provide an alternative rail halt to serve George Best Belfast City Airport. However, I plan to carry out a general public consultation in the coming months on what should be our priorities for future railways investment. The responses to this consultation will be used to inform future budget decisions within the policy prioritisation framework to be developed under the new approach to Regional Transportation Strategy.

Department for Social Development

Biomass Heating

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development whether feasibility studies have been conducted to assess the potential savings that could be achieved by switching his Department's buildings to biomass heating.

(AQW 16021/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): The Department for Social Development has not conducted feasibility studies to assess the potential savings that could be achieved by switching departmental buildings to biomass heating.

Discretionary Housing Payment

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development how long the discretionary housing payment system will last from time of initial application; and whether every application for the discretionary housing payment is paid to assist with housing costs.

(AQW 17618/11-15)

Mr McCausland: An award of a Discretionary Housing payment will normally run for six months from the date of application, although all awards must end on 31 March each year. At the end of this period the claimant may make another application for a further period and this will be considered although there is no guarantee that another award will be made, and if it is, that it would be for the same amount as the original award. Each claim is considered individually on its own circumstances.

Not every application for Discretionary Housing payment results in an award. During the period from April to October 2012, the Housing Executive received 11,105 applications for Discretionary Housing payment; of these 1,316 were refused.

Regional Development Strategy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development how the figures set out in the Housing Strategy area plans relate to those in the Regional Development Strategy; and how the housing content of the area plans in the Housing Strategy compares with the housing targets set out in the Regional Development Strategy.

(AQW 17743/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are no area specific plans contained within the draft Housing Strategy for Northern Ireland.

The Regional Development Strategy which is published by the Department for Regional Development outlines the number of homes of all tenures that are required in Northern Ireland to meet demand up to 2035. The figures within the Regional Development Strategy are based on Housing Growth Indicators and are a guide for those preparing Area Development Plans, namely the Department of the Environment.

Housing need is addressed by the Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) and is assessed by the Housing Executive (NIHE). Details can be found on the Housing Executive website at: http://www.nihe.gov.uk/shdp_amendments_28th_december_2012.pdf.

Home Insulation

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what more his Department can do to help people insulate their homes.

(AQW 17782/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department, through the Warm Homes Scheme, offers cavity wall and loft insulation to privately owned and privately rented households receiving a qualifying benefit. The Housing Executive checks insulation in their properties when they are carrying out other planned maintenance work and where necessary this is replaced or topped up. This represents a significant investment in insulating homes.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development how many Housing Executive homes in North Down have not yet had Carbon Monoxide Detectors fitted.

(AQW 17829/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are 340 Housing Executive homes in North Down that have not yet had a Carbon Monoxide detector installed. This is the number of homes that are still outstanding in a scheme for 1,709 homes that started in early 2012 and they are included in a mop up scheme which is due to commence in early January 2013.

Ministerial Private Office: Running Costs

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the cost of running his Ministerial Private Office in the last financial year.

(AQW 17866/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Private Office is subsumed under the Corporate Services Unit of the Department. The cost of running this unit for the financial year 2011/12 was £966,651.

Late Payment Directive

Mr Frew asked the Minister for Social Development how the late payment directive currently going through Westminster will affect his Department.

(AQW 17912/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The EU Late Payment Directive was originally brought into UK law in 1998 by way of the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act. The scope of the Directive is now being extended (2011/7/EU) and must be implemented by each member state by 16 March 2013. The UK government issued a consultation paper in preparation for the change in law and is due to publish its response next month. My Department will aim to comply with the new Directive.

For the Member's further information, this Department has not made any payments under the 1998 Act in the last 3 financial years, 2009-10 to 2011-12.

Commencement Orders: Charities Act NI (2008)

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development when the relevant Commencement Orders in relation to the Charities Act NI (2008) have been, or will be, presented to the Assembly; and what functions they have been carrying out in the interim.

(AQW 17913/11-15)

Mr McCausland: A total of three Commencement Orders have been made to date to implement the provisions of the Charities Act (NI) 2008. These were made on 26 March 2009 (No.1), 22 September 2009 (No.2) and 21 January 2011 (No.3). The relevant provisions commenced include establishment of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI), powers for disclosure of information by and to the Commission, establishment of the Charity Tribunal for Northern Ireland and a range of regulatory, investigatory and enforcement powers. A further Commencement Order (No.4) is planned for early 2013 to enable CCNI to assume responsibility for Cy-pres provisions.

CCNI has engaged extensively with local charities to prepare them for future regulation. It has produced and distributed a range of advice and guidance helping charity trustees and members of the public comply with and understand charity law and other relevant legislation. It has completed over 100 investigations to address matters of concern in local charities. A report has been produced to highlight common concerns identified including poor governance in charities, poor financial control, lack of transparency and the damage of internal disputes.

The Commission has also established system to allow for the registration of local charities, due to commence in Autumn 2013, and made preparations for public consultation on the registration process and public benefit guidance.

Charities Act (NI) 2008: Charity Commission

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development what extra functions the Charity Commission will have when the entire Charities Act NI (2008) is operational.

(AQW 17914/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The provisions within the Charities Act (NI) 2008 are being implemented on a phased basis to enable the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and local charities to prepare for full regulation.

Further Commencement Orders are planned which will enable CCNI to assume responsibility for a range of functions including application of cy-pres, charity land, the register of charities, accounting and reporting and charitable incorporated organisations.

Social Housing New Build Programme

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development how he will address objective need within the present social housing new build programme.

(AQW 17918/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I would refer the member to my previous answer in relation to AQW 17621/11-15 which dealt with your similar question in some detail.

All social housing programmes are constructed having regard to the annual assessment of housing need carried out by the Housing Executive, coupled with Strategic Guidelines that direct resources to specified need groups across dedicated geographical areas of need.

My priority is to ensure that resources are directed on an equitable basis to our most vulnerable individuals, families and communities.

Regeneration Tool

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development how he intends to use housing as a regeneration tool.

(AQW 17919/11-15)

Mr McCausland: As I have outlined in the draft Housing Strategy, my Department, in conjunction with the Housing Executive and others intends to pilot housing-led regeneration in four areas to improve current poor housing stock and deliver new social and affordable homes.

Through this programme, the aim is to unlock wider physical and social regeneration by providing a focus for environmental upgrading, improved access to amenities and access to economic activity; with the housing interventions acting as the initial driver.

Social Housing: North Belfast

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development to detail (i) the social housing new builds in North Belfast in each of the last two years, broken down by (a) location and; (b) the amount spent on each development; (ii) the proposed housing developments in North Belfast in each of the next 2 years, broken down by (a) location; and (b) proposed spend on each development; and (iii) how much has been spent on refurbishing social housing in North Belfast in each of the last two years.

(AQW 17920/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Please find detailed in Tables 1 and 2 below the social housing new builds in North Belfast in each of the last two years, 2010/11 and 2011/12, broken down by a) location and b) the amount of spend on each development.

TABLE 1 - NORTH BELFAST NEW BUILD 2010/11

a) Scheme / Location	Units	Total Scheme Costs	b) Housing Association Grant
Rathcoole Gardens, Newtownabbey (T)	28	2,594,785	2,111,899
Rosapenna Parade, Belfast	2	301,908	165,298
Sunningdale Gardens, Belfast (T)	46	7,378,798	4,692,178
Gainsborough Infill, Belfast (T)	17	2,036,147	1,604,410
6-12 Whitewell Road, Belfast	15	1,554,800	947,253
Brookfield Mill, Belfast	40	5,320,000	3,787,840
Ladbrook Drive, Belfast	1	117,111	76,478
Prospect Park, Belfast	2	208,800	116,303
Alliance Avenue, Belfast (T)	4	521,869	305,910
Lands at Oldpark Avenue (T)	4	507,317	323,797
Loughview Terrace, Belfast (T)	9	1,250,910	846,282
Shore Road Regeneration	3	326,614	224,937

a) Scheme / Location	Units	Total Scheme Costs	b) Housing Association Grant
Mount Street/High Street, Bawnmore (T)	4	383,148	273,758
1 Doagh Road, Newtownabbey	13	1,639,931	1,265,315
75-77 Cliftonville Road	6	512,096	324,018
Delaware Building 119 Limestone Road, Belfast	22	1,352,000	889,616
The Glen, Limestone Road, Belfast (T)	32	4,512,492	3,046,641
Atlantic House, Atlantic Avenue, Belfast	3	330,494	201,681
Factory Site, Alliance Avenue, Belfast	29	3,487,487	2,615,664
Stanhope Ste Phase 2	11	1,454,998	1,067,173
466 Shore Road, Rathcoole	10	1,174,725	697,640
186 Cliftonpark, Avenue, Belfast	8	727,610	444,877
Tudor Phase 4, Belfast (Transfer)	11	1,582,078	991,805
Tudor/Shankill OTS	2	158,585	134,124
Total	322	39,434,703	27,154,897

TABLE 2 - NORTH BELFAST NEW BUILD 2011/12

a) Scheme / Location	Units	Total Scheme Costs	b) Housing Association Grant
212 Cliftonville Road, Belfast	10	1,396,075	693,394
Tigers Bay Rehabs, Belfast (T)	10	1,059,060	654,192
Rush Park, Newtownabbey (T)	17	1,798,738	944,649
2 Allworthy Avenue, Belfast	3	364,116	158,306
Mountcollyer Rehabs, Belfast (T)	5	578,939	340,571
Ardoyne Acquisitions Phase 9B (26 Brookfield Place)	1	85,261	84,605
Ardoyne Acquisitions Phase 9A (1c Flax Street, Belfast)	1	118,354	78,957
3 Estoril Court, Belfast	1	69,957	58,162
1-39 Leopold Street, Belfast	10	1,070,680	459,877
Thompson House, Belfast	21	2,110,622	2,113,376
Coulters Site, Antrim Road, Belfast	10	1,137,566	736,708
142-144 Clifton Park Avenue, Belfast (T)	6	813,960	374,060
North Belfast ESPs	6	407,114	255,260
Total	101	11,010,442	6,952,117

- (ii) I am currently considering the draft Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) which will operate across the three year timeframe 2013/14 to 2015/16. As the current Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) period ends in 2014/15, only the first two years of this new programme are firm, with plans for the third year determined by the outcome of the next CSR.

I will be happy to provide an update when I have fully considered and approved the programme.

- (iii) With regard to how much has been spent on refurbishment of Housing Executive stock (planned maintenance schemes) in North Belfast, in each of the last two years, I can advise that £4.7m and £3.6m was spent in 2010/11 and 2011/12 respectively.

Social Housing: Unoccupied

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development why houses, which are owned by social housing providers, in the (i) Lower Old Park; (ii) Greater Shankill; and (iii) Westland areas of Belfast are currently unoccupied.

(AQW 17921/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that it currently has 37 vacant properties in the Lower Oldpark area, which comprise of 26 properties due to be transferred to Clanmil Housing Association as part of the Lower Oldpark strategy and the remaining 11 properties are waiting relet.

Within the Housing Executive's Shankill District Office area there are 236 vacant properties, 170 of which are awaiting demolition, 2 are pending sale and the remaining 64 are due to be relet.

The Housing Executive currently has five vacant properties in the Westland area which are due to be relet.

In the Housing Association sector, only six Housing Associations own stock in either the Lower Oldpark, the Greater Shankill or the Westland areas of Belfast. In the Lower Oldpark area, one Housing Association reported a vacant property citing low demand for the area as the reason for the vacancy. A number of Housing Associations confirmed that they held 115 vacant properties in the Greater Shankill area. The reasons for the vacancies varied between change of tenancy, low demand to a major refurbishment scheme accounting for 47 of the 115 vacant properties. None of the Housing Associations reported any vacancies in the Westland area.

I hope that by the end of the financial year the finalised Empty Homes Strategy document will be released and as a result measures will be put in place to ensure that empty homes throughout Northern Ireland are properly targeted and over time brought back into use.

Freedom of Information Requests

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 16782/11-15, for an explanation of the tenfold increase in the proportion of Freedom of Information requests not answered within the statutory time limit between 2010 and 2011; and what actions he will take to rectify this ongoing problem.

(AQW 17936/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The number of Freedom of Information requests received in my department during 2010 was 183. This figure increased to 224 in 2011, which represents a significant increase of 22% in the number of requests received.

Although 22.3% of the requests received in 2011 were answered outside the permitted clearance time of 20 working days, the Department responded to 28% of this figure within 21-23 days of date of receipt.

The Department strives to meet its statutory obligation of answering requests within 20 working days of receiving a request for information.

DSD will continue to review its processes to improve its response rate to FOI requests.

Areas at Risk Programme: Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Areas at Risk programme for Beechfield Estate, Donaghadee; and what proposals are in place.

(AQW 17960/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Areas at Risk programme in the Beechfield area of Donaghadee comprises a range of community activities drawn up by the Beechfield Residents' Association Planning Team. The team has worked in conjunction with the Ards Development Bureau & Community Network. The programme includes:

- support for local community infrastructure;
- community events;
- provision of equipment for boxing club and community house;
- training and adult education; and
- healthcare.

The Department is also working with the Ards Development Bureau & Community Network Partnership on a new project to provide computers in the community house, and with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on an additional project to carry out minor environmental improvements within the Estate.

North Down Social Housing Stock Levels

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Social Development (i) to detail the social housing stock levels in North Down, broken down by bedroom numbers; (ii) to detail the current levels of vacancy and demand for each property type; and (iii) whether his Department holds the same information for the private rental sector. **(AQW 18060/11-15)**

Mr McCausland: The information is not available in the format requested for Housing Executive stock as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, in relation to (i) and (ii) the table below provides the relevant information for the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office area which covers North Down and also for Housing Association stock in the North Down constituency.

Number of Bedrooms	Housing Executive Stock (Bangor District Office area at 30 November 2012)		Housing Association Stock (North Down Constituency)		Waiting List (1 Dec 2012)
	Total	Vacant	Total	Vacant	
1 bed	504	34	481	3	1,419
2 bed	1,045	15	483	12	632
3 bed	1,062	19	86	3	227
4 + bed	61	0	14	2	97
Total	2,672	68 *	1064 **	20*	2,375

* Note: only 24 vacant NIHE properties were lettable; remaining properties were vacant for various reasons such as undergoing repairs, decanting, pending demolition or pending sale.

Note: the majority of vacant Housing Association stock is awaiting allocation, 1 is awaiting demolition.

** Housing Association figures include units of sheltered and supported living accommodation.

My Department does not hold the information requested at (iii).

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.

Welfare Reform Bill: Work Capability Assessments

Mr Agnew asked the Minister for Social Development in relation to work capability assessments, (i) whether his Department has entered into a contract with any healthcare company to carry out assessments following the introduction of the Welfare Reform Bill and, if so, to outline how his Department could enter into such a contract before the relevant legislation passes through the Assembly; (ii) how much his Department pays any company to provide assessments per person; (iii) when his Department's contract with any company that provides assessments expires; and (iv) to outline the terms and conditions of any contract his Department has with any company that provides work capability assessments.

(AQW 18090/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In relation to the Work Capability Assessment.

- (i) The Department has not entered into any contract with any healthcare company to carry out work capability assessments following the introduction of the Welfare Reform Bill (NI) 2012. Atos Healthcare have been providing medical advice, including face-to-face assessments for the Work Capability Assessment, on behalf of the Social Security Agency since 20 June 2011.
- (ii) The charging regime within the supplier agreement is deemed commercially sensitive and therefore individual charging information cannot be disclosed.
- (iii) The contract was awarded for seven years, with an option to extend for a further 3 years.
- (iv) The Medical Support Services Agreement with Atos Healthcare specifies the service requirements, and prescribes the quality of service and performance levels that must be achieved.

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