

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 29 March 2013**

**Volume 83, No WA3**



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# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 29 March 2013

## Written Answers to Questions

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

#### **Victims of Institutional Abuse**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what support services are available for victims of institutional abuse; and what support there is for victims who present at the Acknowledgement Forum as part of the Inquiry into Institutional Abuse.

**(AQW 17178/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister):** OFMDFM listened to victims' concerns about the need for support services for victims and survivors and as a result ensured that, in January 2012, arrangements were put in place for victims and survivors of historical institutional abuse to make full use of the counselling support services provided by Lifeline.

Lifeline operates a free, in confidence telephone line which can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Lifeline will provide up to six full counselling sessions with victims and survivors depending on their individual needs. This can be extended further in exceptional circumstances.

Victims and survivors are also provided with the contact details for the Nexus Institute, which provides free counselling and support services to people who have experienced sexual abuse.

In October 2012, at the request of SAVIA, OFMDFM funded WAVE Trauma Centre to provide a drop in and counselling facility for victims and survivors in Derry/Londonderry. The meeting place is available from 10am-12pm every Friday morning and a qualified Trauma counsellor is on hand.

A similar meeting place had been provided in Belfast City Centre, but as it was not used, it was discontinued at the end of January 2013.

OFMDFM invited tenders for a broader service for victims and survivors with a closing date of 24 January 2013. Work on this is ongoing.

The Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry is independent from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, so we cannot answer questions on its behalf about the support which is available as part of the Inquiry. This is a matter for the Chairman of the Inquiry.

#### **Ilex Urban Regeneration Company**

**Mr McCartney** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Ilex Urban Regeneration Company.

**(AQO 2967/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Ilex is an Arms Length Body of OFMDFM and DSD with responsibility for regeneration of the Ebrington and Fort George sites and co-ordination and delivery of the One Plan.

Ebrington Square was completed and opened to the public in February 2012. Work on a number of other capital projects at Ebrington are now underway. This includes buildings 80/81 which should be

complete by this summer and will have an interim use as the venue for the Turner Prize as part of the City of Culture programme. Following this, it will become a digital cultural industries hub which will bring economic and cultural benefits for the city. In addition, work is also underway on the underground car park which will allow for 216 parking spaces and will facilitate the provision of office type accommodation on the site.

Work will begin shortly on the Development Framework for Ebrington to determine legacy usage, ensuring that the development of the site addresses the needs of the city and adds value in terms of activities and jobs. However, pending this Framework, Ilex has developed an interim use policy and has tested market demand for the site to determine potential uses and interests for the other buildings.

The Department for Social Development owns the Fort George site and has been in discussions with Ilex on the most effective way forward for the physical development and marketing of the site.

Ilex is a partner in the co-ordination of the One Plan and progress is being made across the eleven catalyst programmes. The One Plan Strategy Group conducted an 18-month review of progress in December 2012 and agreed five near term priorities to be progressed in the next 18 months. These are: the promotion of jobs in 2012/13 and 2013/14; expansion of University of Ulster Magee campus by 1,000 maximum student numbers; City of Culture 2013 and its legacy; integrated transport; and enabling medium/longer term financing/funding of regeneration. The Interdepartmental Co-ordination Group continues to work with Ilex and the Derry / Londonderry Strategy Board to ensure continuing progress against the One Plan.

The recruitment process for the Chair and new Directors has commenced and interviews are due to take place in April 2013. A process to appoint a new Chief Executive is ongoing.

### **Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the compatibility between the fulfilment of the role of Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, on a salary of £77,000 per annum, by Michael O'Flaherty and his role as professor in the National University in Ireland, Galway.

**(AQW 17804/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is an independent public agency established in March 1999. It is a non-departmental public body funded through the Northern Ireland Office.

### **Chief Commissioner of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many hours per week is the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commissioner expected to work in Northern Ireland, in return for his £77,000 pa salary.

**(AQW 17939/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is an independent public agency established in March 1999. It is a non-departmental public body funded through the Northern Ireland Office.

### **Delivering Social Change Framework**

**Ms Fearon** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how they will utilise the Delivering Social Change framework to co-ordinate responses to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child before the next reporting period.

**(AQO 3346/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Improving our children and young people's health, wellbeing and life opportunities, and ensuring that their rights are promoted and observed, is a priority for the Executive.

Through the Delivering Social Change framework we are seeking to address the key issues of poverty and deprivation across all ages, so that our society becomes a much better one, and our children have a more positive and prosperous future.

As part of our obligations under the UNCRC we will be providing input to the UK State Party Report which is due to be submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child by January 2014. The Report will provide an update on the work which has been carried out to progress the UNCRC since the Committee last reported in 2008.

The Delivering Social Change framework should support progress against the UNCRC. The Delivering Social Change Programme Board and the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Children and Young People will be advised of the progress and findings of the Northern Ireland input to the report as appropriate.

## Social Investment Fund

**Mr Lynch** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline how funding will be allocated to each Investment Zone within the Social Investment Fund.

**(AQO 3352/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Social Investment Fund was established to tackle poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration in targeted areas based on evidence of objective need.

Delivery will be through strategic interventions of significant scale, incorporated within an area plan for each of the nine social investment zones. Final area plans were submitted by established steering groups to the Department on 28 February 2013 and each contains 9-10 strategic projects.

The projects proposed within each plan are now being subject to verification and quality assurance and to the full economic appraisal process.

We will then take decisions on the projects within the plans to be funded in each Social Investment Zone.

## Roma Integration

**Mr Lyttle** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how their Department has progressed the EU Commission's recommendation to set realistic, achievable goals for Roma integration in employment, education, housing and health.

**(AQW 20173/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Department for Social Development (DSD), Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS), the Department of Education (DE), and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) have developed a range of SMART<sup>1</sup> activities for Roma, Gypsy and Traveller integration. Activities range from the DEL's Migrant Workers Employment Rights project to DHSSPS's employment of a Roma community liaison officer.

The European Commission monitors the progress of such integration work across Member States. As a result, OFMDFM regularly co-ordinates input for inclusion in the UK Report. The latest UK Report (March 2012) can be found at [http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/national-strategies/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/justice/discrimination/roma/national-strategies/index_en.htm). A further UK Report on progress, particularly on education, health, housing and employment is imminent and OFMDFM will again co-ordinate the local response.

## Child Poverty

**Mr Dunne** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what their Department is doing to tackle the significant levels of child poverty.

**(AQW 20178/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires the Executive to publish a Child Poverty Strategy and to measure how actions it takes impact on the numbers of children living

1 Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound

in poverty. The Act details four statutory measures against which progress has to be measured and reported on annually. The overall target is the eradication of child poverty in the UK by 2020.

To support the delivery of these targets, our Department commissioned work by the National Children's Bureau to develop a Child Poverty Outcomes Model to help better understand the role of each Department in addressing the issue of child poverty.

The early work taken forward under the Delivering Social Change Framework is focusing on the needs of children and families in order to ensure that the most urgent and significant problems in our society are addressed, including deprivation, social exclusion and disadvantage. We have also developed a number of signature projects as part of our Delivering Social Change programme that we announced in October 2012 which will contribute to the delivery of the Child Poverty Strategy.

We are keen that further such programmes are identified as a rolling programme of initiatives and are currently giving consideration to a range of possible future signature programmes for a second phase of work to be taken forward. This may include the development of further interventions to specifically tackle the issue of child poverty.

We are pleased with the progress that has been made in respect of child poverty and look forward to further progress in line with our commitments in the Programme for Government. The next annual report on the delivery of the Child Poverty Strategy is scheduled to be laid before the Assembly in March 2013.

### **Executive's Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People**

**Mr Agnew** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the child poverty outcomes in the new model will correspond with the six high level outcomes identified in the Executive's Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People.

**(AQW 20273/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Child Poverty Act 2010 requires the Executive to publish a Child Poverty Strategy and to measure how actions it takes impact on the numbers of children living in poverty. The Act details four statutory measures against which progress has to be measured and reported on annually. The overall target is the eradication of child poverty in the UK by 2020.

To support the delivery of these targets, our Department commissioned work by the National Children's Bureau to develop a Child Poverty Outcomes Model to help better understand the role of each department in addressing the issue of child poverty.

The Child Poverty Outcomes Model indicators will overlap with some of the six high level outcomes identified in the Executive's Ten Year Strategy for Children and Young People. The Strategy covers a wider range of objectives than just the eradication of Child Poverty and therefore the indicators in the Outcomes Model will not be entirely synonymous.

### **Childcare Consultation**

**Mr Agnew** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how they have engaged with children and young people to gain their views on the Childcare Consultation; and whether a child-friendly version of the consultation document has been produced.

**(AQW 20449/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** A series of public consultation events has been held to enable the public and childcare stakeholders to engage directly in the development of the Childcare Strategy. In addition to these events, a separate consultation is being organised on behalf of the Department by PlayBoard to obtain the views of children and young people. Child-friendly consultation questions are being produced. This additional consultation exercise will be run in mid-March and will report before Easter. Although it comes after the formal close of public consultation, its findings will be taken fully into account during the development of the Strategy.

## Social Investment Fund

**Mr Easton** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the Social Investment Fund could be used to create further capacity for training facilities for job training.

**(AQW 20474/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** One of the four strategic objectives of the Social Investment Fund is to support communities to build pathways to employment by tackling educational under-achievement and barriers to employment; tackling skills deficits and promoting jobs brokerage, widening access to the labour market, promoting business start up and increasing sustainability through social enterprise.

Therefore, where steering groups, in partnership with communities, have identified job training and facilities as a key priority and included relevant proposals in the strategic area plan, these can be considered for funding against the agreed criteria for the Fund.

Final area plans for each of the nine zones were received on 28 February 2013 and proposed projects are now undergoing appraisal before final decisions on funding are made.

## Commissioner for Victims and Survivors

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what consultations they have had with the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors around the potential impacts of Welfare Reform.

**(AQO 3546/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The principal role of the Commission for Victims and Survivors is to promote the interests of victims and survivors. As part of this role, the Commission advises the Department on matters affecting victims and survivors.

We approved the Commission's Comprehensive Needs Assessment in November 2012. The report looked in detail at Welfare Reform issues and reinforced the importance of the provision of good welfare advice to the victims and survivors sector given the impending changes to the welfare system.

The Commission's advice, including that relating to the welfare reform, has proven invaluable in shaping the new Victims and Survivors Programme for 2013-15.

We understand that people are concerned about how welfare reform will affect them but we can assure the public that we are constantly reviewing the impact of welfare reform on key services and will continue to monitor this to ensure the best service possible is provided to those most vulnerable in society.

We will continue to provide and improve the assistance we provide to victims and survivors, taking into account existing statutory provision, including that provided by the welfare system both currently and in the future.

## Parades Commission

**Mr Campbell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether their Department provides advice to the Parades Commission on the venues it chooses for consultations on parades and related matters.

**(AQW 20552/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Our Department has not provided advice to the Parades Commission on venues for such consultations.

## Children's Awareness of Internet Safety

**Mr Easton** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what funding their Department provides for increasing children's awareness of internet safety.

**(AQW 20731/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Our Department works with relevant departments and other agencies which have a remit for policing, regulation and raising public awareness around internet use in order to protect children and young people online.

The Department does not have a specific budget line for increasing children's awareness of internet safety. However, it works on a cross departmental basis as well as with a number of national bodies, charities and regional organisations who promote internet safety. These include: the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), the Safeguarding Board for NI (SBNI) and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).

OFMDFM officials worked with the UK Safer Internet Centre to promote Safer Internet Day on 5 February 2013. An event was organised which was attended by Junior Minister Bell and was promoted in the local press.

## Social Investment Fund

**Mr Clarke** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Social Investment Fund.

**(AQO 3558/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Since October 2012, our officials have been working alongside steering groups to ensure communities across all nine social investment zones are engaged in the process to identify objective needs and potential projects to tackle those needs. Following that engagement, steering groups have drafted and submitted final area plans, encompassing prioritised projects aimed at addressing the key objectives of the Fund.

The final plans for all nine zones were received on 28 February and are now being subject to a quality assurance review, including the completion of the economic appraisal process for each proposed project. This process will assess the individual projects within the plans against set criteria to ensure the most robust projects are recommended, to maximise impact on the ground.

Following appraisal, we will take decisions on the final projects to be funded and the most appropriate delivery mechanism, with a view to projects commencing in communities soon afterwards.

## Education Bill

**Mr Kinahan** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 20468/11-15, when draft regulations will be published for consultation and submitted to the Assembly for approval.

**(AQW 21051/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We aim, by the early summer, to issue a draft of the regulations envisaged under Clause 62 of the Education Bill for consultation, with a view to bringing finalised regulations to the Assembly for approval by affirmative resolution after the Bill has been enacted.

# Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

## Better Regulation Action Plan

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that the target date of 31 March 2013 set in the Better Regulation Action Plan for a 25 percent reduction in the administrative burden on farmers is nearly passed and the target has not yet been met, whether her Department is working to a new target; and what is the revised target.

**(AQW 20712/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):** The current Better Regulation Action Plan ends at 31 March 2013. Officials will then re-measure the restricted list of regulations which were baselined in 2010 using a very complex and resource intensive method called the Standard Cost

Methodology. While this assessment does serve as an indicator to show the impact on the regulations measured, officials have found it to be a blunt tool and one which does not reflect the changing nature of the regulatory environment in which the Department must operate.

Officials are currently developing a further simplification Action Plan for 2013/14 which will contain a broader range of actions from across the Department's business areas. DARD stakeholders will be involved in developing this new plan which will look at the formal regulatory environment and the methods used to deliver the associated services. Working in conjunction with all business areas, future targets will be set around the delivery of the key actions identified and challenging specific areas of work, in a timely way, which will benefit our stakeholders.

I remain committed to the drive for proportionate regulation which aims to reduce the administrative burden while ensuring that the appropriate level of safeguards and control remain in place for the protection of the industry and the safety of the general public.

### **Food Business Incubation Centre of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to the Food Business Incubation Centre of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise, (i) how many start-up entrepreneurs it has supported in the past five years; (ii) how many established food businesses it has supported in the past five years; and (iii) what consideration her Department has given to delivering composite schemes at the Enniskillen and Greenmount campuses.

**(AQW 20717/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In the past five years the Food Business Incubation Centre (FBIC) has provided manufacturing facilities for six start-up entrepreneurs and five established businesses.

My Department is not currently considering composite schemes at the Enniskillen and Greenmount campuses.

### **Farm Safety**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what funding her Department provides for increasing schools children's awareness of farm safety.

**(AQW 20730/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Farm Safety Partnership of which my Department is a partner published its Action Plan in November last year. Two of the action points relate to increasing the awareness of school children to the matter of farm safety. These action points are being led by the Health and Safety Executive NI (HSENI). The HSENI will deliver key farm safety messages to 90 rural primary schools throughout the north and will hold a Child Safety on Farms poster competition in June on an annual basis. While my Department does not provide any direct funding for these specific action points it is providing £150k to HSENI to help fund a Multi Media Campaign to be launched on 25 March 2013. This campaign is targeted at farmers and those who influence them including children of school age.

### **Veterinary Medicines Directorate**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether the Veterinary Medicines Directorate applies in Northern Ireland and whether it prohibits vets from issuing human medicines.

**(AQW 20757/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is an executive agency of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). It has responsibility for assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines in Britain and the north of Ireland.

Under powers contained within the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2011, the VMD inspects certain businesses located here such as Veterinary Practice Premises, Wholesale Dealer's Authorisation holder's premises and premises approved for the retail supply of veterinary medicinal products by

Suitably Qualified Persons. The arrangements are set out in a Service Level Agreement signed by the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) and VMD. These arrangements are linked to a Memorandum of Understanding between my Department and DHSSPS for enforcement of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations here.

The Cascade system, which is a legislative provision, contained in Schedule 4(1) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2011, allows veterinary surgeons to legally prescribe authorised human medicines for animals if there are no authorised veterinary medicines for treating the disease. The veterinary surgeon responsible for an animal may, to avoid unacceptable suffering, treat the animal with human medicines.

A medicine prescribed in accordance with the Cascade system may be administered by the prescribing veterinary surgeon or by a person acting under the veterinary surgeon's direction. The responsibility for the prescription and use of the medicine remains with the prescribing veterinary surgeon.

### **Departmental Red Tape**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, what action she has taken since becoming aware that the amount of red tape in her Department has only reduced by 4.3 per cent against a base line of 2007 and a target of 25 per cent.

**(AQW 20765/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Over the last number of years my Department has been taking forward a programme of regulatory investigation and analysis with the key goal being to reduce the amount of administrative burden that the agri-food industry in NI has to comply with.

Officials briefed the ARD Committee in November 2011 on the outcome of the interim re-measurement which showed a 4.3% reduction in the administrative burden from the baseline set in 2007 against a target to reduce the administrative burden on the agri-food sector by 25% by 2013, with an interim target of 15% by 2011.

The 4.3% re-measurement figure was an interim figure which was included to give an indication of progress made to that date. Since then my Department has been continuing to implement the Better Regulation Action Plan which finishes at the end of March 2013. The Action Plan has a total of 63 recommendations put forward by an Independent Panel which were accepted or accepted in principle. Officials in the Better Regulation Advisory Unit have also managed to broaden the scope of the simplification work by attending a series of events such as stakeholder roadshows and agriculture events to talk to customers about their concerns. Unfortunately the response so far has been minimal but the Department is committed to keeping similar channels of communication open should an individual or business wish to make any helpful suggestions.

The progress made to date has been slower than I would have wanted to see. This is due mainly to the nature of the key actions which the Action Plan highlights to be delivered, the vast majority of which are based on EU Regulations. As we continue to move forward my Department wants to work closely with industry to develop further Action Plans to deal with any excessive regulatory and administrative burdens identified to ensure that the regulatory environment in which we operate has the appropriate level of governance without being unduly burdensome but at the same time maintains our high quality standards. I feel it is vitally important that we make every effort to reduce red tape where possible for the future prosperity of the industry in the North.

### **Additional Bureaucracy Placed on Farmers**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, using the same criteria that was used to measure the reduction of red tape using 2007 as a base line, how much additional bureaucracy has been placed farmers.

**(AQW 20766/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In 2007 an independent panel was asked to review the regulations that apply in the agri-food sector in the north of Ireland with a view to simplifying and reducing the administrative burden

placed on farmers and the industry generally. The NI Agri-Food Better Regulations and Simplification Review was published in April 2009 and both Departments took time to consider and respond to each of the 85 recommendations contained in the Review.

The method used to first measure and create a baseline measurement of what were considered to be the ten most burdensome areas of regulation is called Standard Cost Methodology. It is a complex and highly resource intensive method of calculating the administrative burden associated with complying with regulations. The areas relevant to DARD business included:-

- Animal Disease Control
- Livestock Identification, Registration and Movement
- Single Farm Payment and Cross Compliance
- Nitrates Action programme and Phosphorus Use in Agriculture
- Veterinary Medicines
- Trade in Animals and Animal Products
- Animal Welfare
- Pesticides
- Agri-Environment

A re-measurement was completed in 2011 which indicated a 4.3% net reduction in the administrative burden of those areas baselined. While this did not achieve the aspirational 15% target set, it did however indicate a reduction in the administrative burden being placed on the industry in these areas. This reduction has been verified by the Ulster Farmers' Union and the NI Agricultural Producers' Association.

As we are now coming to the end of the current three year Action Plan, a final re-measurement will take place again involving industry representatives and officials will brief the ARD Committee when that work has been completed.

### **Slaughter of Equine Animals in the County Armagh Plant**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 20059/11-15 and prior to the cessation of the slaughter of equine animals in the County Armagh plant on 25 January 2013, to detail whether equine meat was being processed for use in the human food chain either in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland or outside the jurisdiction, and if so, where was it being sent. **(AQW 20872/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Food Standards Agency is the Competent Authority responsible for the approval of slaughterhouses, cutting plants and game handling establishments here DARD is responsible for delivery of meat hygiene official controls in approved slaughterhouses, cutting plants and game handling establishments on behalf of the FSA.

While a small number of horses were slaughtered for human consumption in the approved establishment in Co Armagh, up until January 2013, the output was all exported to the Continent in carcase form.

It is legal to slaughter and sell horse meat in Britain and Ireland, provided it is from an approved abattoir, and the meat carries the official stamp declaring it is fit for human consumption. However, no Cutting Premises here are, or have been, specifically approved by FSA to cut horse meat.

Industry bodies here have indicated that none of their members – which includes a number of the major cutting plants -process horse meat, nor to the best of their knowledge have used it in any way as an ingredient in the manufacture of value added product.

Horse is processed in the South, in Britain and elsewhere. DARD has no knowledge of approvals granted by Competent Authorities in other jurisdictions.

## Level of Anti-Microbial Usage on Livestock

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 2586/11-15, to detail (i) who has responsibility for the level of anti-microbial usage on livestock; and (ii) what work departmental officials have undertaken to raise awareness of the significance of the development of antibiotic resistance.

**(AQW 20875/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:**

- (i) The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) lead on the regulation of antimicrobial usage here in the north of Ireland. From a veterinary perspective this function is implemented by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate, an executive agency of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), whose remit covers Britain and the north of Ireland. My Department does not have a statutory role in controlling the volume of antimicrobial usage in farm animals.
- (ii) While my Department does not have a statutory role, officials have worked with other government and non-government bodies in order to raise awareness of the significance of anti-microbial resistance.

My Department has recently commissioned the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) to bring forward a research proposal to carry out investigations into antimicrobial resistance and veterinary antimicrobial prescribing here in the north.

I also recently endorsed a Responsible Medicine Campaign launched by Farmers Weekly.

## Badger Baiting

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that there are a considerable number of gangs engaged in badger baiting, to detail (i) how many incidents her Department is aware of in each Council area in each of the last five years; and (ii) what action is being taken by her Department, in co-operation with the Ulster Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the PSNI, to bring those involved to justice.

**(AQW 20880/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department does not hold data in relation to incidents of badger baiting. The Department of the Environment is responsible for the Wildlife Order 1985 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011 in relation to the killing, injuring, disturbing, taking or selling of a badger.

The PSNI undertakes any wildlife crime investigations. Animal fighting, including badger baiting, is an offence under Section 8 of the Welfare of Animals Act 2011. The PSNI has enforcement responsibility for Section 8 in relation to animal fighting which is defined as an occasion on which a protected animal is placed with an animal or with a human for the purpose of fighting, wrestling or baiting. This means that an animal fight can be deemed to have taken place, even if both animals are wild animals, as protected animal includes any animal under the control of man, whether on a permanent or temporary basis. The 2011 Act has robust provisions to deal with animal fighting.

In May last year, I met the Badger Group and the Ulster Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (USPCA) to discuss a number of issues surrounding the protection of badgers, resulting from media coverage at that time. The meeting was very positive with both organisations commending the tough fines and penalties contained within the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 for dealing with cruelty to badgers. Following this meeting I wrote to, and subsequently met, the Chief Constable to discuss a range of issues regarding rural and wildlife crime, including incidents involving badgers. One of the actions coming out of this meeting was to publicise a contact point for reporting wildlife crimes under the relevant wildlife legislation. This was in response to a request from the Badger Group and the USPCA to have a central contact point to enable the public and others to report wildlife crime concerns. I also wrote to the Environment Minister, on the matter.

I totally deplore the horrific and sickening images that I have seen in news reports regarding badger baiting and I applaud the efforts of the USPCA and the PSNI in trying to bring to justice those responsible. I would urge the public to play their part in reporting wildlife crime to the PSNI so that prompt action can be taken against alleged perpetrators.

### **Single Farm Payment Applications**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when her Department first made farmers aware that areas prevalent in gorse should not be included within Single Farm Payment applications.

**(AQW 20881/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** At the introduction of the Single Farm Payment Scheme in 2005, farmers were advised that scrub land used for grazing was eligible for SFP if more than 50% of the area was capable of being grazed and was managed in accordance with good agricultural and environmental condition requirements.

This advice has since been significantly updated in the light of Commission audits and further clarification from the Commission and the latest version of the guidance for 2013 is on the Departmental website.

### **Field Boundary Management**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what legal standing the Northern Ireland Countryside Management 2007-2013 Information Booklet, often referred to as the Agreement Document, has between farmers and the Department in relation to field boundary management.

**(AQW 20890/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Prior to signing their agreement, NI Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS) participants receive a copy of the Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) 2007-2013 Information Booklet which is issued with the scheme information pack. Participants sign a receipt to confirm that they have received the booklet and to acknowledge that they understand that it forms part of their legal agreement with DARD. Participants are asked to retain the booklet for the duration of their agreement.

When a participant signs their NICMS Agreement they agree to 'comply with the requirements and management prescriptions of Whole Farm Management, Farmland Habitats and Features, Habitat Enhancement Options, Minimum Entry Environmental Benefit, Enhancement Measures and Special Environmental Projects as set out in the Rural Development Programme, the Countryside Management Scheme 2007-2013 Information Booklet, the Commitments Schedule, Agreement and the NICMS Management maps'. They also agree to adhere to the rules detailed within the Countryside Management Regulations (NI) 2008, and Regulation (EC) No. 1975/2006.

If a participant has agreed to undertake field boundary management work as a Habitat Enhancement Option, then by signing their agreement, they have made a legal agreement with DARD to carry out this work according to the management requirements set out in the CMS 2007 – 2013 Information Booklet.

### **Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme Document**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what legal standing the Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme document has between farmers and the Department in relation to field boundary management.

**(AQW 20892/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Field Boundary Agri-Environment Training Programme booklet has been provided as a general guide to good practice for scheme participants and it does not form part of the legal agreement with DARD.

## Field Boundary Restoration Work

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail any differences to the instructions to individuals completing field boundary restoration work, contained in the original Northern Ireland Countryside Management 2007-13 Information booklet and the recently published Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme document.

**(AQW 20893/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Detailed information on agri-environment field boundary management requirements, field boundary restoration management requirements and restored field boundary protective fencing conditions and standards are found in the Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) 2007-2013 Information Booklet.

The Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme booklet covers the general management of all on-farm boundaries found on the farm such as hedges, stone walls, stone banks, earth banks, sheughs, waterways and fences, including hedge restoration and how to plant a new hedge.

The training booklet is a general guide to good practice. It is to be used in conjunction with the CMS 2007-2013 Information Booklet and is not intended to replace it.

## Field Boundary Schemes

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to field boundary schemes, to clarify what is meant when her Department refers to ground that is not too wet or not too dry, and how a farmer or contractor should measure this.

**(AQW 20895/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Countryside Management Scheme (CMS) 2007-2013 Information Booklet provides detailed information on agri-environment field boundary management requirements. Supplementary field boundary management guidance in the areas of management of hedges including hedge restoration and planting new hedges is contained in the Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme Booklet which makes reference to 'ground that is not too wet or not too dry' when considering suitable soil conditions for hedgerow planting.

The CMS 2007-2013 Information Booklet advises to 'plant hedges during periods of dry weather between October and March. Avoid planting in very wet or frosty weather. Avoid planting on waterlogged sites and when planting on a bank plant consider planting at the base of the bank to avoid the plants from suffering from drought'

Further planting advice given in the Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme booklet states, boundaries not suitable for hedge planting include areas that are liable to flooding, areas which are very wet and those which are very dry.

A farmer or contractor should draw on this guidance when assessing the suitability of a site for planting a hedgerow.

## Ash Dieback Disease

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 20063/11-15, why the document does not refer to ash dieback disease, as mentioned in her answer.

**(AQW 20897/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Field Boundary Management Agri-Environment Training Programme booklet does not make any reference to ash dieback disease, as the booklet was produced before the first confirmed outbreak of the disease in the north in November 2012. However, at all subsequent training courses a verbal update was provided to course participants about the situation pertaining to ash dieback disease.

The document referred to in AQW 20063/11-15 was an addendum to the Countryside Management Scheme 2007-2013 Information Booklet which was issued to new participants. This contained guidance on Ash Dieback disease.

### **County Armagh Slaughter Plant**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 20059/11-15, to detail (i) why the County Armagh slaughter plant ceased slaughtering equine animals on 25 January 2013; and (ii) whether this was a voluntary decision by the company.

**(AQW 20941/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** There was one slaughter plant in Co Armagh approved by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) for equine slaughter. This establishment is also approved for the slaughter of cattle and sheep. It ceased slaughtering horses completely on 25th January 2013 and have asked the FSA to completely remove their authorisation to slaughter equines.

I understand that the decision to cease slaughtering equines at Oakdale Meats was taken for the company's own commercial and business reasons.

### **Eurostock Foods Factory in Craigavon**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline when the Eurostock Foods factory in Craigavon was subject to inspection and the precise nature of each such inspection, including whether content of product was tested, over the last three years .

**(AQW 20972/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Food businesses such as Eurostock Foods are subject to official controls such as audits, inspections and sampling in respect of food safety, food standards composition and labelling and beef labelling.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is the Central Competent Authority in matters of food safety and authenticity here and in Britain. DARD is responsible for the delivery of meat hygiene official controls on behalf of the FSA in the north of Ireland. DARD also enforces the Beef Labelling Regulations in the factory insofar as they pertain to fresh and frozen cuts of beef and mince. Enforcement of food safety, food composition and labelling requirements are conducted by District Council Environmental Health Departments who carry out food hygiene and food standards composition and labelling inspections. District Councils are also responsible for the Beef Labelling controls at retail level and of processed beef products.

Veterinary Service's delivery of Official Controls in stand-alone Meat Cutting Premises such as Eurostock takes the form of regular risk-based audits. Since January 2010, six routine audits of the Eurostock premises have been completed. The audit process included nine additional informal visits to close off the audits and verify the Food Business Operator's compliance.

In addition Veterinary Service staff carried out three separate visits to follow up on information provided by other agencies. These concerned import health certification, consumer complaint and an anonymous complaint. All these issues were resolved to the satisfaction of the Veterinary Service inspectors by Eurostock management.

No samples for testing were taken as part of this process.

DARD has also carried out 12 Beef Labelling inspections at Eurostock at approximately quarterly intervals since February 2010. No samples for testing were taken.

Craigavon Borough Council has carried out a total of 16 food hygiene and food standards (composition and labelling) inspections and visits since March 2010.

As part of the process of approving Eurostock for the re-wrapping of fishery products, Craigavon Borough Council carried out two food hygiene inspection visits during 2012. One of these visits also included a food standards inspection.

Since the publication of the FSAI survey findings on 14th January 2013, Environmental Health Officers from Craigavon Borough Council have carried out a further 13 inspections and visits focussing on species declaration. Formal samples were taken during two of those inspections.

## **Transgender Community**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, how her Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 20983/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The Department recognises the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of its statutory equality duties. Our Equality Scheme (2011) commits us to seeking the views of those directly affected by the matter / policy in question and a list of our current consultees is included in our Equality Scheme at <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/agenda-for-equality/agenda-for-equality-dard-equality-scheme-2011.htm>

Our current list of Section 75 consultees includes the Rainbow Project, who works to improve the physical, mental & emotional health of gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender people and their families in the North; and Cara-friend an organisation dedicated to supporting, empowering, educating, and offering friendship to everyone in the LGBT community.

Equality Unit is represented on the LGB&T Consultative Forum and have met on a number of occasions with the Equality Officer with the Rainbow Project, who has also addressed the Department's Equality Steering Group. An offer had been made by the Department for the LGB&T sector to use the DARD regional premises across the North for the promotion of LGB&T Issues and support services.

Two members of the Equality Unit attended a recent seminar titled; 'Transgender Issues, Good Practice in Employment, for employers and employees organised by the Trans Community in partnership with the Equality Commission, Youthnet and Transgender NI.

DARD's Equality Branch Intranet site has dedicated pages on Sexual Orientation and Transgender issues. These pages provide useful information for our staff and policy makers on a range of issues; such as latest Equality Commission publications, research material and statistical information; links to recent reports such as the Yogyakarta Principles, and contact details of LGB and Trans (T) organisations. The Branch also issues a regular e-zine to business areas with information about LGB&T issues and links to latest e-bulletins such as E-Male Matters.

## **G83 Connection Agreement**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why the prerequisite to provide a G83 connection agreement from Northern Ireland Electricity, under Appendix 25 of the departmental operating rules for Axis 3 Measure 3.1 of the Rural Development Program, has not been removed from the eligibility criteria.

**(AQW 21016/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** At time of application an applicant is only required to provide confirmation that the project has been registered with NIE and that a generator application pack has been received. The requirement to have a G83 connection agreement is a post application requirement in that no grant will be paid out until it is in place.

## **Illegal Dumping of Fallen Farm Animals**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many successful prosecutions have been pursued in each of the last five years for the illegal dumping of fallen farm animals.

**(AQW 21022/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The number of successful convictions associated with the illegal dumping of fallen farm animals is:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number</b>
2008/9	2
2009/10	2
2010/11	4
2011/12	7
2012/13	4

## **Public Consultations**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) the number of public consultations undertaken by her Department, in each year since 2007; (ii) the type of consultation; and (iii) the total cost of each consultation.

**(AQW 21045/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** A total of 324 consultations have been undertaken by my Department since 2007. A list of consultations, broken down by financial year, is attached at Annex A.

The Section 75 statutory duties make equality and good relations central to the whole range of public policy decision-making. Therefore the cost of carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) are not normally maintained separately and may not be readily disaggregated. However, where possible, costs for individual EQIA consultations have been included. The attached figures also exclude staff costs, as the Department does not routinely collect information on staff costs associated with the production of consultation documents.

## **Northern Ireland Electricity**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department has considered applying the requirement to provide a G83 connection agreement from Northern Ireland Electricity, under Appendix 25 of the operating rules for Axis 3 measure 3.1 of the Rural Development Program, as a post-condition by a successful applicant for grant aid.

**(AQW 21071/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Presently a G83 connection agreement is a post application requirement in that no Grant will be paid out until it is in place. At time of application an applicant is only required to provide confirmation that the project has been registered with NIE and that a generator application pack has been received.

## **Measure 3.1 of Farm Diversification Scheme**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 20099/11-15, whether she would consider transferring uncommitted funds in Measure 3.1 of Farm Diversification Scheme from the areas that are finding it difficult to spend funds, to other areas that have almost exhausted their funds and could commit to using the funds on Farm Diversification.

**(AQW 21243/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Axis 3 allocations were competitively awarded to empower local people under the 'LEADER methodology' to make local decisions to benefit their local community. Under LEADER it is within the gift of Joint Council Committee's (JCC's) and Local Action Groups (LAG's) to determine how they manage their allocations subject to proper and good governance.

I understand that five groups have now indicated that they will be moving funds from measure 3.1. They have stated that they want to ensure that 100% of allocated funds are used in the area. Also there is a concern about being unable to fully commit 3.1 funds given the record of previous calls for applications and the final out turn.

The economic environment has changed and Groups have made various adjustments to their Plans to better locally address their changing situation. In some areas the uptake of some of the measures is below original projections, however these Clusters have identified other projects across the measures that could benefit from funding and help improve the quality of life and economic sustainability of their areas.

## Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

### Eel Fishing

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure in light of her written statement on 18 February 2013, and asks for considering any reduction in eel fishing in Lough Neagh, how this differs from her Department's stance when eel fishing was prohibited on Lough Erne.

**(AQW 19965/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure):** The North West Eel Management Plan was submitted to the EU in December 2008 and approved by the Commission on 4th March 2010. The plan showed that the eel stock in Lough Erne was below safe biological limits and therefore it was necessary to introduce a cessation of the commercial eel fishery on the Lough.

The Neagh Bann Eel Management Plan, which was approved at the same time, allowed for a restricted continuation of commercial eel fishing in Lough Neagh, given the different circumstances prevailing there.

A draft report has been recently submitted to the European Parliament Fisheries Committee, proposing amendments to the EU Eel Regulations, including an immediate suspension of all commercial eel fishing across the EU, if the status of the European eel stock continues to be classed as critical.

I have opposed the various amendments and it is unlikely that the amendments on eel fishing will be agreed by the EP

### Eel Fishermen on Lough Erne

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why compensation was not offered to eel fishermen on Lough Erne when their fishery was closed, in view of the Department establishing such as a prerequisite to any such change in respect of Lough Neagh eel fishing.

**(AQW 19966/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** There was no provision for compensation in the NW Eel Management Plan or under Council Regulation (EC) No 1100 / 2007 which established measures for the recovery of the European eel stock.

The potential suspension in the future of all commercial eel fishing across the EU would present a different set of circumstances in relation to the consideration of compensation from Europe.

### Eel Fishery on Lough Erne

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what equality impact assessment was conducted before the Lough Erne eel fishery was closed, given that the Department now expects an assessment before any change in respect of Lough Neagh.

**(AQW 19967/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** An Equality Impact Assessment and a Regulatory Impact Assessment were carried out on the draft legislation that introduced a prohibition of eel fishing on all waters in the DCAL jurisdiction except Lough Neagh.

## Answers to Assembly Questions

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the average number of days it takes her Department to answer an Assembly question for priority written answer, in the last year.

**(AQW 20883/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The average number of working days taken by my Department to answer priority Assembly Written Questions in the last year was 9.

## Answers to Assembly Questions

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the average number of days it takes her Department to answer an Assembly question for ordinary written answer, in the last year.

**(AQW 20885/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The average number of working days taken by my Department to answer ordinary Assembly Written Questions in the last year was 9.

# Department of Education

## Education and Skills Authority

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of the Education and Skills Authority since 2005/06.

**(AQW 19080/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The total cost of expenditure in establishing the Education Skills Authority from 2005/06 to December 2012/13 is £14,967,179.15

## Educational Underachievement

Mr Storey asked Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW15328/11-15, for an update on the current situation.

**(AQW 19584/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I am committed to progressing with the project to tackle educational underachievement in the Greater Belfast area.

My Department is currently working with its delivery partners to determine the most effective means of using and distributing this funding to improve educational outcomes in the most educationally disadvantaged areas. This is in line with my policies for raising standards and tackling educational underachievement.

In addition to this, I also announced on 1 March an additional £3m to be targeted at raising educational standards in each of the next two years. £1m per year will be used in developing literacy and numeracy programmes in disadvantaged areas. A further £2m per year will be used to develop community education initiatives.

## Kirkinriola Primary School

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education, given the positive follow-up inspection report, why Kirkinriola Primary School is still in formal intervention.

**(AQW 20787/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** While the recent follow up inspection of Kirkinriola Primary School found that, in most areas inspected, the quality of education provided by the school was satisfactory it also identified areas of improvement in standards, learning and teaching and in leadership, management and

governance. These still need to be addressed if the needs of all the children are to be met more effectively.

In particular, the ETI reported that having personnel in an acting capacity at a senior leadership level within the school, and within the Board of Governors, needs to be resolved as a matter of priority.

The school continues to need focused support to address these and other issues and it will remain in the Formal Intervention Process to ensure that it receives the necessary support, guidance and encouragement from the NEELB to improve and address the areas of concern.

The ETI will conduct a further inspection within 12 months of the date of the follow up inspection.

## **Irish Medium Schools**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education to outline the good practice used in the inspection of Irish Medium schools that was agreed between the inspectorates in the two jurisdictions.

**(AQW 20958/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** For approximately ten years, inspectors from the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) in the North have been working alongside inspectors from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in the South to refresh their Irish language skills. Over the past five years, there have been round table professional discussions between the two inspectorates on how best to inspect Irish medium schools; however, there is no formal written agreement.

In addition, inspectors from both jurisdictions participate in an exchange programme, which allows inspectors to share good practice in general terms. In 2008, one such exchange afforded inspectors the opportunity to share good practice explicitly relating to the evaluation of the teaching and learning of Irish in two schools; one in the North and one in the South.

## **Transgender Community**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Education, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, how his Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 20985/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Equality Scheme, sited on the department's website, lists all organisations etc who wish to be currently consulted. This includes representation from the transgender community.

The list is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to the Department's functions and policies. The Equality Scheme also gives information as to how an organisation can be added or removed from the consultation list.

In addition to formal documentation the Department's consultation process can also include meetings, focus groups, surveys and questionnaires.

## **Rural Schools**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Education what plans he has to promote the job opportunities in rural schools better and to encourage principals to take up positions in rural schools.

**(AQW 20997/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Employing Authorities manage the recruitment of school staff and do not report any particular difficulties in recruiting school staff and principals for rural schools. Vacancies are widely advertised and the number of applicants for each post will vary from post to post. The decision to apply for a particular vacancy, be it in a rural or urban school, rests with the individual and will depend on their personal circumstances, experience and the nature of the post. I recognise that effective leadership and high-quality teaching are central to delivering improvement in all schools and I am developing a new strategy for teacher education which will focus on developing and supporting teachers throughout their career.

## Curriculum Change in Primary Schools

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the need for a curriculum change in primary schools to better promote science, technology, engineering and maths.

**(AQW 21011/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Revised Curriculum, which is now in place in all grant aided primary schools, provides much greater freedom for teachers to explore STEM-related learning with pupils. The revised Primary Curriculum contains a number of statutory 'Areas of Learning' and emphasises the development of the 'Cross-Curricular Skills' and the 'Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities'. Mathematics, Science and Technology are compulsory elements of the revised primary curriculum.

Since the publication of the Report of the STEM Review, my Department has been and continues to take significant action on a number of fronts aimed specifically at primary schools to engage primary pupils with STEM in an interesting and exciting way. These include: annual funding to Sentinus to deliver a suite of primary STEM programmes, including the successful annual Sentinus Young Innovators event; a new pilot programme 'Smart Gear' to enhance STEM based learning at Key Stage 2 involving over 2000 pupils from 75 primary schools; 'Promoting STEM in Primary Schools' project which has developed a series of Key Stage 2 case studies and thematic units to improve teachers' and pupils' understanding of connections between STEM school-based learning and the STEM 'world of work'; and a 'STEM Primary Professional Development Project' which enables primary school teachers to act as 'STEM Teacher Developers' trained to provide a range of STEM professional development activities for teachers across a cluster of local primary schools.

The results from the recently published Trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS) show that our primary school pupils are performing well above the international average in numeracy, where our pupils are ranked 6th out of 50 countries surveyed and in science, where they are ranked 21st, also scoring significantly above the international average.

I believe that the revised curriculum is having a positive effect on how our children are learning and have no plans at this moment to seek a comprehensive review of the primary curriculum.

## Professional Development for Primary School Teachers

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Education what steps are being taken to ensure that there is adequate continuing professional development for primary school teachers in science, technology, engineering and maths.

**(AQW 21012/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) is one of the main priority areas for action within the STEM Strategy "Success through STEM".

I recognise the importance of STEM subjects to our future economic growth and as Education Minister I am committed to ensuring that teachers are equipped to deliver excellence in teaching STEM subjects.

CPD for all school teachers (including primary school teachers) in STEM subjects is provided by the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and its STEM partner organisations. The following are examples of support provided:-

Primary STEM Teacher Developer Project – funded by the Department and delivered by the ELBs, this province wide project has trained 27 primary teachers as 'expert teacher developers' whose role it is to go to schools to model the teaching of primary science and technology. In the last three years this project has reached more than 19,000 pupils and 800 teachers in 268 primary schools.

Primary Technology Challenge/Young Innovators' Day – an annual event jointly run and organised by the ELBs and Sentinus, which showcases excellent practice in science and technology in schools.

ELB/Science Partner Support – The ELBs in conjunction with a range of partners (including The National Science Learning Centre (NSLC), Sentinus, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), the Association for Science Education (ASE), Eco-Schools and UNESCO) provide teacher professional

development opportunities for pupils to develop and practice skills within the context of award schemes and competitions.

Consortium of Local Education Authorities Supporting Practical Science and Technology – this organisation issues bulletins three times a year containing information support and practical ideas, offers a telephone health and safety helpline which all schools can access and provides an extensive website which offers access to a range of courses for teachers and technicians.

Web-based Support – material designed to enhance and support the teaching of science and technology, and mathematics and numeracy, are posted on ELB websites and Virtual Learning Environments, such as clounagh.org. This particular site is widely known and used by teachers to support science teaching.

‘Smart Gear’ science programme - The Department sponsors the ‘Smart Gear’ science programme which engages pupils from 75 primary schools, their class teachers along with 85 student teachers from St Mary’s University College, Stranmillis University College and the University of Ulster. This annual 10 week programme, based on modern sensor technology, supports the continuing professional development of non-science specialist primary teachers and the professional development of student teachers following STEM specialisms.

Telephone and E-mail Support –ELBs provide telephone and e-mail support and advice to science/World Around Us co-ordinators and teachers.

Centre-based Courses - ELBs provide support for science/World Around Us co-ordinators through centre-based courses, aimed at supporting them to develop whole school science and technology within their school.

Improvement of mathematics and numeracy - ELBs also provide support for the improvement of mathematics and numeracy in primary schools which have been identified as requiring support. This support includes provision of high quality bespoke professional development for teachers.

With the establishment of a single Education and Skills Authority to support the delivery of education in the north, I will change and enhance how we provide training, support and development for our teachers. In doing so, I will be taking appropriate action to ensure that all of our teachers, including those in our primary schools, continue to receive the necessary support in terms of continuing professional development in STEM subject areas.

## **Dundonald High School**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education for his assessment of the impact that the South Eastern Education and Library Board’s announcement on the future of Dundonald High School may have on the number of pupils selecting Dundonald High School as a preferred school this year.

**(AQW 21054/11-15)**

**Mr O’Dowd:** Responsibility for planning the Controlled schools’ estate is a matter for the Education & Library Boards in the first instance. In the case of Dundonald High School (HS) this is the South-Eastern Education & Library Board (SEELB).

I understand that at present the Board is conducting a pre-publication consultation on the possible closure of Dundonald HS. The Board will decide whether or not to publish a Development Proposal (DP) following this consultation.

Should the Board decide to publish a DP, this will be followed by a statutory 2-month consultation. Following this, my role is to decide whether or not to approve the DP taking account of all relevant information and comments received. Hence I have made no assessment of the impact that this action may have on applications for places at Dundonald HS for 2013/14.

## Dundonald High School

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education why the South Eastern Education and Library Board made its announcement on the future of Dundonald High School a few days before the deadline for Primary 7 pupils to select their preferred schools for next year.

**(AQW 21055/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Responsibility for planning the Controlled schools' estate is a matter for the Education & Library Boards in the first instance. In the case of Dundonald High School (HS) this is the South-Eastern Education & Library Board (SEELB).

I understand that at present the Board is conducting a pre-publication consultation on the possible closure of Dundonald HS. The Board will decide whether or not to publish a Development Proposal (DP) following this consultation.

Should the Board decide to publish a DP, this will be followed by a statutory 2-month consultation. Following this, my role is to decide whether or not to approve the DP taking account of all relevant information and comments received. Hence I have made no assessment of the impact that this action may have on applications for places at Dundonald HS for 2013/14.

## Dundonald High School

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education to detail the level of capital expenditure by Dundonald High School in each of the last 15 years.

**(AQW 21056/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As Dundonald High School is a controlled school the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) has provided details in relation to capital expenditure. The SEELB has advised that expenditure is only readily available from 2001/02 and is detailed by financial year in the table below.

Financial Year	£s
2001-02	13,100
2002-03	245,067
2003-04	24,908
2004-05	12,128
2005-06	129
2006-07	9,898
2007-08	158,108
2008-09	491,096
2009-10	505,685
2010-11	105,461
2011-12	91,054
2012-13 to 28/02/13	501
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,657,135</b>

## School Curriculum

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education what provision exists, or is planned, to teach civics to pupils.

**(AQW 21096/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Civics is embedded in Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) in primary schools, and Local and Global Citizenship in post-primary schools. Both subjects contribute to the curriculum objective of developing the young person as a contributor to society and have been statutory elements of the revised curriculum since 2007.

At Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and 2 there is a focus on building relationships in the school and community, respect for diversity and how to respond to conflict. Pupils' learning experience of PDMU at primary school provides a foundation for developing their skills, knowledge and deeper understanding of Local and Global Citizenship at Key Stages 3 and 4.

At Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 Local and Global Citizenship aims to prepare pupils for playing an active role in society. Knowledge and understanding are covered under four key concepts: Diversity and Inclusion; Equality and Social Justice; Democracy and Participation; and Human Rights and Social Responsibility.

A GCSE qualification is available at Key Stage 4 in Learning for Life and Work and Local and Global Citizenship is a GCSE component module.

### **Cost of School Meals**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education what is the average spend on a (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary school meal in each Education and Library Board area.

**(AQW 21115/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I refer the member to AQW 20169/11-15 tabled by Michael Copeland MLA published in the Official Report on 1 March 2013.

AQW 20169/11-15 refers to the "average cost" of a school meal whilst this question refers to the "average spend" on a school meal. School meals are a demand led service, therefore, expenditure (spend) is equivalent to cost. The information previously provided by the Education and Library Boards (ELBs) reflects the cost of providing a school meal in terms of the expenditure that has been incurred by the ELBs in this regard.

### **Catholic Primary Schools**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of Education what action is being taken to help catholic children in south and east Belfast whose parents have been told that there are no Primary 1 places in catholic primary schools within their area for commencement this September.

**(AQW 21126/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I am committed to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age will obtain a primary 1 place in a school of their preferred type within a reasonable distance of their home address.

The process for admissions to primary schools for 2013/14 is ongoing and does not complete until 17 April 2013 when letters are issued advising parents of the school to which their child has been admitted. Until then school placements are not final. During this process, parents of children who have not secured a place in their nominated schools will be asked to nominate further preferences.

The relevant Education and Library Board(s) are responsible for administering the admissions process, and if due to oversubscription within an area children remain unplaced, the Board and my Department will work with parents to ensure that all children are allocated a place in their appropriate sector.

### **Efficient Discharge of School Teachers**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to outline his plans for the efficient discharge of school teachers, now that the funding for such has been allocated elsewhere.

**(AQW 21128/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** No funding has previously been set aside for an efficient discharge scheme nor will funding be allocated in advance of completing the formal approval processes involved in taking forward schemes of this nature.

### Primary School Results

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to detail the results achieved by each primary school in (i) achievements and standards; (ii) quality of provision; and (iii) leadership and management, following inspections in each of the last three years; and the time taken between the initial inspection and publication of the final report in each case.

**(AQW 21129/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The table below summarises, for each primary school inspected during the academic years 2010/11 and 2011/12, the:

- performance levels for achievements and standards;
- performance level for the quality of provision;
- performance level for leadership and management; and
- date of inspection and date of publication of the report on the ETI's and DE's website.

Note: prior to the academic year 2010/11, performance levels were not reported formally in all inspection reports. Inspection reports are not generally published during a holiday period. For example, the report for a primary school inspected on 18 May 2010 was published on 22 September 2010.

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Abercorn Primary School	16/04/2012	18/05/2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Aghadrumsee Primary School	20/02/2012	27/04/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Aghavilly Primary School	21/03/2011	11/05/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
All Childrens Integrated Primary School	26/09/2011	18/11/2011	Good	Good	Good
Ashlea Primary School	22/11/2010	23/02/2011	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Aughamullan Primary School	20/02/2012	30/03/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Avoniel Primary School	07/03/2011	18/05/2011	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Ballycarry Primary School	24/10/2011	28/11/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Ballykelly Primary School	11/10/2010	10/01/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Ballymagee Primary School	06/06/2011	24/06/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Ballytrea Primary School	20/03/2012	27/04/2012	Good	Good	Good
Ballyvester Primary School	06/02/2012	13/03/2012	Very Good	Good	Very Good
Balnamore Primary School	04/04/2011	06/06/2011	Good	Good	Good
Bangor Central Primary School	23/05/2011	30/06/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Barnish Primary School	07/11/2011	16/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Belmont Primary School	01/06/2011	27/06/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Birches Primary School	05/03/2012	03/05/2012	Very Good	Outstanding	Outstanding
Botanic Primary School	21/05/2012	22/06/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Braniel Primary School	21/02/2011	20/05/2011	Good	Good	Good
Bridge Integrated Primary School	30/01/2012	23/03/2012	Good	Good	Good
Brownlee Primary School	03/10/2011	18/11/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Buick Memorial Primary School	23/04/2012	12/06/2012	Inadequate	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Bunscoil an Luir	18/10/2010	10/01/2011	Inadequate	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Bush Primary School	30/01/2012	30/03/2012	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
Campbell College Junior School	27/09/2010	09/11/2010	Good	Good	Very Good
Camphill Primary School	28/02/2011	14/03/2011	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
Carniny Primary School	26/09/2011	17/10/2011	Very Good	Good	Very Good
Carrick Primary School	21/03/2011	18/05/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Carrick Primary School	30/01/2012	14/05/2012	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Carrickfergus Model Primary School	11/10/2010	08/11/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Carrowdore Primary School	16/04/2012	15/06/2012	Good	Good	Good
Carrowreagh Primary School	14/05/2012	22/06/2012	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Carr's Glen Primary School	15/11/2010	12/01/2011	Good	Good	Good
Castleroe Primary School	04/10/2010	01/11/2010	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very Good
Cedar Integrated Primary School	21/03/2012	27/04/2012	Very Good	Good	Good
Clandeboye Primary School	26/03/2012	27/04/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Clough Primary School	24/11/2010	11/01/2011	Good	Very Good	Very Good
Cloughmills Primary School	08/02/2012	09/03/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Cortamlet Primary School	10/11/2010	03/12/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Cranmore Integrated Primary School	04/10/2010	22/11/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Cregagh Primary School	24/10/2011	07/12/2011	Good	Good	Good
Crumlin Controlled Intergrated Primary School	12/03/2012	22/05/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Culcrow Primary School	15/05/2012	13/06/2012	Good	Good	Very Good
Darkley Primary School	12/01/2011	14/02/2011	Good	Very Good	Good
Denamona Primary School	07/03/2011	09/05/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Derrylatinee Primary School	08/11/2010	03/12/2010	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very Good
Downey House School	31/01/2011	31/05/2011	Good	Good	Very Good
Downpatrick Primary School	03/10/2011	19/11/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Dromore Road Primary School	27/02/2012	03/05/2012	Good	Good	Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Drumard Primary School	20/02/2012	29/06/2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Drumduff Primary School	05/12/2011	07/02/2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Drumsallen Primary School	07/02/2011	10/03/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Dunmullan Primary School	02/05/2012	12/06/2012	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Dunmurry Primary School	07/11/2011	11/01/2012	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very Good
Earlview Primary School	08/11/2010	12/01/2011	Good	Very Good	Good
Eden Primary School	16/05/2011	14/06/2011	Good	Good	Good
Edendork Primary School	07/11/2011	09/12/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very Good
Edmund Rice (CB) Primary School	28/02/2011	10/05/2011	Very Good	Good	Good
Enniskillen Integrated Primary School	23/03/2011	16/05/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Very Good
Enniskillen Model Primary School	21/10/2010	06/12/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Faughanvale Primary School	05/12/2011	30/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Foley County Primary School	10/10/2011	19/01/2012	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Forth River Primary School	31/01/2011	08/03/2011	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory
Fountain Primary School	27/09/2010	24/11/2010	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Friend's School	09/03/2011	19/04/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Outstanding
Gaelscoil Na Bhfal	21/03/2011	08/09/2011	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Glendermott Primary School	21/03/2011	26/05/2011	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Glynn Primary School	21/03/2012	15/05/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Grange Park Primary School	23/01/2012	17/02/2012	Good	Good	Very Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Greenlough Primary School (St Mary's)	05/12/2011	09/02/2012	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory
Groggan Primary School	09/05/2012	12/06/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Hamiltonsbawn Primary School	17/10/2011	23/11/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Hardy Memorial Primary School	07/11/2011	19/01/2012	Good	Good	Good
Harryville Primary School	06/06/2011	23/11/2012	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Holy Child Primary School	07/11/2011	19/12/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Holy Family Primary School	08/11/2010	17/12/2010	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Howard Primary School	09/05/2011	22/06/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Inchmarlo	22/11/2010	13/01/2011	Satisfactory	Good	Outstanding
Irvinestown Primary School	28/11/2011	30/01/2012	Outstanding	Very Good	Good
Kesh Primary School	21/02/2011	16/05/2011	Good	Good	Very Good
Kilcooley Primary School	30/01/2012	06/03/2012	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory
Killen Primary School	05/12/2011	11/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Killyhommon Primary School	04/10/2010	17/11/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Killyleagh Primary School	29/11/2010	23/02/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
King's Park Primary School	24/01/2011	02/03/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Kingsmills Primary School	21/11/2011	19/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Kirkinriola Primary School	28/03/2011	26/05/2011	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Knockmore Primary School	18/10/2010	11/01/2011	Very Good	Good	Good
Knocknagor Primary School	09/05/2011	24/06/2011	Good	Good	Satisfactory

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Laghey Primary School	21/03/2012	03/05/2012	Good	Good	Good
Lead Hill Primary School	05/12/2011	30/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Lisnagelvin Primary School	04/04/2011	08/06/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Loughries Primary School	21/03/2012	27/04/2012	Inadequate	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Loughview Integrated Primary School	28/03/2011	24/05/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Lowwood Primary School	14/11/2011	19/01/2012	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
Maguiresbridge Primary School	26/09/2011	02/11/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Malvern Primary School	26/03/2012	13/06/2012	Inadequate	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Meadow Bridge Primary School	06/06/2011	30/06/2011	Good	Good	Very Good
Millennium Integrated Primary School	29/11/2010	21/02/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Millennium Integrated Primary School	29/11/2010	21/02/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Millstrand Integrated Primary School	27/02/2012	28/05/2012	Good	Good	Good
Milltown Primary School	12/03/2012	27/04/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Moat Primary School	21/11/2011	11/01/2012	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Mossgrove Primary School	26/09/2011	22/11/2011	Good	Good	Satisfactory
Mount St Catherine's Primary School	10/01/2011	24/02/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Moy Regional Primary School	24/10/2011	03/12/2011	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Moyallon Primary School	16/04/2012	30/05/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Mullaglass Primary School	12/03/2012	03/05/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Nazareth House Primary School	21/02/2011	30/03/2011	Good	Very Good	Very Good
Newcastle Primary School	21/05/2012	21/08/2012	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Oakwood Integrated Primary School	17/01/2011	05/04/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Olderfleet Primary School	06/02/2012	09/03/2012	Good	Good	Good
Orchard County Primary School	22/11/2010	13/01/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School	22/11/2010	11/01/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Our Lady's Girls' Primary School	28/03/2011	31/05/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Our Lady's Primary School	29/11/2010	24/01/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Parkgate Primary School	21/05/2012	26/09/2012	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Portaferry Integrated Primary School	01/05/2012	27/06/2012	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Portavogie Primary School	27/09/2010	10/11/2010	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Portglenone Primary School	06/10/2010	09/11/2010	Good	Good	Very Good
Queen Elizabeth II (Pomeroy) Primary School	26/09/2011	26/10/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
Queen Elizabeth II Primary School	05/12/2011	11/01/2012	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
Randalstown Central Primary School	21/03/2011	11/05/2011	Good	Very Good	Very Good
Scarva Primary School	26/09/2011	27/10/2011	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Seaview Primary School	14/11/2011	16/01/2012	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Silverstream Primary School	17/04/2012	01/06/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
Springhill Primary School	07/03/2011	01/06/2011	Inadequate	Satisfactory	Inadequate
St Anne's Primary School	24/01/2011	30/03/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
St Anne's Primary School	17/04/2012	13/06/2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Anthony's Primary School	21/11/2011	19/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Brigid's Primary School	09/05/2011	14/06/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
St Brigid's Primary School	09/05/2011	23/06/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Clare's Convent Primary School	28/09/2011	29/11/2011	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
St Colman's Abbey Primary School	28/11/2011	10/02/2012	Satisfactory	Inadequate	Satisfactory
St Colman's Primary School	10/10/2011	09/12/2011	Good	Satisfactory	Good
St Colmcille's Primary School	06/06/2011	09/09/2011	Good	Good	Good
St Colmcille's Primary School	05/12/2011	09/02/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Good
St Columbkille's Primary School	05/12/2011	25/01/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Columb's Primary School (Cullion)	20/03/2012	15/05/2012	Satisfactory	Good	Good
St Eoghan's Primary School	22/11/2010	11/01/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Finlough's Primary School, Sistrakeel	21/02/2011	24/03/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
St John's Eglis(1) Primary School	01/05/2012	14/06/2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St John's Primary School	27/09/2010	09/11/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St John's Primary School	08/11/2010	16/12/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Good
St Josephs and St James Primary School	07/11/2011	16/12/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
St Joseph's Primary School	24/01/2011	05/04/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Joseph's Primary School	07/02/2011	24/03/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Joseph's Primary School	09/05/2011	29/06/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Joseph's Primary School	17/10/2011	25/11/2011	Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Luke's Primary School	08/11/2010	30/11/2010	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Macartan's Primary School	06/06/2011	09/09/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Macnissi's Primary School	04/04/2011	06/05/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Malachy's Primary School	26/09/2011	26/10/2011	Good	Good	Good
St Malachy's Primary School	26/10/2011	19/01/2012	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
St Malachy's Primary School	05/12/2011	02/02/2012	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
St Martin's Primary School	26/09/2011	14/10/2011	Good	Good	Good
St Mary's Girls' Primary School	29/11/2010	23/02/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
St Mary's Primary School	10/01/2011	24/03/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Mary's Primary School	03/10/2011	02/11/2011	Good	Good	Satisfactory
St Mary's Primary School	07/11/2011	19/01/2012	Very Good	Good	Good
St Mary's Primary School	09/01/2012	07/03/2012	Good	Good	Satisfactory
St Mary's Primary School	09/01/2012	21/02/2012	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
St Mary's Primary School	20/02/2012	20/04/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Mary's Primary School	06/06/2012	05/07/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Mary's Primary School (Glenview)	21/03/2011	23/05/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
St Mary's Primary School , Aughnacloy	26/09/2011	14/10/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Mary's Primary School Glenravel	07/12/2011	24/01/2012	Good	Good	Good
St Mary's Star of the Sea Primary School	16/05/2011	19/09/2011	Inadequate	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Matthew's Primary School	06/06/2011	09/09/2011	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
St Ninnidh's Primary School	15/11/2010	13/01/2011	Satisfactory	Good	Good
St Oliver Plunkett Primary School	17/10/2011	03/12/2011	Good	Good	Good
St Patrick's Primary School	11/10/2010	13/12/2010	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
St Patrick's Primary School	10/01/2011	11/02/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Patrick's Primary School	06/06/2011	15/09/2011	Very Good	Satisfactory	Good
St Patrick's Primary School	03/10/2011	02/11/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Patrick's Primary School	24/10/2011	16/12/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Patrick's Primary School	23/01/2012	22/02/2012	Good	Very Good	Good
St Patrick's Primary School	06/02/2012	09/07/2012	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
St Patrick's Primary School	20/02/2012	16/03/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Patrick's Primary School	26/03/2012	03/05/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Outstanding
St Patrick's Primary School	30/04/2012	29/06/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
St Paul's Primary School	28/09/2011	26/10/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Good
St Peter's Primary School	28/03/2011	16/05/2011	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
St Peter's Primary School	23/05/2011	04/06/2011	Good	Good	Good

<b>Institution Name.</b>	<b>Inspection Date</b>	<b>Date of Publication</b>	<b>Leadership and Management</b>	<b>Quality of Provision</b>	<b>Achievements and Standards</b>
St Ronan's Primary School	01/06/2011	23/06/2011	Outstanding	Very Good	Outstanding
St Teresa's Primary School	06/02/2012	13/03/2012	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
St Vincent de Paul Primary School	21/05/2012	04/07/2012	Very Good	Good	Good
Straid Primary School	03/10/2011	14/11/2011	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Straidbilly Primary School	22/11/2010	03/12/2010	Outstanding	Very Good	Outstanding
Tandragee Primary School	05/12/2011	02/02/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Taughmonagh Primary School	08/11/2010	11/01/2011	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
The Cope Primary School	06/02/2012	27/04/2012	Good	Very Good	Very Good
The Holy Family Primary School	15/11/2010	13/01/2011	Outstanding	Very Good	Very Good
Thompson Primary School	23/05/2011	05/09/2011	Good	Good	Good
Towerview Primary School	26/03/2012	12/06/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Tullygally Primary School	28/02/2011	03/06/2011	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Tummery Primary School	21/03/2011	16/05/2011	Good	Very Good	Very Good
Victoria Park Primary School	10/01/2011	11/02/2011	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory
Victoria Primary School	17/10/2011	23/12/2011	Satisfactory	Good	Good
Waringstown Primary School	23/04/2012	30/05/2012	Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding
West Winds Primary School	28/05/2012	07/09/2012	Very Good	Good	Good
Wheatfield Primary School	18/10/2010	06/12/2010	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Woods Primary School	20/03/2012	14/05/2012	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good

## Post-Primary and Primary School Education

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 20367/11-15, what action he is taking to ensure that there is greater engagement, clarity and consistency in Area Planning in post-primary and primary school education.

**(AQW 21138/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** As I outlined in my statement to the Assembly on 26 February, I have written to the Chairpersons of the Boards and highlighted a number of areas where I wish to see action.

My officials met the Chief Executive of every Board and CCMS during March to discuss the draft area plans published on 26 February and where further work is needed.

I said also that I intended to establish an area planning steering group which will meet for the first time on 8 April. The group will support my Department's work to advance the plans, embed a single approach to area planning and identify priority areas for action in the short to medium term.

## Integrated Education

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education how integrated education is defined in law.[R]

**(AQW 21170/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Under Article 64 (1) of The Education Reform (NI) Order 1989, integrated education is defined as "the education together at school of Protestant and Roman Catholic pupils."

## Lisanelly Campus

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education whether the Lisanelly campus concept is one of a shared education campus or an integrated campus. [R]

**(AQW 21171/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Lisanelly Shared Education Campus will be based on a shared approach to educational provision. It will bring together pupils from a number of schools sectors on one geographical location, allowing children and young people from differing communities to be educated together in an atmosphere of mutual respect for the cultural identity of others.

Plans being developed envisage a series of core schools that will ensure the individual ethos and values of differing sectors and educational models can be respected and retained, together with a series of shared centres where pupils from all schools can learn together in state of the art educational facilities.

Lisanelly is about delivering a world class educational experience to young people and I do not believe it is necessary to put any particular label on it.

## Segregation in Education

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education what progress has been made by his Department to address the problem of segregation in education, as identified by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child in its most recent compliance report. [R]

**(AQW 21172/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Much work has been undertaken to tackle segregation in the education system as identified by the UNCRC.

The terms of reference for Area Planning specifically require the planning authorities to consider and bring forward proposals for shared education where it is appropriate. School managing authorities for the first time are required to plan together and it is the intention that this approach provides opportunities to consider shared provision to protect local access to high quality education.

The Education and Skills Authority (ESA) will be required to maximise opportunities for integrating education within a system of sustainable schools and the Sustainable School Policy has, at its heart, a recognition that “new opportunities for collaboration and sharing in education should be pursued”.

There is already much good sharing practice within education, including excellent work within area learning communities. These provisions enable schools to build on that good practice, to the benefit of all.

The application of and commitment to the Department’s statutory duty to encourage and facilitate integrated education has seen the number of integrated schools increase from 33 in 1997 to 62 in 2012, and the number of pupils attending integrated schools has more than doubled to over 21,500 in the same period.

The Executive’s Programme for Government 2011-15 contains four key commitments, from my Department, on shared education. One of the key commitments was to establish a Ministerial Advisory Group to explore and bring forward recommendations to advance shared education. I have taken receipt of the Executive Summary and will be receiving a full report later this month. The Report will be a catalyst for public debate on advancing shared education.

### **Deficit in Primary School Places**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Education what action his Department will take to address the deficit in primary school places in the Carryduff and Drumbo parish area who are for children entering primary 1. **(AQW 21174/11-15)**

**Mr O’Dowd:** The process for admissions to primary schools for 2013/14 is ongoing and does not complete until 17 April 2013 when letters are issued advising parents of the school to which their child has been admitted. Until then school placements are not final. It is therefore premature to say if there is a deficit in the number of primary 1 places available in the area to which you refer.

The relevant Education and Library Board(s) are responsible for administering the admissions process, and if a problem due to oversubscription in any particular area is identified, the Board and my Department will work with parents to ensure that all children are allocated a place in their appropriate sector.

### **Oversubscription of Places in Schools**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister of Education, given the oversubscription of places in schools such as St. Ita’s Primary School, Carryduff, what assistance can be provided to enable schools to meet demand. **(AQW 21175/11-15)**

**Mr O’Dowd:** I am committed to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age will obtain a primary 1 place in a school of their preferred type within a reasonable distance of their home address.

The process for admissions to primary schools for 2013/14 is ongoing and does not complete until 17 April 2013 when letters are issued advising parents of the school to which their child has been admitted. Until then school placements are not final.

The relevant Education and Library Board(s) are responsible for administering the admissions process, and if due to oversubscription within an area children remain unplaced, the Board and my Department will work with parents to ensure that all children are allocated a place.

### **Education and Training Inspectorate: Inspection Report**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of pupils, at each stage of the statementing process, in each school on which the Education and Training Inspectorate has published an inspection report in the last three years. **(AQW 21181/11-15)**

**Mr O’Dowd:** The information requested has been placed in the Assembly Library.

## Free School Meals

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to detail the percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals in each Primary School that has been reported on by Education and Training Inspectorate in the last three years.

**(AQW 21182/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The information requested has been placed in the Assembly Library.

## Maintained Primary Schools in Ballymena

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 19810/11-15, to identify the two Ballymena Maintained Primary Schools; and how the £5million was broken down between the two schools.

**(AQW 21205/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The two Ballymena maintained schools are St Colmcille's and St Brigid's Primary Schools. The £5million detailed in AQW 19810/11-15 was a target construction cost for both schools and a breakdown for this figure is not available. I can however, advise that following consideration of the final account the final construction costs for each school are £2.6m and £2 million respectively.

## Certificate of Religious Education

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department will consider providing funding for teachers who have already qualified, and for people who are studying at initial teacher training colleges, to enable them to obtain the Certificate of Religious Education.

**(AQW 21245/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) requirement to possess a Certificate in Religious Education for all those seeking appointment to a permanent teaching position applies to Catholic Maintained Primary and Nursery schools only.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for the primary sector (BEd or Primary PGCE) is provided locally by 3 Higher Education Institutions: St Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College and the University of Ulster (UU). Presently, students undertaking ITE at UU will automatically study for and obtain the Certificate as an integral part of their degree course. Those at St Mary's can elect to take the Certificate course as part of their ITE. At Stranmillis, the Certificate can be obtained through a distance learning course and the Department for Employment and Learning provides funding to reimburse students for costs associated with this course.

Qualified teachers who did not opt to undertake the Certificate as part of their ITE can obtain the Certificate through a distance learning course. There are currently no plans to provide funding to cover associated costs.

## Skin Cancer Awareness

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education, given that skin cancer is the most common form of cancer and one of the fastest growing forms of cancer, whether schools are required to teach children skin cancer awareness and sun safety; and whether he has any plans to introduce skin cancer awareness and sun safety into the curriculum.

**(AQW 21250/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** While there is no statutory requirement to teach children skin cancer awareness and sun safety, the revised curriculum does provide teachers with opportunities to cover these issues in the classroom.

The revised curriculum which has been taught to all pupils of compulsory school age since 2009/10 is less prescriptive than before. Legislation sets out the minimum content to be taught in schools as Areas of Learning (AOLs) for each Key Stage and teachers have flexibility to make decisions on how

best to interpret and combine minimum requirements to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of individual pupils. The specifics of what is taught, and how it is taught, under each Area of Learning, is a matter for each teacher/school.

Areas of Learning which provide teachers with the opportunity to cover skin cancer awareness and sun safety include Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) at primary level and Learning for Life and Work (LLW) at Post-Primary level.

I am aware of the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety Skin Cancer Prevention Strategy which includes an action to develop and co-ordinate resources for schools to deliver the care in the sun message. While the Department of Education does not prescribe the resources that teachers should use in their delivery of the curriculum, the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) is represented on the DHSSPS working group taking this action forward. The Department of Education has offered to disseminate any resources developed, to schools, via the C2k service, the managed ICT service provided for all grant-aided schools.

### **Certificate in Religious Education**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education whether he has any plans to review the Certificate in Religious Education.

**(AQW 21265/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department has very recently undertaken a review of Employment Opportunities for Teaching Staff in relation to the impact of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) requirement to possess a Certificate in Religious Education for all those seeking appointment to permanent teaching positions in Catholic Maintained Primary and Nursery schools.

I plan to publish this report in the near future and have asked my officials to arrange for the implementation of all of the recommendations within the report.

### **PGCE Course at St Mary's University College, Belfast**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister of Education why students wishing to sit a PGCE Course at St Mary's University College, Belfast must have a high level of written and oral Irish; and what action he proposes to take to address the discriminatory nature of the course at St Mary's.

**(AQW 21293/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The PGCE offered by St Mary's College is an Irish Medium course which is taught substantially through the medium of Irish and is intended particularly for graduates who wish to teach in Irish-Medium primary schools.

The course content is based on the requirements of the Curriculum and students have the opportunity to gain meaningful insights into educational issues relevant to immersion education.

It is therefore essential that students wishing to sit this particular course have a high level of written and oral Irish.

Alternative English-Medium PGCE Primary programmes are available at the University of Ulster and, with specific regard to early years, at Stranmillis University College.

### **Statutory Requirements of the Education Bill**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to list the statutory requirements as referred to in Part I clause 5(4) of the Education Bill; and how such statutory requirements can change in the future.

**(AQW 21294/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The statutory requirements are defined in Clause 4(7), and set out in full in Clauses 4(2) (a), and 4(5)(a), (b), and (c). They may be summarised as:

- i a requirement to comply with Schedule 2 to the Bill;

- ii. a requirement to be consistent with the Education Orders and any other statutory provision;
- iii. a requirement to be consistent with any instrument of government and scheme of management for the school in question; and
- iv. a requirement to be prepared having regard to guidance issued by my Department under the provisions in Clause 5(2).

The Bill provides that my Department may amend Schedule 2 by order. The Education Orders and other statutory provisions may be changed by the Assembly, or by the use of any modifying power contained within the particular statute.

### Land and Buildings of Controlled Sector Schools

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education to list the land and buildings of controlled sector schools which are wholly or partly owned by individuals or organisations outside the existing education bodies. **(AQW 21300/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Land and buildings of controlled sector schools which are wholly or partly owned by individuals or organisations outside the existing education bodies are listed below.

#### NORTH EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD

Name of Property	Name of Owner
<b>Carnalbanagh Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Land to Site Mobile</li> <li>■ Use of Church Hall</li> </ul>	Cairnalbana Presbyterian Church
<b>Carnalridge Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Land for Playground</li> </ul>	John Campbell Taylor
<b>Carhill Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Access to School</li> </ul>	Mr J R M Glass
<b>Creavery Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building</li> <li>■ Land for Playground</li> </ul>	The Right Honourable Raymond Arthur Clanaboy Baron O'Neill and Shane's Castle Estates Company Ltd
<b>Crumlin Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building</li> </ul>	Joan Boyd, Samuel John Ballance, Maud Elizabeth Robinson, Samuel Washington Robinson
<b>Culnady Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Use of Church Hall</li> <li>■ Use of Church Car Park</li> </ul>	Culnady Presbyterian Church
<b>Longstone Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Building</li> </ul>	The Right Honourable Raymond Arthur Clanaboy Baron O'Neill and Shanes Castle Estates Company Ltd
<b>Straid Primary School</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Land for Play Area</li> <li>■ Land for Mobile</li> <li>■ Use of Church Hall</li> </ul>	Denis Gilmore Boyd Straid Congregational Church Straid Congregational Church

<b>Name of Property</b>	<b>Name of Owner</b>
<b>Parkgate Primary School</b> ■ Use of Church Hall	1st Donegore Presbyterian Church
<b>South Eastern Education &amp; Library Board</b>	
■ Ballyvester Primary School	Presbyterian Church
<b>Western Education &amp; Library Board</b>	
<b>McClintock Primary School</b> ■ Land and building	Ms Xenia P Lewis
<b>Lisnagelvin Primary School</b> ■ Land only (playground)	Derry City Council
<b>Dunmullan Primary School</b> ■ Land only (playground)	Ms J R Elliott
<b>Southern Education &amp; Library Board</b>	
Armstrong Primary School	Armagh Observatory
<b>City of Armagh High School</b> ■ Playing Fields	The Governors and Guardians of the Library, Church of Ireland
Maralin Village Primary School	Magheralin Parish Church
The Cope Primary School	Loughgall Parish Church
<b>Belfast Education &amp; Library Board</b>	
Nil	Not Applicable

### **Early Years Capital Funding Scheme**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education when payment will be made on the applications received to the Early Years Capital funding scheme.

**(AQW 21343/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department is required to ensure full accountability and value for money for all expenditure. Officials are seeking to ensure that the necessary processes are completed as quickly as possible in order to ensure that payments can be made to local groups.

## Department for Employment and Learning

### **Incubation and Innovation Centres**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning (i) what role his Department has in encouraging and developing incubation and innovation centres within further and higher educational facilities; and (ii) what discussions he has had with further and higher educational representatives with a view to emulating and building upon the successes of the Food Business Incubation Centre of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise and the Southern Regional College's Greenshoots Business Incubation Centre.

**(AQW 20715/11-15)**

**Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):** The policy lead for innovation policy in Northern Ireland is DETI, implemented via Invest NI. Accordingly, DETI is currently leading on the drafting of a new Innovation Strategy for Northern Ireland, per the commitment in the Economic Strategy, in close consultation with other Executive Departments and stakeholders. DEL, in particular, is closely involved in this process and my officials have already facilitated the initial engagement of DETI with senior representatives from both the Higher and Further Education sectors. I understand incubation policy, and the associated issue of venture capital availability, have been raised at an early stage by both sectors and DETI is planning further follow-up meetings to allow these, and other issues, to be developed further with a view to being reflected in the final document to be published later this year.

Under “Graduating to Success” – a Higher Education Strategy for Northern Ireland – I am committed to creating a Higher Education sector that is more responsive to the needs of the economy. In Northern Ireland, we are fortunate to have two leading, research-active universities which are wholly committed to the successful commercial exploitation of the local research base, through both effective Knowledge Exchange and also spin-out activity.

The research base represented by Queen’s University and the University of Ulster receives almost £50 million per annum core investment from DEL through “Quality-related Research” (QR) funding. This core investment, as well as promoting research excellence, is also the bedrock which underpins the universities’ spin-out / start-up activities. With respect to spin-out activity, Northern Ireland continues to lead the way with the latest figures revealing that the total number of spin-offs still active after 3 years here was 49, accounting for a relatively large (4.9%) proportion of the UK total number of university spin-off companies.

The pipeline of new spin-outs is also healthy thanks to organisations such as QUBIS and Innovation Ulster Ltd, the University of Ulster’s technology venturing company.

As well as reflecting the substantial QR investment from my Department highlighted above, this success also reflects my commitment to the mainstream core funding of the universities’ business and community facing activities (through the Higher Education Innovation Fund), so that these activities are given the strategic priority they deserve alongside the traditional priorities of teaching and research.

I am aware that, in the past, there were a number of incubation facilities at the University of Ulster’s campuses at Magee, Coleraine and Jordanstown. However, Invest NI has advised that these were closed a number of years ago. In the meantime, the University of Ulster has continued to spin-out companies which it is servicing directly across the three campuses above, with the more mature companies then taking advantage of the facilities on offer at the Northern Ireland Science Park which provides rentable accommodation and other services for high-tech start-ups and other businesses, although it is not an incubator. However, the Science Park’s anchor tenant, the Institute of Electronics, Communications and Information Technology (ECIT) houses a dedicated cyber security unit (the Centre for Secure Information Technologies - CSIT) which provides hot-housing and incubation facilities to encourage and support the establishment and development of new spin-off and spin-in companies.

The Further Education (FE) sector in Northern Ireland, which is directly accountable to my Department, has established a number of innovation and incubation centres. For instance, the South West College (SWC) has three industry innovation centres which provide Research and Development (R&D) support to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) across Northern Ireland: the Innotech Centre (Cookstown), the Image Centre (Enniskillen) and the Idea Centre (Omagh).

SWC has also recently secured EU Interreg funding of £2.9 million to develop a new Centre for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technologies (CREST) at its Enniskillen Technology and Skills Centre Campus.

Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) has an Incubation and Innovation Facility located in the e3 building on the Springvale Campus in west Belfast and North West Regional College (NWRC) has a Digital Media Incubation Unit plus a Technical and Innovation Centre.

With respect to the second part of your question regarding the Food Business Incubation Centre of the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) and the Southern Regional College's Greenshoots Business Incubation Centre, I can comment as follows:

As a highly successful partnership between the Southern Regional College and the University of Ulster, and the first Incubation Centre in the FE sector in Northern Ireland, the successful and highly innovative Greenshoots project is well known to me. My officials on the FE side are already engaged with DETI as part of its stakeholder engagement on the Executive's forthcoming Innovation Strategy, as are senior colleagues from the Southern Regional College. The successful exemplar represented by Greenshoots is therefore something which I fully expect will be highlighted to DETI as part of this process.

The Food Business and Incubation Centre (FBIC) at CAFRE, however, is not within my Department's remit. However, I understand from DARD officials that its eight rental units are currently fully occupied with a waiting list. I therefore have little doubt that they will be raising FBIC too as an exemplar in their discussions with DETI in formulating the Innovation Strategy.

I trust the above information is helpful in your consideration of these strategically important issues.

### **Departmental Funded Apprenticeship with Bombardier**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the application criteria for the departmental funded apprenticeship with Bombardier which results in a National Vocational Qualification level 3 certificate in aeronautical engineering.

**(AQW 20762/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The application criteria for recruitment to job vacancies are set at the discretion of the employer. In the case of Bombardier apprenticeships, this includes a criterion relating to eligibility for ApprenticeshipsNI funding.

The eligibility criteria for ApprenticeshipsNI funding are as follows.

An apprentice must:

- have attained the minimum school leaving age;
- be in permanent remunerative employment with a Northern Ireland-based company and be contracted to work a minimum of 21 hours per week (including day release/off-the-job training) with one employer;
- have the potential to successfully complete all the requirements of the appropriate Level 2/Level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI framework;
- meet any health requirements (e.g. colour vision) specific to the occupation of their choice;
- have achieved any minimum entry academic qualifications (e.g. GCSE) determined by the relevant sector for the Apprenticeship and approved by the Department; and
- pass any entry tests specified by the relevant sector/employer and approved by the Department.

In addition, a person who has previously achieved a recognised vocational qualification at Level 2/Level 3 or equivalent can only receive funding for a Level 2/3 apprenticeship which is both unrelated to their qualification and classified as a priority skill area.

To meet their business needs Bombardier has chosen the 'Level 2 framework en route to Level 3 framework' ApprenticeshipsNI funding model. This will result in successful apprentices achieving the ApprenticeshipsNI Engineering framework Level 2 and Level 3 (Aeronautical Pathway).

## Departmental Funded Schemes and Apprenticeships

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline why people with level 2 or above vocational qualifications in subjects relating to engineering are excluded from application to the departmental funded apprenticeship with Bombardier.

**(AQW 20763/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The ApprenticeshipsNI funding eligibility criteria are not intended to exclude people unnecessarily from following an apprenticeship but funding is from the public purse and eligibility criteria must take account of the potential for double funding.

In the case of the Bombardier apprenticeship scheme, a candidate is ineligible for funding when he/she holds a qualification that is deemed equivalent to the NVQ Level 3 in Engineering. The principle of avoiding double funding is not specific or unique to the Bombardier situation. All applications for ApprenticeshipsNI funding are considered in this context.

I recently announced plans to undertake a review of apprenticeships and youth training. My intention is to make the review process inclusive and to engage with all the relevant stakeholders. The review will include consideration of progression routes for learners, including lateral progression, whilst avoiding any duplication. The review findings will be reported in the autumn of this year.

## Departmental Funded Schemes and Apprenticeships

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the departmental funded schemes and apprenticeships that are available to those with level 2 or above vocational qualifications in subjects relating to engineering.

**(AQW 20764/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** ApprenticeshipsNI provides participants with the opportunity to achieve a Level 3 engineering framework qualification following one of 13 different pathways ranging from Aeronautical Engineering to Mechanical Manufacturing Engineering. The apprentice must: be in paid employment from day one; work a minimum of 21 contracted hours per week; and work towards completing an industry-approved framework, which includes a relevant competence based qualification at Level 3, Essential Skills and a knowledge based qualification.

For those aged under 25, the full cost of directed training is met by my Department. For those aged 25 and over, there is a 50% contribution for those following a framework in the sectors which are a priority for the rebalancing of the Northern Ireland economy.

For those who hold an equivalent qualification to the ApprenticeshipsNI engineering framework qualification, funding is available to follow an ApprenticeshipsNI framework in another priority area.

The Department also funds further education colleges to deliver a range of courses related to engineering at Level 3 and above. Detailed information regarding these courses can be obtained directly from the colleges' prospectuses or from their websites. All vocational qualifications offered by colleges, including those in the engineering technologies sector above level 2, are on regulated qualifications frameworks.

## Queen's University Belfast: Student Progression

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many students have progressed to year two of (i) BSc Honours in Mental Health Nursing; (ii) BSc Honours in Adult Nursing; (iii) BSc Honours in Children's Nursing; and (iv) BSc Honours in Learning Disability Nursing at Queen's University Belfast, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 20845/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The table overleaf details the number of students that have progressed to year two of (i) BSc Honours in Mental Health Nursing; (ii) BSc Honours in Adult Nursing; (iii) BSc Honours in Children's

Nursing; and (iv) BSc Honours in Learning Disability Nursing, at Queen's University Belfast over each of the last five years for which data are available.

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Mental Health Nursing	45	40	50	55	60
Adult Nursing	380	340	395	420	370
Children's Nursing	55	45	55	55	55
Learning Disability Nursing	25	25	20	40	30

**Sources:** Queen's University Belfast and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

**Notes:**

- 1 Figures in the table are rounded to the nearest 5.

### Departmental Supported Apprenticeships

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in relation to departmental supported apprenticeships, to detail (i) the number supported in the last five years; and (ii) the planned number to be supported in the next five years.

**(AQW 20963/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** ApprenticeshipsNI is my Department's flagship training programme for those in employment. It is demand led, based on the needs of employers, which means that apprentice numbers are determined by employers themselves, recruiting and nominating apprentices on to the programme in line with their business and skills requirements.

The table below details the number of apprenticeships my Department has supported over the past five years:

Year	Number of Apprenticeship Starts
2008	7,138
2009	7,297
2010	8,384
2011	9,619
2012	7,657

(Depending on the occupational area, an apprenticeship framework can take between two to four years to complete)

You will be aware that in February of this year I launched a major review of apprenticeships and youth training. I want the Review to ensure that apprenticeship training is more closely matched to the growth sectors in the economy and the needs of businesses in those sectors.

The review will conclude in the autumn of this year. It is likely that we will then proceed to formal public consultation and thereafter move to policy formalisation and implementation as appropriate.

Within the parameters of a demand led programme and the context of the current review it is not possible to provide a detailed forecast of the likely number of departmental supported apprenticeships over the next five years.

## Youth Unemployment Levels

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what schemes or work programmes are available in the North Down area to help reduce youth unemployment levels.

**(AQW 20971/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** I would refer the Member to my previous answer to AQO 3619/11-15 (Oral No. 5) on the same subject.

(<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Reports-12-13/12-March-2013/#5>)

## Profoundly Deaf Students

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many profoundly deaf students are enrolled in each of university and how this compares with five years ago.

**(AQW 20973/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** It is not possible to determine the number of profoundly deaf students enrolled at NI Higher Education Institutions. As a proxy however, the table below details the number of students who declared having a disability relating to being deaf based upon their own self assessment, enrolled at each NI Higher Education Institution in 2011/12 compared to 2006/07.

	Queen's University of Belfast	University of Ulster	Stranmillis University College	St Mary's University College
2006/07	60	185	5	0
2011/12	40	55	0	0

**Source:** Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

### Notes:

- 2 Figures in the table are rounded to the nearest 5.
- 3 The latest available data are for 2011/12.
- 4 Information on disability is collected on the basis of a student's self assessment.
- 5 It should be noted that the years cannot be directly compared as HESA's coding frame changed between the two years i.e. in 2006/07 the figures relate to those who were self-assessed as "deaf/having a hearing impairment" whereas in 2011/12 the figures relate to those who were self-assessed as either "deaf/having a hearing impairment" or "deaf or a having a serious hearing impairment".

## Profoundly Deaf Students

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the schemes of assistance available to help Further and Higher Education Colleges maximise their enrolment of profoundly deaf students and how assistance has changed over recent years.

**(AQW 20974/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department has a number of initiatives in place to support students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SLDD) including those students enrolled in Further and Higher Education provision who are profoundly deaf.

### Further Education

My Department provides a ring-fenced sum of £3.5 million per annum to Further Education (FE) colleges to help deliver courses and provide support and assistance to SLDD including those students who are profoundly deaf.

Students declaring a learning difficulty and/or disability are assessed to determine the level of support required to meet their additional needs. For profoundly deaf students, adjustments may include the provision of interpreters, assistive technologies, modified exam papers or one-to-one support.

Recent initiatives (within the last three years) undertaken by FE colleges to support students who are profoundly deaf include:

- working with Action on Hearing Loss to create bespoke courses for students, including discussions regarding the piloting of lip reading classes;
- research into the development of the iCommunicator system for use with British and Irish Sign Language (this enables effective two-way communication for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing);
- the use of the sign video system in Northern Ireland which is an on-line live BSL video interpreting service;
- participation in the Sensory Engagement Project which provides sensory awareness training to improve service provision and raise awareness of sensory disabilities; and
- the introduction of additional support for profoundly deaf students in the form of proof reading and organisational support for assignments as English is considered a second language for profoundly deaf students.

My Department has also supported the delivery of staff training and deaf awareness sessions, delivered by Action on Hearing Loss, to lecturers and learning support staff in FE colleges, outlining the needs of profoundly deaf students.

### **Higher Education**

Through the Disabled Students Allowances (DSA) my Department provides funding to meet the costs of a Disability Needs Assessment for each student who presents with a disability. This is an assessment of the support needs of the student including their specialist equipment requirements and non-medical support provider needs.

When a student with a disability applies for a Higher Education course, they are encouraged to apply for DSA, to cover the extra costs of any support they may require throughout their course as a direct result of their disability.

Through the DSA, my Department also provides funding to meet the administration costs of a Register of Support Providers in each of the two Northern Ireland universities.

The Register of Support Providers is a unique service which provides one-to-one personal support to disabled students, including those students with severe hearing impairments, registered on recognised higher education courses at any of the colleges or universities in Northern Ireland. The Registers maintain and develop a resource of freelance professional and non-professional support providers, who act in specialist roles to support disabled students. The support providers include audio-typists, note-takers, dyslexia coaches, study skills mentors, sign language interpreters and campus assistants.

My Department is providing funding for 20 deaf tutors to undertake a specially tailored programme at Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC) and the University of Ulster (UU), which will enable them to teach in the Further Education sector. In the coming months, the tutors will obtain NVQ Level 6 in British or Irish Sign Language at BMC, in order to commence a two year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Further Education) (PGCE-FE) course at UU in January 2014.

### **Transgender Community**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act, how his Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 20986/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department recognises the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. It consults on its equality scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

All consultations seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, including: the Equality Commission; representative groups of Section 75 categories; other public authorities; voluntary and community groups; our staff and their trade unions; and such other groups who have legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have direct economic or personal interest.

Initially all consultees, as a matter of course will be notified (by post or e-mail) of the matter/policy being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all consultations. The Belfast Butterfly Club, a support network for transgendered people and their families, is included in the Department's Section 75 consultation list under the heading of gender.

## **Review of Employment Law**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how the review of employment law will take into account the protection of workers in the course of their duties.

**(AQW 21073/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The purpose of my Department's review of employment law, a key target in the Executive's Economic Strategy, is to establish an employment law system that works in the interests of business, helps our economy to grow, attracts investment, encourages companies to recruit new staff and, at the same time, protects the employment rights of employees, with opportunities for redress.

Responsibility for enforcement and issues relating to the safety, health and welfare of workers in the course of their duties is primarily a matter for the Health and Safety Executive and local councils (depending on the type of business); and the Police Service of Northern Ireland, which responds to and investigates any incidents of criminality against workers, and pro-actively promotes the prevention of harm to workers through advice.

## **Penalties for People who Assault Workers**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what discussions he has had with the Minister of Justice on the creation of an additional penalty for those who assault workers in the course of their duties.

**(AQW 21077/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** I have not had any direct discussions with my Executive colleague on the issue of creating an additional penalty. The issue of assault on workers is a very serious crime, and is addressed through the criminal justice system, which falls within the remit of the Department of Justice.

## **Public Consultations**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) the number of public consultations undertaken by his Department, in each year since 2007; (ii) the type of consultation; and (iii) the total cost of each consultation.

**(AQW 21122/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** A total of 41 public consultations have been undertaken by my Department since 2007 at a cost of £97,000, excluding staff costs. A detailed breakdown of these figures has been placed in the Assembly Library and on the DEL website at <http://www.delni.gov.uk/>

## **Education Maintenance Allowance**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how much the proposed changes to Education Maintenance Allowance are projected to save in the 2013/14 academic year. [R]

**(AQW 21173/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** I can advise that for forecasting and budgeting purposes, financial years rather than academic years have been used by my Department and for the financial year 2013/14, if no changes are made to the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme, the forecast costs are £30.8m. The forecast costs for the financial year 2013/14 when the proposed changes are to be introduced are £25.8m. This represents a saving of £5.0m in respect of the anticipated costs if no changes are introduced and a saving of £0.9m against my Department's baseline budget of £26.7m for the Education Maintenance Allowance scheme.

### **Educational Guidance Service for Adults**

**Ms McGahan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how he intends to meet the educational guidance needs of adults who are seeking to re-train, or have been made redundant due to the recession, in light of the removal of funding and consequent closure of the Educational Guidance Service for Adults.

**(AQW 21215/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department's Careers Service and Employment Service offer advice and guidance through the network of Jobs and Benefits Offices, JobCentres and Careers Offices in Northern Ireland. This service is available to all, including those facing redundancy or who have been made redundant, and those seeking to re-train.

The Educational Guidance Service for Adults (EGSA) went into voluntary liquidation on 22 February 2013. The organisation was contracted by my Department until May 2013 to deliver a guidance service to hard to reach clients in neighbourhood renewal areas and to provide advice and guidance to those under threat of redundancy. Arrangements have been put in place to ensure that these services continue to be provided. There is now a range of community and voluntary organisations offering support to the hardest to reach clients in their communities for example through the Collaboration and Innovation Fund and the Local Employment Intermediary Service (LEMIS).

In addition, the Department's Careers Service is working alongside the Employment Service to support people who are under notice of redundancy.

The Careers Service has over 100 professionally qualified careers advisers who provide guidance on education, training and employment opportunities to young people and adults. Careers advisers work with clients to help them access and analyse relevant labour market information about current and future employment opportunities; determine the occupations that best suit their personal aptitudes, interests and skills; identify relevant training; and support these clients to develop appropriate career plans.

Within my Department's Redundancy Advisory Service, the Careers Service participates in redundancy clinics and offers one to one careers guidance interviews to individuals facing redundancy where an employer has requested this service for their employees.

### **Steps to Success Scheme**

**Ms McGahan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what impact the removal of the Steps to Work programme to the Steps to Success Scheme will have on students and staff at the South West College.

**(AQW 21316/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Steps 2 Success (NI) is the Department's new employment programme which will commence in 2014, replacing Steps to Work. The design of the new programme is being prepared at present and when finalised a two stage procurement process will commence. The management in South West College may then decide if they intend to bid to deliver the new programme either as a lead or sub-contractor.

Any potential impact from the introduction of Steps 2 Success (NI) on staff at the South West College will depend on the outcome of the procurement process. The procurement process will be competitive

and there can be no guarantee that any organisation will be successful. If any organisation presently delivering Steps to Work is unsuccessful in the Steps 2 Success (NI) procurement they will need to decide on how to deal with the practical implications that may arise at that time.

There will be no direct impact on students at the South West College from the introduction of Steps 2 Success (NI).

### Lisburn City Council's Spend

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the total cost for each of the last five financial years, in the Lisburn City Council area, (i) Training for Success (Skills for Life/Skills for Work/Programme Led Apprenticeships); (ii) ApprenticeshipsNI levels two and three; and (iii) all strands of Steps to Work and the total for the programmes.

**(AQW 21335/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department currently contracts with training suppliers for the delivery of Training for Success (TfS) which incorporates the Skills for Your Life, Skills for Work, and Programme Led Apprenticeships (PLA) strands. Separate contracts are held for the delivery of ApprenticeshipsNI (AppsNI).

It is not possible to identify the Training for Success and ApprenticeshipsNI programme costs specifically for the Lisburn City Council area. The following figures reflect the total paid to suppliers contracted to deliver in the Lisburn area during the period in question. The figures include payments made for participants in other areas also covered by the suppliers' contracts.

Financial Year	Spend £M	
	TfS/PLA	AppsNI
2008-09	£4.85m	£5.37m
2009-10	£5.75m	£12.45m
2010-11	£7.51m	£15.50m
2011-12	£9.22m	£23.47m
2012-13 to date	£9.50m	£18.21m

#### \* BREAKDOWN OF APPSNI L2 / L3

	AppsNI L2	AppsNI L3
2008-09	£4.71m	£0.67m
2009-10	£10.76m	£1.69m
2010-11	£12.99m	£2.51m
2011-12	£17.18m	£6.29m
2012-13 to date	£12.61m	£5.60m

### Steps to Work

The Steps to Work (StW) programme, which commenced at the end of September 2008, is delivered by a network of 8 Lead Contractors spread over 10 contract areas throughout Northern Ireland. Expenditure on the StW programme is only available by contract area.

It is not possible to identify the StW programme costs specifically for the Lisburn City Council area. Expenditure on the StW programme in the South Eastern Contract Area, which includes Lisburn, is set out in the table below. It should be noted that in addition to Lisburn the South Eastern contract area

also covers the Banbridge, Kilkeel, Ballynahinch, Downpatrick and Newcastle Job Centre/Jobs and Benefit Office areas.

In addition participants on Step 2 provision in receipt of JobSeekers Allowance (JSA) are paid Benefit Based Training Allowance (BBTA) equivalent to their JSA plus a weekly top-up of £15.38. BBTA is paid by the Department of Social Development and recovered from the Department for Employment and Learning. This aspect of programme expenditure is only available for the whole of Northern Ireland and is shown separately in the table below.

Financial Year	Spend £M	
	StW	BBTA
2008-09 (from Oct 2008)	£0.08m	£0.92m
2009-10	£0.73m	£6.02m
2010-11	£1.39m	£9.39m
2011-12	£2.49m	£12.71m
2012-13 (To end Feb 2013)	£1.91m	£12.17m

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Hotel and Bed and Breakfast Sectors: South Down

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans are in place to develop the hotel and bed and breakfast sectors in South Down.

**(AQW 20542/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** Invest NI is currently awaiting the outcome of a review commissioned by NITB to consider current accommodation provision and with a view to providing guidance on future needs.

While the responsibility for bringing forward specific projects lies with the private sector, Invest NI may support and encourage the development of projects by way of capital grant.

Invest NI is also committed to the development of the capability of businesses and as such offers a range of developmental support aimed at encouraging companies to become more competitive. Tourism accommodation businesses, including hotels and B&B's, may, subject to meeting the conditions specific to the assistance, avail of the full range of Invest support.

### Construction of a Titanic Replica

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in light of the recent media coverage of the construction of a replica of Titanic and the plans for it to sail to the UK, what action she is proposing to secure a visit to Belfast.

**(AQW 20681/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Northern Ireland Tourist Board is responsible for the Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland markets. Tourism Ireland is responsible for marketing of the island of Ireland in Great Britain and overseas.

NITB is aware that a Belfast-based organisation has made approaches to those who have commissioned the building of the ship, with regards to bringing the ship to Belfast. The Northern Ireland Bureau in Washington has also attended a reception to launch the project. NITB is open to discussing opportunities that showcase and profile Northern Ireland on a world stage, however no direct approaches have been made to NITB to become involved in bringing this replica ship to Belfast.

The project to construct a replica of the Titanic is still at a very early stage in its development. Tourism Ireland will monitor its progress with a view to capitalising on any opportunities that arise for Belfast and Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile, Tourism Ireland continues to highlight Belfast's links to the Titanic and Titanic Belfast as part of its extensive promotional programme overseas. Titanic Belfast continues to go from strength to strength, attracting almost 214,000 visitors from Great Britain, North America and Mainland Europe since it opened last March.

## **Incubation and Innovation Centres**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) for her assessment of the current level of incubation support available to Belfast-based start-up businesses; (ii) what action her Department has taken to develop urban incubation and innovation centres to support local start-ups; and (iii) to what extent she has engaged with her Ministerial colleagues in order to explore multilateral approaches.

**(AQW 20716/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI's Regional Start Initiative is a two-year initiative (until October 2014) designed to support locally focused entrepreneurs to enter self employment. As part of this initiative, participants are provided with incubation workspace.

Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI) has been awarded the contract for Regional Start which commenced in October 2012. Collectively, ENI members have access to over 2 million square feet of incubation workspace. There are 29 Local Enterprise Agencies operational on Regional Start, 6 of which are based in Belfast.

Seed and early stage businesses in Belfast also have access to a range of physical, co-working, incubation spaces which are private sector led. It is estimated there are at least 10 private sector funded, shared workspaces in Belfast. Whilst in the shared space, start-up companies can avail of support for start-ups through Invest NI initiatives such as NISPO and the Small Business Loan Fund.

Invest NI also lends support through its Propel programme. This provides training, mentoring and financial support to high growth potential start up businesses that are innovative and capable of selling in international markets. Entrepreneurs who are successful in getting on to Phase 2 of Propel are provided with a hot desk facility and shared working space with the other Propel participants, should they wish to avail of this.

The NISPO Investment Readiness Programme, which is managed by E-Synergy, provides support through its 'accelerator' and 'incubator' initiatives. These initiatives do not provide a physical work space, however they provide support to start-ups in the form of coaching, networking etc.

There have been two NISPO Accelerator Events, one in November 2011 and one in September 2012. These events attracted a total of 68 applicants with 20 companies invited to participate in the programme resulting in two investments. Many of these companies were high growth potential start-ups. E-Synergy also ran its own incubator programme with 7 young companies participating in 2011 and 6 companies in 2012. There was not an accommodation element to this initiative.

To facilitate High Potential Start Ups, Invest NI is currently appraising the potential for establishing an Accelerator space in Belfast. Different to an Incubator, an Accelerator tends to focus on a programme of support over a specific time period, generally from three to nine months after which the company must move out of the shared space.

Invest NI hosted a UK Business Incubation (UKBI) workshop in February where discussions focused on Incubation good practice and the Northern Ireland operating environment. Representatives of both Universities and Northern Ireland Colleges were present. UKBI are intending to take forward a larger scale event in Northern Ireland to improve the knowledge and understanding of business incubation and clarify best practice. Following this event and using the outputs from it, UKBI may effect a business

incubation 'mapping' and 'gap' analysis across Northern Ireland. Invest Northern Ireland will continue to engage with UKBI.

### Regional Start Initiative

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of enquiries received and business plans approved from 8 October 2012 to 7 January 2013 for the Regional Start Initiative broken down by regional contract; and (ii) how this compares with the targets for the programme set by InvestNI.

**(AQW 20794/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Regional Start Initiative commenced in October 2012.

#### REGIONAL START ENQUIRIES BY CONTRACT AREA OCTOBER 2012 – 7 JANUARY 2013

Contract Area	Total
Eastern	509
Southern	338
Western	231
North West	253
North East	175
	1506

Regional Start Initiative business plan approvals are confirmed on a month end basis. Data is not available at a specific date other than month end. The following table lists the number of business plans approved at 31 January 2013 and at 28 February 2013.

#### REGIONAL START BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY CONTRACT AREA

Contract Area	At 31 Jan 2013	At 28 Feb 2013
Eastern	71	143
Southern	51	103
Western	102	154
North West	96	148
North East	32	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>606</b>

The target for business plan approvals for the Regional Start Initiative is 3,200 by 21st October 2013. Following a slower than expected start to the programme, activity levels are now increasing. The contractor is confident that the target of 3,200 Business Plan Approvals will be achieved. It should be noted that this is a 'payment on outputs' based contract with penalties and bonuses subject to performance. The contractor is only paid on the basis of Business Plan Approvals and not on any other activity. It is therefore clearly in the contractor's interests to meet and indeed exceed targets.

### InvestNI

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of enquiries received from, and business plans approved for the specific target groups of (i) those Not in Education, Employment or Training; (ii) Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, broken down by regional contract; and (iii) how this compares with targets set for the programme by InvestNI.

**(AQW 20795/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Regional Start Initiative has recorded the following enquiry numbers for 'Neighbourhood Renewal' (NRA) and 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEETS):

**NRA & NEETS ENQUIRIES BY CONTRACT AREA AT 28 FEBRUARY 2013**

	NEET	NRA
Eastern	36	27
Southern	46	141
Western	9	27
North West	46	182
North East	28	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>409</b>

The number of business plans approved for 'Neighbourhood Renewal' and 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' is as follows:

**NRA & NEETS BUSINESS PLAN APPROVALS BY CONTRACT AREA AT 28 FEBRUARY 2013**

	NEET	NRA
Eastern	7	28
Southern	8	5
Western	15	7
North West	15	43
North East	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>83</b>

The target set by Invest NI for NEET's is 100 business plan approvals within the first year of programme operation (to 21st October 2013). The NEETs target is on track and is achievable.

The target set by Invest NI for NRA is 735 business plan approvals within the first year of programme operation (to 21st October 2013). The NRA target is significantly behind. Enterprise Northern Ireland has been asked to focus effort on NRA and is currently developing local marketing campaigns to assist in achieving the target.

**Geological Survey of Northern Ireland**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland has any regulatory roles.

**(AQW 20851/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** No. The Geological Survey of Northern Ireland provides technical advice to the Minerals and Petroleum Branch of DETI. This advice assists DETI with regulating Petroleum Licences, Mineral Prospecting Permits and Mining Licences.

**Geological Survey of Northern Ireland**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) whether the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland is funded entirely by her Department; (ii) to provide details on which organisations contribute to the resourcing and/or funding the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland; and (iii) whether

the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland receives any resources and/or funding from the British Geological Survey.

**(AQW 20853/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI) provides technical advice to DETI under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). The cost of this SLA is borne entirely by DETI.

In addition, GSNI receives funding under a separate SLA between NERC and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency under which GSNI provides specialist advice on hydrogeology.

GSNI may periodically receive further funds from DETI, other Departments or Agencies for specific projects.

GSNI receives funding each year from the British Geological Survey (BGS) to finance research or service work undertaken on behalf of other BGS programmes that may not be directly relevant to the DETI/NERC SLA.

### **Geological Survey of Northern Ireland**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the Geological Survey of Northern Ireland receives any funding from the private sector.

**(AQW 20854/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Geological Survey of Northern Ireland receives no funding from the private sector other than minor income from fees arising from responding to inquiries, the licensing of digital data and the sale of publications.

### **North South Interconnector**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department is working to deliver the proposed North South interconnector as a matter of urgency given that the All-Island Generation Capacity Statement 2013-2022 published by System Operators Northern Ireland and EirGrid states that possible supply deficits by 2016 and a certain supply deficit by 2022 could be alleviated if the additional North South tie line was in place and given that the proposed tie line has an estimated minimum construction time of three years.

**(AQW 20855/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department has no role in the delivery of the North/South Interconnector which is a joint NIE Ltd and EirGrid commercial project, but I have been a keen supporter, from the outset, of its need from a security of supply perspective. In March 2012 the Department of the Environment referred NIE's original planning application to build a 400 kilovolt electricity interconnector between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to the Planning Appeals Commission (PAC). The public enquiry was adjourned indefinitely on the 20 March 2012 to allow NIE to re-submit a revised environmental statement. I understand that work to progress this matter is ongoing and I hope that on receipt of the revised statement the PAC can resume its enquiry at the earliest possible opportunity. It is important to note that while the recently published SONI/EirGrid All-Island Generation Capacity Statement 2013-2022 considers that there is some risk of generation deficit from 2016 onwards, it concludes that in the base case scenario the Northern Ireland Generation Security Standard is met to 2020.

### **North-South Electricity Interconnector**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, given the current economic climate, the rising costs of electricity to both consumers and businesses, and uncertainty around Northern Ireland's security of supply, whether her Department is working to ensure that the proposed North-South electricity interconnector is constructed using the most cost effective, reliable and proven technology.

**(AQW 20874/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The proposed North South electricity interconnector is a joint NIE Ltd and EirGrid commercial project. My Department has no powers, or role to direct, or stipulate, what design criteria a

privately owned business utilises. However, NIE is regulated by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR) which has a statutory responsibility to ensure electricity users get value for money. I understand that NIAUR has scrutinised the project proposal and is satisfied it represents the most economic option.

### **Older and Established Businesses Support**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how her Department can assist older and established businesses affected by the economic downturn that do not fit the normal model for support.

**(AQW 20953/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In order to ensure that it could provide the most effective and efficient support to business, Invest NI reviewed its existing products and services to see if, and how, they could be made available to a much wider business base. In addition, Invest NI also considered what new initiatives it could introduce to help businesses.

As a result, a wide range of activities and initiatives were identified and brought together under the Boosting Business campaign. Boosting Business has five themes of Skills, Technology, R&D, Exports and Jobs, and there are a range of initiatives to help businesses build the skills of their workforce, use new technology to improve competitiveness, take existing products and services to new markets, develop new ones, or create and protect jobs.

Support may be available through a combination of financial, capability development and advisory services and regional seminars and workshops.

### **Transgender Community**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, how her Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 20999/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department is committed to effectively fulfilling its statutory obligations in accordance with the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and to notifying all Section 75 consultees as a matter of course of all the policies being consulted upon to ensure they are aware of all Departmental consultations. Thereafter we take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the policy being consulted upon and to whom the policy is of particular relevance.

### **Moratorium on Lignite Prospecting Licences**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an update on the extension of the moratorium on lignite prospecting licences in North Antrim.

**(AQW 21017/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Following recent proposed changes in Northern Ireland Planning Policy, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment intends to issue a paper for public consultation in April 2013, on a revised policy on lignite and a proposal to extend the moratorium on licensing for lignite prospecting and extraction.

The public consultation will remain open for a period of 12 weeks.

### **Protection of Workers Bill**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what consideration she has given to the Protection of Workers Bill currently going through the legislative process at Westminster.

**(AQW 21018/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** This Bill will create a specific offence relating to the assault on certain categories of people whose work brings them into face-to-face contact with members of the public. As such it would not fall within the remit of DETI.

### **Protection from Harm for Workers**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she has taken to ensure adequate protection from harm for workers in the course of their duties.

**(AQW 21019/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** In general, workers are provided with protection under the Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 and a range of subordinate health and safety regulations. This legislation is enforced by my Department's agency, the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI), in conjunction with the District Councils. Further detail on the work of HSENI and the District Councils in promoting and enforcing health and safety standards in Northern Ireland can be found in HSENI corporate publications, which are available on its website at:

<http://www.hseni.gov.uk/about-hseni/corporate-publications.htm>

At present HSENI has a particular focus on the safety of farm workers and has employed a wide range of approaches to securing health and safety improvements on farms. In particular, a Farm Safety Partnership (FSP) was established in May 2012 and a Farm Safety Action Plan launched in November 2012. In addition, the FSP will be launching a farm safety media awareness campaign on 25 March this year.

### **Economic Advisory Group's Report 'A Review of Access to Finance for NI Businesses'**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she will implement the relevant recommendations in the Economic Advisory Group's report 'A Review of Access to Finance for NI Businesses'

**(AQW 21109/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I welcome the report 'Review of Access to Finance for NI Businesses' published by the Economic Advisory Group (EAG). The report contains 13 substantive recommendations to be implemented by banks, business and government. I believe these recommendations offer an opportunity to improve many of the demand and supply side issues facing Northern Ireland businesses in the current economic climate.

I chaired a meeting of the Executive Sub-Committee on the Economy on 19 March 2013 to discuss the initial findings of the report. We broadly accept the Group's recommendations and are considering how they might be best implemented. This will be done in consultation with DFP, Invest NI and other relevant stakeholders.

### **InvestNI**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline the specific action she has taken to address the concerns raised in the Northern Ireland Audit Office's performance review of InvestNI.

**(AQW 21110/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** On 13 February 2013, officials from both the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and from Invest Northern Ireland provided evidence to the Public Accounts Committee on the NIAO report "Invest NI: A Performance Review".

The Public Accounts Committee's Report will be published in due course and its recommendations will be carefully considered. A detailed response will be made in the form of a Memorandum of Reply within two months of the PAC Report's publication.

## 2MB Universal Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment when the responses to the consultation on the 2MB Universal Broadband Service will be published.

**(AQW 21150/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Responses to this consultation are intended to assist in defining the areas of intervention across Northern Ireland, where public funds could be used to improve broadband services, in line with the UK Government objectives.

Any intervention undertaken, is subject to State Aid rules and guidance, which were recently updated at the end of January 2013. My officials are working with the UK's National Competence Centre, which is approved to scrutinise such interventions in the UK, to assess the impact that these updated rules have on our intervention plans in Northern Ireland.

This process has meant that the outcome of the public consultation will not be published until after Easter.

## Recurring Network Problems: Vodafone

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she plans to make representations to Vodafone in relation to the recurring network problems particularly affecting customers in the areas of Greencastle, Gortin, Creggan, Loughmacrory, Mountfield and Kildress, Co. Tyrone.

**(AQW 21191/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I and my officials continue to engage with representatives of all Mobile Network Operators on a regular basis including Vodafone. During my most recent meeting I was advised of Vodafone's joint venture with O2 under which they will share infrastructure with a view to extending the reach of their 2G and 3G networks and enable early deployment of 4G services. I was assured that this would improve coverage across the whole of Northern Ireland by 2015.

Officials have since had further discussions with Vodafone representatives to learn of progress with this joint initiative and to assist my Department in determining on any intervention in the mobile market. This consideration is continuing.

My officials contacted Vodafone and were advised that recurring network issues are restricted to their site at Mullaghcarn which has been off air on two occasions in 2013 i.e. 23 January and 19 March due to power outages. It is understood that, on both occasions, once power was restored normal service was resumed. Vodafone are continuing to monitor the site to ensure that performance remains stable.

I would advise that should consumers continue to experience network problems they should be taken up in the first instance with their service provider.

## Security of Electricity Supply

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what action she is taking to ensure the security of the electricity supply post 2015.

**(AQW 21197/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department has had a number of meetings with the Regulator and System Operator for Northern Ireland (SONI) within the context of the SONI All-Island Generation Capacity Statement. These discussions are at an early stage to inform understanding of our respective roles and responsibilities. They will be developed at the appropriate point to examine options that might be required to ensure future adequacy of supply.

My Department is also monitoring developments in relation to options to restore full capacity to the Moyle Interconnector and actions to bring proposals for development of the North/South Interconnector

back before the Planning Appeals Committee. Improved interconnection has a vital role to play in relation to long-term security of supply for Northern Ireland.

### Conventional Electricity Generation

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why no new conventional electricity generation is currently planned.

**(AQW 21198/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department is responsible for development of energy policy and for establishing the framework within which the electricity market develops. The Northern Ireland electricity sector operates in a privatised marketplace and it is a matter for investors and generators operating within that sector to identify market opportunities and invest as they see appropriate.

However, my officials have been engaging with the Utility Regulator and the electricity system operator SONI to consider how best to ensure that there is a sufficient generation capacity margin and therefore adequate security of electricity supply for Northern Ireland.

### Indigenous Business Start-Ups

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of indigenous business start-ups, broken down by constituency, over the last five years.

**(AQW 21200/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The table below shows the number of indigenous business start-ups by constituency, over the last five years (2007-08 to 2011-12).

<b>Pca</b>	<b>Number of Offers</b>
Belfast East	629
Belfast North	683
Belfast South	777
Belfast West	611
East Antrim	613
East Londonderry	971
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	1,241
Foyle	941
Lagan Valley	582
Mid Ulster	1,185
Newry & Armagh	883
North Antrim	735
North Down	442
South Antrim	579
South Down	828
Strangford	477
Upper Bann	784
West Tyrone	1,036

<b>Pca</b>	<b>Number of Offers</b>
Unknown	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,022</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 Invest NI revises performance data on a regular basis to ensure that it reflects implemented projects; therefore, the data above may differ to previously published information.
- 2 The UNKNOWN category relates to projects for which this level of detail has not been provided..

Of these projects 13,292 were supported indirectly by Invest NI through the Enterprise Development Programme (now known as the Regional Start Initiative), delivered in conjunction with Enterprise Northern Ireland.

**Minutes of Ministerial Meetings**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, pursuant to AQW 17525/11-15, whether it is standard practice to keep minutes of a ministerial meeting with an organisation such as the Caleb Foundation.

**(AQW 21344/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department does not have any protocols in place regarding the practice of minute taking at Ministerial meetings.

**Department of the Environment****Environmental Impact Assessment**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment whether the drilling of a borehole over 1000 metres deep by Tamboran Resources to penetrate the full Bundoran section would be classified as permitted development by the Planning Service; and whether the drilling of such a borehole would require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

**(AQW 17852/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment):** I note that the company, Tamboran, has said that it may seek to drill a borehole 1000 metres deep. To date, no notification of this intention has been conveyed to DOE. In the event that Tamboran seek to proceed in this way, DOE will consider the proposal, make an assessment whether this would or would not be under the relevant permitted development rights or whether is EIA development, requiring a planning application accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

**Article 31 Planning Applications**

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister of the Environment what progress has been made in clearing the backlog of Article 31 Planning Applications.

**(AQO 3290/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** There were 60 article 31 applications in May 2011. Of these a total of 36 determinations have been made with a further 5 where decisions have been made. Three have been appealed and determinations will now issue on the remaining 2. This means 38 of the 60 in May 2011 will have been cleared, almost two thirds of the total. In addition since May 2011 8 new applications have been received of which 3 have been determined.

I have, and will continue, to impress on my planning officials the need to process planning applications, particularly those of major importance, in a timely manner. I believe that reduction in the number of live

cases that has been achieved since I took up office clearly demonstrates that the planning system is making huge in-roads in actively managing Article 31s.

Moreover, I anticipate that of the remaining applications, four or five will be cleared shortly after Easter.

### Collected Recycling Material

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 19725/11-15, whether his Department is aware of the amount or proportion of collected recycling material which is unusable.  
**(AQW 20260/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department has no regulatory reason to hold this information. Further there is currently no direct legislation relating to the quality of recyclates. This has meant a large variation of quality standards in re-processing plants and Materials Recovery Facilities (MRFs) throughout the UK.

A Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) study examining existing approaches to assessing material quality across MRFs and reprocessors, found that a significant proportion of MRFs did not monitor the quality of their outputs and the majority of those that did relied solely on visual inspection. WRAP has estimated that less than 30% of MRF operators have robust quality monitoring processes in place at present. In Britain, DEFRA is considering whether this work can be used as a baseline for putting in place robust quality management systems.

In Northern Ireland we intend to consult on a range of actions to improve and maintain the quality of recyclable materials collected, sorted and presented to the market through a MRF Code of Practice. There will be proposals to address contamination at the point of collection, introduce mandatory and transparent material quality sampling, carry out a benchmarking exercise on the quality of source segregated materials and introduce a recyclate quality grading system.

### Professional Planners

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment how many professional planners have been seconded to (i) each planning division; (ii) his Department; and (iii) other Departments, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 20721/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** During the last five years, professional planners have been transferred within the area planning office network to meet business needs. In addition staff have been loaned to other Departments and seconded to outside organisations.

Details of all secondments and loans in the last 5 years are set out in the following table:

	Staff transferred within the Department	Staff On Loan to Other Departments	Staff Seconded to Organisations Outside the NICS
2008	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0
2010	0	57	0
2011	8	81	7
2012	11	47	10

### Beaches in Millisle

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of the Environment what his Department can do to help improve the appearance of the beaches in Millisle.

**(AQW 20801/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Since June 2011 I have convened a series of Good Beach Summits to address issues which will help improve the appearance of beaches and coastal areas including Millisle. The Summits have dealt with litter, water quality, signage and information, and have demonstrated a firm commitment to beach management and coastal development. Both Ards Borough Council and the Millisle and District Community Association have participated in these Summits and recently participants agreed that good progress had been made under them and that they should continue under my chairmanship.

My Department is also working to develop a Marine Litter Strategy for Northern Ireland which will help address the levels of litter present on beaches and improve the appearance of beaches such as Millisle. The Strategy will provide a co-ordinated response to removing existing litter and preventing future occurrences. The Strategy will also recognise that the challenge of addressing beach litter will require partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors and a change in public attitudes and behaviour.

The Department also provides funding for a number of programmes such as Eco-schools and Young Reporters on the Environment which are administered by Tidy NI and which help children become more aware of the consequences of dropping litter. Tidy NI is also planning a number of campaigns to keep our beaches clean including Big Spring Clean, Clean Coast, Green Coast and Seaside Awards. TidyNI's Big Spring Clean is regularly supported in Millisle and I myself supported the Marine Conservation Society's Beachwatch Big Weekend, last September, by participating in a litter survey and coastal clean up at Millisle.

I also recently announced half a million pound funding boost to regenerate local coastal communities, through the UK wide Coastal Communities Fund (CCF). The CCF for Northern Ireland is designed to regenerate the economic development of coastal communities and will consider a wide range of projects, including those that support charities, the environment, education and health. Closing date for Year 2 applications is 26th April 2013 and application forms, guidance notes and Q&As can be found on The BIG Lottery website.

I trust you find this helpful.

### **Driver and Vehicle Agency, Coleraine**

**Mr McQuillan** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on job security at the Driver and Vehicle Agency in Coleraine, after his meeting with Parliamentary Under-secretary of State for Transport, Stephen Hammond MP.

**(AQW 20828/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Vehicle licensing is delivered in Northern Ireland by the Driver & Vehicle Agency under an agreement between my Department and the Department for Transport. The Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) in Swansea, which is responsible for vehicle licensing services across the United Kingdom, is nearing completion of a project to integrate the separate computer systems currently in use in NI and Britain, in order to produce an integrated system capable of meeting the vehicle licensing needs of customers throughout the UK.

In Britain, the DVLA plans to close all of its regional and local motor tax offices, transfer some functions to Post Offices, further enhance online access, and centralise remaining work in Swansea. For Northern Ireland, the DVLA has identified an option of similarly transferring remaining work to Post Offices and Swansea once access is made available to customers here.

The centralisation of work in Swansea would impact on the 323 jobs in the DVA here, provided at present by DVLA, and reduce the quality of service provided to customers locally. I am firmly opposed to this proposal because of the impact on staff in the DVA, who have consistently provided a very high standard of service, and because of the impact on the local economy, especially in Coleraine, where most of the jobs are based. I have made it clear to Ministers in London that cutting further public sector jobs would be damaging and ill-advised at a time when the Executive is working hard to stimulate and re-balance the economy, in difficult and challenging economic conditions.

Since June 2011, I have been meeting, writing to and lobbying Ministers at Westminster about this issue, and encouraging public representatives from right across the political spectrum to do likewise. I have made the argument for the retention of jobs on a consistent basis, preparing and presenting a dossier to London on the reasons why jobs should be retained.

At the meeting with Stephen Hammond, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Transport, on 5 March, I outlined the commitments that had been made previously by Ministers in London, and in particular emphasised the need for detailed consultation with me and with stakeholders in Northern Ireland about the proposed changes. In particular, I emphasised the point that the potential loss of jobs had to be considered not in isolation but in the context of the wider economic, social and political impacts. Mr Hammond assured me that no decision had yet been taken on the future delivery of vehicle licensing services in Northern Ireland, and we agreed to engage further on the issue.

I have subsequently written to the Minister re-inviting the Minister to visit Coleraine and that London must hold to its 'consultation' and 'full assessment' of impact commitments.

## **Water Framework Directive**

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he has met with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency, the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to ensure that the target for the Water Framework Directive for 2015 is met. **(AQW 20830/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs), which cover the period 2009-2015 were published in December 2009 to meet the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD).

The Plans, which cover all of Northern Ireland, identify where the water environment needs to be protected or improved, the timeframe to make these improvements and how that can be achieved. The RBMPs state that around 28% of water bodies are at good status and through the measures in the Plans the aim is to reach around 59% at good status by 2015.

The Department of the Environment is the competent authority for coordinating the implementation of the Directive and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) leads on this. DARD, DCAL and DRD and their agencies are co-deliverers in taking forward implementation. An Implementation Working Group and an inter-departmental Board are in place to coordinate the strategic and operational delivery of the Directive. The next meetings are scheduled for April and May respectively. This will provide a timely discussion of progress to date.

A Programme of Measures, published as part of the Plans, includes a number of new national measures which were agreed by all relevant departments and agencies through the Implementation Working Group. In November 2012, I wrote to Ministerial colleagues in DARD and DCAL highlighting their responsibilities regarding the effective implementation of the Programme of Measures, despite an unsuccessful interdepartmental bid of £8.9m. Progress on implementing the measures was reported to the European Commission in December 2012.

## **Planning Bill**

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister of the Environment to detail his Department's position on the new Planning Bill. **(AQW 20831/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** In bringing forward the Planning Bill the Department is seeking to accelerate the implementation of much needed reforms contained in the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 which were not due to be implemented until the transfer of planning powers to councils in 2015. The reforms include measures which will lead to faster processing of planning applications, simpler and tougher enforcement, fairer and faster appeals, enhanced community involvement and enhanced environmental measures. The Bill also underpins the role of planning in promoting economic development.

The Bill was introduced to the Assembly on 14 January 2013, the Second Stage was completed on the 22 January 2013, and Committee Stage commenced on 24 January 2013.

The Department is keen to complete the Assembly process as quickly as possible so the benefits of the reforms can be reaped at the earliest possible opportunity. This will also allow us to test the reforms on the ground and transfer a planning system that developers, applicants, elected representatives, the public and all other interested parties know and understand.

## Councils Allotments

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment how many councils provide allotments.  
(AQW 20839/11-15)

**Mr Attwood:** The Allotments Act (Northern Ireland) 1932 (as amended) enables District Councils to provide allotments at their discretion.

A number of councils have made significant provisions for allotments with which identified a total of 602 allotments in 11 Council areas in February 2012 (AQO 1420/11-15) and there is active support for provision of allotments via other groups in Antrim Council, Down Council and Newry & Mourne Council. In addition, under the 2012-13 Challenge Fund NIEA is currently providing £70,000 to support ten innovative projects which contain garden, orchard and allotment elements.

In addition, Antrim Council, Down District Council and Newry & Mourne Council are actively supporting community groups and others to make some provision.

District Council	Number of allotments in 2012
Belfast	178
Carrickfergus	189
Castlereagh	6
Derry	31
Dungannon and South Tyrone	14
Larne	8
Lisburn	53
Newtownabbey	26
North Down	18
Magherafelt	27
Strabane	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>602</b>

## Local Councils: Provision of Allotments

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment what mechanisms his Department has explored to ensure that the provision of allotments is more of a priority for local councils.  
(AQW 20841/11-15)

**Mr Attwood:** I have previously looked at the possibility of using a range of further mechanisms including legislative ones which could encourage and support councils in providing allotments. The process to develop and agree legislative proposals for the introduction of a specific duty to provide allotments cannot be completed in a timeframe that would allow its inclusion in current legislation proposals but I keep the option “on the radar”.

In addition officials in Northern Ireland Environment Agency have been working to facilitate organisations that have experience with allotments including the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens. This Federation has established an Allotment Council Forum with representation from Councils and NGOs. We have encouraged the Forum to develop relevant projects and schemes and identified potential sources of funding that might be available to realise such schemes.

I have also made financial provisions as detailed in AQW 20839/11-15.

### **Elections to Shadow Councils**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of the Environment, given that under the Review of Public Administration programme the elections for Shadow Councils are due to take place in the near future, what options are available for a Councillor Severance Package; and when consultations on these packages will take place.

**(AQW 20882/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** In the rundown to local government reorganisation, I intend to introduce a one-off councillor severance scheme that will recognise the contribution and commitment of those long-serving councillors who decide not to stand for election to the new councils.

I will be consulting on a range of options for the councillor severance scheme, and aim to do so imminently. Views will be sought on:

- a minimum qualifying period of no less than 12 years;
- how reckonable service is to be calculated;
- prescribed periods when councillors will be able to apply for severance;
- calibration of amounts so that councillors with fewer years of service would be entitled to a lower yearly rate; and
- a cap on individual payments.

I intend that the Regulations will be made before Summer recess.

### **Derelict Town Funding**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment whether a further round of derelict town funding is planned; and when this funding will be available.

**(AQW 20894/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Following my announcement on 4 February 2013 of a £1m funding package to tackle dereliction in Fermanagh, Down, Lisburn, Moyle and Belfast councils, further funding of £200k has been identified for properties within Newry & Mourne District Council, Limavady District Council and Belfast City Council.

I see dereliction funding as a rolling programme which I will be bidding to maintain into the next financial year and beyond. Existing bids will be reconsidered as and when further funding becomes available and Councils will have the opportunity to refresh their bids at that point if they so wish. I believe monitoring rounds provide a mechanism to roll out the scheme across the Council areas, particularly those which have not benefited to date. For a relatively small sum the dereliction fund can have a big impact. The evidence is for all to see. I hope others will back me.

### **Six Mile Water River**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of the Environment what action is being taken to protect the high risk pollution hot spots on the Six Mile Water river; and what long term plans for monitoring and enforcement have been put in place.

**(AQW 20900/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** While the main Six Mile Water is generally of good quality, some of the river's tributaries, particularly those flowing through the heavily industrialised and heavily populated area around Mallusk, have historically been prone to water pollution incidents.

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has, for some years, had an intensive programme of proactive pollution prevention on the Six Mile Water and its tributaries. This included, dedicating staff to visit all business premises in the Mallusk area to check for pollution risks, collating an inventory of all potentially polluting material used or stored in the area, and checking the layout of all drainage in the area. Where pollution risks were identified these were, so far as possible, remedied. This work programme has reduced the incidence of water pollution in the catchment and has improved NIEA's ability to track the source of any pollution occurring in the catchment.

NIEA works closely and directly with industry and stakeholders such as anglers to improve the overall quality of the river catchment; for example through the establishment of the Six Mile Water River Trust. NIEA's support of the establishment of the Six Mile Water Trust included providing start-up funding and secretarial support until the Trust was well established. The Agency continues to be an active participant in the Six Mile Water River Trust and is committed to continuing to work with local stakeholders to ensure the river is protected.

NIEA also has a robust enforcement policy, whereby for all medium and high severity pollution incidents where the polluter is identified, are subject to appropriate enforcement action against the polluter, which includes prosecution, in more serious incidents. In the period 2006 to the present this has resulted in 15 prosecution cases being taken to court for pollution within the Six Mile Water and its tributaries.

NIEA carries out water quality sampling at approximately 500 river sites for chemical analysis and 460 river sites for biological analysis across Northern Ireland, including 16 sites in the Six Mile Water. This includes chemical monitoring for a variety of general chemical quality elements including pH, Ammonia and Dissolved Oxygen. In addition, a further rolling programme monitors for substances defined by the Water Framework Directive as specific pollutants and priority substances at some stations, which includes trace organic compounds and metals.

Biological water quality sampling is carried out, for macro-invertebrates (aquatic insects), Macrophytes (aquatic plants), phytobenthos (diatoms) and fish. Hydromorphology (river structure) is also monitored.

NIEA also supports a Riverfly Monitoring Initiative involving members of the Six Mile Water Trust who regularly inspect sites to count invertebrates and help assess water quality.

River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) for Northern Ireland were published in December 2009. The RBMPs are being implemented through Local Management Area (LMA) action plans during the 2009 to 2015 planning cycle. The action plan for the Six Mile Water LMA has been drafted and is due to be published by 31 March 2013. Actions include additional targeted biological monitoring, awareness raising, targeted river walks to identify individual pollution hotspots and inspections of premises with the potential to cause water pollution.

Detailed monitoring plans for the second RBMP period (2015-2020) will be formulated next year. At this stage, there are unlikely to be major changes to the monitoring network but the elements monitored at some stations may change, dependent on what are perceived to be the most significant pressures on water quality in a particular area.

Looking forward, and as already outlined above, I can assure you that my Department is committed to continuing its intensive proactive pollution prevention work throughout the entire Six Mile Water catchment, working closely with local industry, anglers and others to improve water quality within the catchment, and will continue to take robust enforcement action against polluters wherever it is warranted.

## EU Water Framework Directive

**Mrs Hale** asked the Minister of the Environment whether his Department will face infractions if the EU target in the Water Framework Directive is not met.

**(AQW 20901/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** To date, the Department has implemented measures and produced progress reports in accordance with the targets and timetable set out in the Water Framework Directive.

The European Commission will assess progress across all member states at the end of the first river basin planning cycle in 2015. At this stage there is no indication as to whether the Commission will initiate infraction proceedings against the UK or other member states.

## Minerals Planning Applications

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 17637/11-15, which minerals planning applications have been reviewed by the Compliance, Improvement and Review Team in the Planning Policy Division; and what were the outcomes of these reviews.

**(AQW 20928/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** In my response to AWQ 17636/11-15, I had indicated that the exercise to check that the screening for an Environmental Statement considered all relevant issues was carried out by the staff in the Strategic Planning Division's Minerals Team with assistance from the Development Management Guidance Team where required.

I had indicated in answer to AQW 20450/11-15 that this exercise was not a formal review and that I was satisfied that it had been carried out in a thorough professional manner. In relation to this exercise I can confirm that the Compliance, Improvement and Review Team in the Planning Policy Division was not involved in this exercise.

CIRT has a wider role in auditing all types of planning applications (including minerals) as part of an ongoing Audit programme. There is an ongoing audit of minerals files as part of this programme but this has not been completed.

## Marine Division

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 17596/11-15, from which divisions within his Department will the 65 staff be drawn.

**(AQW 20959/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** When the Marine Division was established on 29 October 2012, 50 staff members were relocated from Divisions within the Department, as detailed below:

Departmental Division / Directorate	Number of staff relocated to establish Marine Division
Environmental Protection Directorate	28
Natural Heritage Directorate	8
Planning Policy Division	6
Strategic Planning Division	5
Local Planning Division	1
Environmental Policy Division	1
Human Resource and Organisational Change Division	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

One member of staff has since transferred out of the Marine Division. This leaves 16 vacancies to be filled in line with the NICS vacancy management policy. To date, 6 of these have been filled as follows:

<b>Departmental Division / Directorate</b>	<b>Number of staff who transferred to vacant posts</b>
Natural Heritage Directorate	3
Environmental Crime Unit	1
Environmental Protection Directorate	1
Local Planning Division	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

Work is ongoing to fill the remaining 10 vacancies in line with the NICS vacancy management policy.

### **Shadow Council Elections**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of the Environment what the remuneration levels will be for people elected in the shadow council elections in 2014.

**(AQW 20967/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I am in the process of establishing a panel, using the public appointments procedure, to conduct a review of councillors' remuneration and to advise me on the system and level of allowances appropriate for the new councils.

I will be asking the panel to make recommendations that will fairly reflect the roles and responsibilities that councillors will be taking on in the new councils, post re-organisation. The panel will also consider the allowances that should be paid during the shadow period following the local government elections in 2014.

The recruitment panel is currently interviewing for the panel and chairperson posts. The panel, which will be given six months to submit its final recommendations, will comprise a chairperson and four members who are expected to take up post on 1 May 2013.

### **People with Lung or Heart Disease**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment whether he is working with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to raise awareness of the steps that people with lung or heart disease can take to combat the effects of high air pollution levels.

**(AQW 20990/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Officials in my Department work with their counterparts in the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) to ensure that targeted, effective air quality advice is issued to the general public.

When levels of air pollutants are high, my Department issues alerts to the local press and contacts DHSSPS. These high air pollution alerts contain advice for vulnerable individuals, such as those with heart or lung conditions, who may experience an increase in their symptoms. The advice, which has been agreed with DHSSPS, sets out steps which individuals may wish to take to minimise their exposure to the pollutants, or to reduce or alleviate any resultant symptoms. This advice is also available on the NI Direct webpage: <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/air-pollution-and-health>

In addition members of the public can access the Department's air quality website ([www.airqualityni.co.uk](http://www.airqualityni.co.uk)) to find out current or forecast air pollution levels in their area. Alternatively they can dial a freephone number: 0800 556677 to hear this information.

## Plastic Bag Levy

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of the Environment what environmental programmes and activities will be funded by the proceeds of the plastic bag levy.

**(AQW 20991/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The 5p carrier bag levy will apply to new single use carriers bags made of plastic, paper or natural materials.

In terms of how the revenue will be used, the types of programmes that I am considering funding are those that support communities and businesses to generate improved environmental outcomes. For example:

- The creation of a new River Restoration Fund to allow local communities, angling groups and voluntary environmental organisations to run small projects which will improve local river water quality and ecological status and thereby contribute to implementing the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive;
- The creation of a new Sustainability Innovation Fund to support community groups, business and others who need financial support to implement initiatives which have the potential for innovation which can generate transformational environmental change with economic and social benefits;
- Increased grants from the Community Challenge Fund to deliver a range of practical, local environmental projects through a broad range of not-for-profit groups including; voluntary and community groups, schools, charities and environmental trusts;
- Increased grants from the Natural Heritage Fund to encourage the conservation and enhancement of key elements of the environment and its wildlife and provide facilities which help as wide a range of people as possible to enjoy and appreciate our natural heritage; and
- Increased grants available from the Rethink Waste Fund to address the need to prevent waste arising and to increase the amount of waste re-used or recycled.

The levy will be used to fund additional environmental activity and will be deployed to support actions by people and organisations in Northern Ireland with proposals to improve environmental outcomes.

## Transgender Community

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of the Environment, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, how his Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 21000/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department recognises the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of its statutory equality duties and is committed to carrying out consultation in accordance with the Equality Commission's guidance 'Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)'.

The Department maintains a list of all S75 statutory consultees, including those representing the transgender community, and on a quarterly basis, issues its Advance Notice of Consultation which notifies them of consultations which are expected to take place over the next three months. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of our resources and those of the consultees, we take a targeted approach to consultation for those who may have a particular interest in the policy under consultation. I had a meeting with The Rainbow Project recently to discuss how the Department might consider the needs of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities in relation to Community Planning and Local Government Reform.

The Department holds an Equality Forum annually to which S75 representative groups are invited to attend. Consultation is a standard agenda item at these meetings. The Rainbow Project was represented at the meeting held in June 2012.

In addition, I have held a series of meetings with 'The Rainbow Project' on a range of issues, including RPA/ Community planning which is relevant to all Ministers.

### **Carrier Bag Levy**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of the Environment what are the administrative costs associated with the carrier bag levy which is due to be introduced on 8 April 2013.

**(AQW 21030/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** A budget of £0.575m has been allocated for 2013-14 for the administration costs of the carrier bag levy team to cover salary and non salary running costs. The main focus of the team will be to oversee implementation and administration of the levy.

### **Carrier Bag Levy**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of the Environment what are the income projections from the carrier bag levy which is due to be introduced on 8 April 2013.

**(AQW 21031/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The primary purpose of the levy is to protect the environment by reducing the estimated 250 million bags used in Northern Ireland every year. The amount of revenue raised through the levy will be dependent on how shoppers adjust their behaviour in response to the levy. Total revenue estimates, based on evidence from other jurisdictions with similar arrangements, are £2.3m in 2013/14 and £4.6m in 2014/15.

### **Carrier Bag Levy**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of the Environment what were the results of the environmental impact assessment carried out on the carrier bag levy.

**(AQW 21032/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** The Department produced a Regulatory Impact Assessment as part of its public consultation on the Single Use Carrier Bags Charge Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013.

The Impact Assessment considered a range of issues including the costs and benefits of introducing a levy, the impact on retailers and consumers, and the potential impact of the levy on the environment.

Based on experience in other jurisdictions, the assessment assumed an 83% reduction in single use carrier bag consumption. The assessment took account of the cost of carbon emissions and the cost of abating air pollution from the carrier bag production process. The analysis also considered the costs associated with waterborne pollution, landfill and cleaning public spaces (streets and beaches).

As a result of reduced carrier bag consumption, the levy is expected to deliver an overall net benefit to the environment, even when increased consumption of substitute products (such as bin liners) is taken into account.

While the environmental cost of substitute products (bin liners and reusable carrier bags) is expected to increase (estimated at £3.1m per annum) this should be more than offset by the environmental benefit of reduced single use carrier bag consumption (estimated at £8.7m per annum). Therefore the net benefit to the environment (through reduced carbon emissions, air & water pollution, and clean up costs) in monetary terms was estimated at £5.6m per annum. This equates to around £8 per household per annum.

In addition to the above savings, the carrier bag levy will reduce the amount of virgin raw materials used in the production of carrier bags and generate revenue to fund environmental programmes and activities in local communities.

## Councils Allotments

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what grants are available to councils or groups to increase the number of allotments in their areas.

**(AQW 21098/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** There are no grants available that are directly aimed at increasing the number of allotments available in council areas. However, grants available to groups under the Northern Ireland Environment Agency's Challenge Fund programme launched in 2011 and extended in 2012 have supported a wide range of environmental projects including a number of schemes with a community garden or allotment element.

## Review of Public Administration

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment what subordinate legislation his Department will need to introduce to implement the Review of Public Administration for local government.

**(AQW 21099/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Pursuant to my answer to AQW 17190/11-15 subordinate legislation will be required on the following:

- Statutory Transition Committees – to provide for the establishment and operation of these committees, as provided for in the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010.
- Shadow arrangements – to make the necessary arrangements for the operation of the 11 new councils during the shadow period.
- Governance arrangements – to set out the demarcation of those functions that may be the responsibility of the executive and those that may not; the procedures in relation to access to meetings of and information relating to executive decision-making; and the specification of matters which must be included in a council's standing orders.
- Community planning – to specify the bodies which must participate in community planning.
- Severance - to provide for the award of severance payments to councillors who decide not to seek re-election to the new councils.

The subordinate legislation to commence all the sections of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to enable the new councils to operate as local planning authorities was set out in my response to AQW 13738/11-15 on 14 September 2012.

Other Ministers may also need to bring forward subordinate legislation in order to transfer functions for which they are responsible to local government.

## A2 Bangor Road

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the Planning Appeals Commission Appeal Decision 2011/A0251, paragraph 6; and, in relation to the A2 Bangor Road, whether the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan has been, or will be, amended to identify and prepare local policies for those stretches of a Protected Route that will be subject to further access restrictions beyond those set out in Policy AMP3.

**(AQW 21118/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I would refer you to my previous reply to you dated 18 February 2013 in respect of the same issue tabled under AQW 18646/11-15.

## Wind Farm Applications

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of the Environment, pursuant to AQW 20201/11-15, why the 14 applications were withdrawn.

**(AQW 21165/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** An applicant or their agent can withdraw a planning application at any stage in the planning process prior to a decision notice issuing. There is no requirement for the applicant/ agent to advise the Department of the reason for the withdrawal.

Since 2008 a total of 14 planning applications for windfarms have been withdrawn. 7 were withdrawn following discussion with the Department regarding concerns relating to the impact of the development, 1 sought to submit a revised application, 1 did not wish to submit an Environmental Statement and the remaining 5 did not indicate any reason for the withdrawal.

## Exemption of Pre-1960 Vehicles from MOT Testing

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the exemption of pre-1960 vehicles from the MOT test.

**(AQW 21246/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** I have answered this question a number of times, most recently in AQW 20797/11-15.

The Department has consulted on possible exemption of certain categories of historic vehicles from MOT testing. The responses indicated that there is broad support for exemption of pre-1960 vehicles from periodic testing, in line with the British Government's exemption which has been in place since 18 November 2012.

The Environment Committee has indicated that it is content with the Department's proposed way forward following the consultation, which is to make use of the exemption in Roadworthiness Directive 2009/40/EC concerning the periodic testing of pre-1960 vehicles.

However on 13 July 2012, the European Commission published a 'Roadworthiness Package' which, amongst other things, addresses periodic roadworthiness tests for motor vehicles, therein making changes to the rules that apply to historic vehicles; the proposals are expected to be introduced no earlier than August 2014.

If implemented as then drafted, these proposals would narrow the parameters within which the Department can provide for exemptions to historic vehicles, as the definition of a historical vehicle was more prescriptively described. While the Department's policy intentions remained the same; that is to make exempt pre-1960 vehicles from the MOT regime, we had to be mindful of the changing legislative context, to ensure that any changes we make are not made redundant by incoming EC Regulations.

Following receipt of a further update on the EU negotiations regarding the roadworthiness package, one of the main amendments in which was a change to the definition of "historic vehicles" which allows vehicles that have not undergone "substantial" changes to be still classed as historic, I have instructed officials to proceed with legislative amendment to exempt pre-1960 vehicles from the MOT test.

We have now resolved some outstanding issues with Departmental Solicitors, including provision for a voluntary MOT test for such vehicles (for purposes including cherished plate transfer; this is an area where Northern Ireland law differs from British law). The Department will now amend the relevant legislation to exempt pre-1960 motor and light goods vehicles from MOT testing. My officials will provide the Environment Committee with the required SL1 before the Assembly summer recess and I anticipate the legislation will be in place by autumn 2013.

## Vehicle Regulations

Mr Hilditch asked Minister of the Environment for an update on the progress of the new vehicle regulations which will allow taxis to provide different types of services.

**(AQW 21328/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** Single tier licensing was originally part of the Taxi Vehicle Regulations. However in order to consolidate Taxi Operator licensing which was introduced in September 2012, I plan to introduce a new single tier taxi licensing in September 2013. The timing of the new single tier regime change will be subject to the legislative scrutiny process.

Single tier licensing is the largest change in the reform programme for users of taxis, and will give the consumer greater choice as to how they engage with the taxi industry allowing for a more flexible approach to travel by taxi as the passenger will be able to get a taxi when they want it without having to plan and book in advance. This greater flexibility should mean that there will be more taxis available at times of peak demand.

In addition, the Department is seeking to ensure that chauffeur services will not be required to display a roof sign under the single tier system.

The Taxi Vehicle Regulations include provisions for special occasion vehicles licence arrangements and wheelchair accessible vehicle specification and are due to be implemented in September 2014.

The introduction of a licensing regime for special occasion vehicles will begin to differentiate between special occasion and novelty vehicles licensed as taxis but providing different types of services. The regulations will also allow them to be tested and licensed differently according to the service they provide.

I have commissioned a review of Wheelchair Accessible Taxis (WAV), with the objective to produce a thoroughly researched modern accessible vehicle specification. Once this process is completed, I would intend that the WAV requirements will be included in the Taxi Vehicle Regulations. This will allow all taxi vehicle changes to be implemented simultaneously, which will facilitate the industry in terms of understanding compliance issues and timetables

In delivering the changes in this controlled manner I am confident that my Department can deliver a new modern taxi licensing framework which will offer consumer a range of services that are affordable and will improve customer confidence.

## Department of Finance and Personnel

### Retirement Age of Emergency Workers

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consideration he will give to the retirement age of emergency workers, such as firefighters, when bringing forward legislation on public service pensions and the effect that a later retirement age could have on public safety.

**(AQW 20646/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):** In taking account of the unique characteristics of the services provided by firefighters, and also police officers the Public Service Pensions Bill will contain concessions on the policy to link normal scheme pension age to State Pension Age for all Public Service for both groups. The Bill will specify a normal scheme pension age of 60 for firefighters from April 2015. This represents no material change to the existing pension age of 60 introduced for newly recruited firefighters since 6 April 2006. The Bill will also specify a normal pension age of 60 for police officers from 1 April 2015. A normal pension age of 55 currently applies for new police officers recruited since 6 April 2006.

These provisions are in line with the Public Service Pension Commission recommendation to adopt a pension age of 60 for the uniformed services as a whole. The report did not recommend any concession from the central recommendation to link normal scheme pension age to State Pension Age for any other public service employments outside of the categories for Police Officers, Firefighters and the Armed Forces.

Transitional measures incorporated in the Assembly Bill will have the effect of ensuring Firefighters and Police Officers, who are within ten years of the normal pension age for their current scheme as at April 2012, will retain the pension age entitlement associated with their current scheme. For those in service prior to 6 April 2006 this provides an earlier pension age of at least 55.

It is appropriate that full consideration should be given to issues of public safety connected with the provision of these emergency services. The new schemes for Firefighters and Police Officers, which will be created under the Public Service Pensions Bill, will specify that pension age must be subject to regular review. These reviews will provide an opportunity to consider available evidence on any factors which may be shown to diminish an individual's ability to meet the occupational demands and fitness standards of these workforces. Where proven impacts are demonstrated Departments with responsibility for these schemes will need to take full account of the evidence available to ensure there is no risk to public safety.

Scheme provisions will be reviewed and adapted as necessary to accommodate any changes required in the interest of ensuring employee safety and public safety is not diminished.

### **Welfare Reform Bill**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what would be the cost to the Block Grant of not introducing the Welfare Reform Bill.

**(AQW 20943/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** At this stage I cannot give a definitive figure on the cost to the Block of not introducing the Welfare Reform Bill. However the costs are likely to be substantial and well beyond what the Executive can reasonably afford. The anticipated total cost comprises a number of elements.

Firstly, failure to implement the Welfare Reform Bill would likely be deemed to represent a breach of parity in relation to social security policy and the UK Government may therefore deem it appropriate to penalise the Executive through reducing the level of funding available to the Northern Ireland Block. The extent of such a penalty would be a decision for the UK Government.

It would also be for the Executive to fund the significant additional costs of all local social security policies that represent a departure from those that apply in the rest of the UK. This could amount to hundreds of millions of pounds.

Furthermore, failure to implement the Welfare Reform Bill would result in significant additional IT and administration costs for the Executive as we could no longer utilise the systems operated by the Department of Work and Pensions whose systems will have been updated to accommodate welfare reform changes.

I also have a concern that failure on the part of the Executive to implement welfare reform changes consistent with the rest of the United Kingdom will also damage relations with the UK Government - hindering our ability to achieve favourable outcomes for Northern Ireland on a range of other issues of strategic importance to the Executive and the people of Northern Ireland.

### **Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: Rates Reduction**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consideration will be given to a rates reduction for small and medium-sized enterprises to assist them in the current financial climate.

**(AQW 20956/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** There are already several rate relief schemes currently in place to help the business sector in these difficult times.

These include small business rate relief, industrial derating, empty shops rates concession and empty property rate relief.

More than 50% of businesses now receive some form of relief through the rating system.

Earlier this year in my statement on rating matters I announced my intention to extend the empty shops rates concession until the end of the budget period. I also informed Members that the small business rate relief scheme would be expanded to include an additional 3,600 businesses. From 1st April 2013, 24,000 businesses will benefit from this scheme.

In addition to these schemes the regional rate has been frozen in real terms throughout the budget period. As part of the overall four year budget the Executive has agreed that rates should be held at the rate of inflation, through to the 2014/15 rating year, providing certainty and stability for ratepayers in terms of financial planning.

I believe that the range of measures described above are the right mix of policies that put business needs first, recognising that there are limits to the concessions we can make while still raising enough money to help pay for essential public services and investment in infrastructure.

My Department has no plans to provide any further relief to businesses at this time.

## VAT Reduction

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consideration has been given to seeking a reduction in VAT for businesses connected to tourism.

**(AQW 20957/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** This issue was debated in the Assembly on 10th September 2012 and a Motion was passed which called on the Executive to pursue the case for a reduced rate of VAT for tourism related products and services in Northern Ireland with HM Treasury.

I subsequently wrote to the Exchequer Secretary, David Gauke MP, on this basis and he responded on 16th October 2012. He indicated that any reduction under EU law would need to be applied across the UK as a whole which would be very costly at a time when the Government's priority was to tackle the budget deficit. Consequently, I have no expectation that the Government would be willing to consider such a VAT reduction any further at this time.

## Youth Unemployment

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what is the current level of youth unemployment.

**(AQW 20970/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Official statistics on youth unemployment are sourced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The most recent results from the LFS indicated there were an estimated 24,000 persons aged 18-24 who were unemployed in the period November 2012-January 2013. This represented 23.8% of the economically active (i.e. those employed or unemployed) population aged 18-24.

## Transgender Community

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, how his Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 21001/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** My Department's Equality Scheme contains our commitment to consult with all Section 75 consultees as a matter of course. We also use a targeted approach to consult with those who may have a specific interest in a particular matter to ensure that those directly affected by any proposal will have an opportunity to comment.

We achieve this with the use of an extensive consultation database that includes relevant organisations.

We follow the Equality Commission's guidance on consultation 'Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)'

### **Legislative Consent Motion**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the consequences of a Legislative Consent Motion not being agreed in respect of the Westminster Defamation Bill; and whether his Department has any legislative plans in this area.

**(AQW 21014/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** In the absence of a legislative consent motion, the Defamation Bill does not extend to Northern Ireland and the law of defamation in Northern Ireland remains unchanged.

The Scottish Government has agreed to extend a very limited number of provisions in the Bill to Scotland and those provisions essentially deal with statements or reports which arise in the scientific or academic field.

There are no plans to review the law of defamation in Northern Ireland. However, my Department will continue to monitor developments in other jurisdictions.

### **Defamation Bill**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what action he has taken on the extension of the Defamation Bill to Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 21041/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The origins of the Defamation Bill are to be found in a coalition promise to review the law on defamation in England and Wales. The extensive consultation was confined to that jurisdiction and the provisions in the Bill have obviously been developed against the backdrop of the civil justice system of England and Wales. My Department considered the extension of Clause 7 of the Bill (statutory privilege), which could have been applied in the Northern Ireland context. However, it was unable to secure an Executive decision within the required timescale and a legislative consent motion in respect of that Clause was not, therefore, pursued.

There are no plans to review the law of defamation in Northern Ireland. However, my Department will continue to monitor developments in other jurisdictions.

### **2009 NICS Equal Pay Settlement**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) how many staff within his Department, who were on secondment to the Publicity Association Northern Ireland or the Northern Ireland Office between 2003 and 2009, were paid mistakenly both limbs of the settlement under the agreed 2009 NICS Equal Pay Settlement; (ii) how much was paid to these members of staff; (iii) from where the money that was paid in error was found; and (iv) whether HM Treasury has requested that the money is clawed back.

**(AQW 21048/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** I am not aware of any payments made in error to staff seconded to the NIO or to the Publicity Association of Northern Ireland.

### **Profoundly Deaf People**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what is the unemployment rate among people who are profoundly deaf.

**(AQW 21081/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The official measure of unemployment is sourced to the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS asks respondents to detail their main health problem however there is no breakdown for those that are profoundly deaf. The category used in the LFS is 'difficulty in hearing'.

However, the LFS sample size and design does not support the production of sufficiently reliable estimates for those who have difficulty in hearing given the small numbers recorded.

As an alternative, information is available from the Northern Ireland Census of Population. The 2011 Census asked respondents to indicate if they experienced 'deafness or partial hearing loss'. Census results published to date show that just over 93,000 people do so in Northern Ireland. The next Census release, to be published over the summer, will cross-tabulate Census variables and could be used to determine a Census Day unemployment rate among adults who experience 'deafness or partial hearing loss'.

### **Domestic and Non-Domestic Rates**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the percentage variance in (i) domestic; and (ii) non-domestic rates between each of the proposed eleven shadow council clusters.

**(AQW 21097/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The percentage variance in (i) domestic and (ii) non-domestic rates between each of the proposed eleven shadow council clusters is not available. The rates to be struck by the eleven cluster councils will depend on a range of issues such as the level of services to be provided, the cost of these services, taking into account any efficiencies which may be gained by the cluster councils, and the value of the tax base which will be affected by the outcome of the Non-Domestic Revaluation due to come into effect in April 2015.

### **Narrow Water Bridge Project**

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in light of the Special EU Programmes Body audit which clarified that all proper procedures were followed in the funding application for the Narrow Water Bridge project, when his Department will issue a Letter of Offer confirming that funding will be made available for this project.

**(AQW 21103/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The audit report commissioned on the Narrow Water Bridge assessment process concluded correct procedures were followed in the appraisal of the application, procurement and appointment of the independent advisor, however, as an agreed element of the INTERREG IVA Programme assessment process a full rigorous accountable department role must be completed. DFP is currently undertaking this role.

A decision will be taken on the project when all relevant information is in place to do so.

### **Economic Advisory Group's Report 'A Review of Access to Finance for NI Businesses'**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he will implement the relevant recommendations in the Economic Advisory Group's Review of Access to Finance for NI Businesses report.

**(AQW 21104/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** My Department along with the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment is currently considering the Economic Advisory Group's report. We broadly accept its recommendations and are currently considering how they might best be implemented.

### **Economic Inactivity**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the level of Economic Inactivity in each of the last 10 years; and to detail how this rate compares to (a) England (b) Scotland and (c) Wales over each of those years.

**(AQW 21106/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Estimates of the levels of economically inactive people in each of the last 10 years are sourced from the Labour Force Survey (LFS).

The table below details the level of economic inactivity in Northern Ireland for last 10 years in comparison to England, Scotland and Wales.

	<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>Scotland</b>	<b>Wales</b>
2012	27.3%	21.8%	23.4%	24.8%
2011	27.3%	22.8%	22.5%	24.7%
2010	28.4%	23.0%	22.6%	26.1%
2009	30.3%	22.9%	22.6%	26.8%
2008	29.7%	22.4%	22.6%	26.2%
2007	29.1%	22.7%	22.1%	27.0%
2006	29.0%	22.7%	21.9%	26.1%
2005	29.7%	22.9%	23.0%	26.7%
2004	29.2%	22.9%	22.5%	26.6%
2003	30.2%	23.0%	23.8%	26.3%
2002	28.8%	22.7%	22.9%	26.9%

## **Libel Laws**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for his assessment of the implications of Northern Ireland having different libel laws from the rest of the UK, particularly in relation to UK wide publications.

**(AQW 21117/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Scottish Government has agreed to extend a very limited number of provisions in the Defamation Bill to Scotland and those provisions essentially deal with statements or reports which arise in the scientific or academic field. It is not the case, therefore, that Northern Ireland is out of step with the rest of the UK. Each of the constituent jurisdictions has, and will continue to have, its own laws.

The challenges which are presented at a cross-jurisdictional level, either at a national or international level, are by no means new. However, over the years our justice systems have developed ways of addressing those challenges.

Our law of defamation is largely covered by the common law, rather than statute, and it could be argued that the flexibility which the common law offers is an advantage in that it allows the law to be quickly adapted or developed to address new issues, including any issues which may arise on foot of the proposed changes to the law in England and Wales.

## **Public Consultations**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of public consultations undertaken by his Department, in each year since 2007; (ii) the type of consultation; and (iii) the total cost of each consultation.

**(AQW 21142/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The number, type and cost of public consultations undertaken by my Department in each calendar year since 2007 are detailed in the table attached.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title of Public Consultation</b>	<b>Cost of Public Consultation (£)</b>
2007	Executive Review of Rating	2,000
	Budget 2007	Nil
2008	Lone Pensioner Allowance	500
	Reduction of Max Cap	500
	Rating of Empty Homes	500
	Rates Deferment	500
	Data Sharing	500
	Green Rebates	500
	The Building (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2010	150
	Electronic Land Registration	645
	Missing Persons – A Consultation on the draft Presumption of Death Bill (Northern Ireland) 2008	993
	Pleural Plaques	1,769
2009	Decapitalisation Rate for Specialised Properties	Nil
	Microgeneration	Nil
	Dormant Accounts Scheme Consultation on Spending Priorities for NI	1,281
	Review of 2010-11 Spending Plans	853
	'Improving Payment Practices in the Construction Industry in Northern Ireland: April 2009'.	20,600
2009	Equality Statistics for the Northern Ireland Civil Service	Nil
	Analysis of Sickness Absence in the NI Departments and Personnel Statistics for the 11 NI Departments	Nil
	Statistics on Employment in the NICS	Nil
	Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2009 Consultation	2,112
2010	Draft Budget 2011-15, Spending and Savings Proposals within DFP	Nil
	Landlord Allowance	500
	Budget 2010	21,113
	The Building (Amendment No.2) Regulations (NI) 2010	150
	The Building Regulations (NI) 2011 Phase 1 Consultation Process	150
	Draft Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) Bill (Northern Ireland) (2010)	1,033

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title of Public Consultation</b>	<b>Cost of Public Consultation (£)</b>
2011	Rating of Commercial Premises	2,000
	The Road Traffic (Financial Penalty Deposit) (Interest) Order (Northern Ireland)	Nil
	The Building Regulations (NI) 2011 Phase 2 Consultation Process	150
	Pay Statistics for the NICS	Nil
	Cessation of the Northern Ireland Abstract of Statistics Online	Nil
	Consultation on draft statutory guidance on forced marriage	1,027
2012	Consultation on Increased Member Contributions 2012-2013	Nil
	Reflections on future European Funding Priorities	Nil
	Dormant Accounts Proposed Appointment of the Ulster Community Investment Trust	1,727
	Consultation on proposals to amend the Scheme for Construction Contracts in Northern Ireland Regulations 1999	3,000
	The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	320
	The Building (Prescribed Fees)(Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013	320
2012	Call for evidence on the Common European Sales Law	Nil
	Consultation on the law of damages	1,082
2013	Northern Ireland Executive Welfare Reform: Rate Rebate Replacement Arrangements Preliminary Consultation Paper, January 2013	1,500
	Consultation on Increased Member Contributions 2013-2014	Nil
	Consultation on Proposals to Reform Public Service Pensions from April 2015	Nil

### **Redundant People and their Properties**

**Ms McGahan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he has considered measures to assist people who have been made redundant and whose properties have dropped in market value as a result of the collapse of the property market.

**(AQW 21153/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Help in meeting housing costs is already available through both the benefits and rating systems for people that have lost their jobs. In certain circumstances, support towards mortgage interest payments or loans of up to £200,000 can be provided by the Social Security Agency to someone in receipt of income-based Jobseekers allowance.

And in terms of the rates element of housing benefit, around a quarter of households have their rates bill paid for them either fully or in part including many people in unemployment. Indeed, most people in unemployment will automatically get full rates support unless they have another form of income. We also have the rate relief scheme which helps those just outside the housing benefit thresholds – this has seen applicable households save £170 per year.

Beyond this support with ongoing housing costs, the Executive does not have any role to play in providing assistance or compensation for falling house prices which have unfortunately affected the property market generally in Northern Ireland.

### Carbon Price Floor Tax

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, in relation to the assurance that Northern Ireland would be exempt from the Carbon Price Floor (CPF) tax, (i) for an update on the negotiations with the EU; and (ii) whether the CPF tax will be applied in April 2013 or when an exemption will be in place.

**(AQW 21168/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** It is Government's and our view that a Northern Ireland exemption from the Carbon Price Floor (CPF) does not represent State Aid and therefore Commission approval was not deemed necessary to proceed with this.

Therefore the Chancellor of the Exchequer confirmed in his Budget 2013 statement on 20 March that Northern Ireland electricity generators will be exempt from the CPF effective from 1st April 2013.

### Northern Ireland Civil Service Staff

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 6853/11-15, to detail the number of Northern Ireland Civil Service staff in post in each Department, broken down by (i) constituency; and (ii) council area at 1 April 2012.

**(AQW 21204/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The number of Northern Ireland Civil Service staff in post in each Department, broken down by constituency and council area at 1 April 2012 is set out in the tables attached. The tables show an increase in the figures from 1 April 2011 which can be attributed to the inclusion of the uniformed prison staff in the Department of Justice in April 2012.

#### NICS Staff (Headcount) at 1 April 2012 by Parliamentary Constituency

	DARD	DCAL	DE	DEL	DETI	DFP	DHS- SPS	DOE	DOJ	DRD	DSD	OFM- DFM	PPS	OTHER*	TOTAL
Belfast East	838	76	0	47	286	866	608	0	592	83	270	294	0	82	4042
Belfast North	35	1	0	72	0	53	0	144	94	38	449	0	0	26	912
Belfast South	69	164	2	858	155	1555	5	886	1017	703	3454	21	263	25	9177
Belfast West	0	0	0	87	0	0	0	0	1	0	1040	0	0	5	1133
East Antrim	22	0	0	65	0	1	0	30	213	12	63	0	0	0	406
East Londonderry	184	0	0	82	0	0	0	121	445	42	107	0	0	1	982
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	325	11	0	92	0	0	0	81	20	144	124	0	0	1	798
Foyle	195	0	113	136	4	177	2	78	51	68	756	3	46	0	1629
Lagan Valley	109	0	0	57	0	36	0	267	1023	51	64	0	90	0	1697

	DARD	DCAL	DE	DEL	DETI	DFP	DHS- SPS	DOE	DOJ	DRD	DSD	OFM- DFM	PPS	OTHER*	TOTAL
Mid Ulster	200	0	0	52	0	0	0	37	0	36	95	0	0	0	420
Newry & Armagh	218	0	0	113	4	0	0	65	31	102	163	11	53	0	760
North Antrim	120	22	0	86	5	65	0	99	29	182	81	0	63	0	752
North Down	0	0	486	29	0	225	0	6	182	12	53	0	0	0	993
South Antrim	278	0	0	43	0	0	0	34	15	90	66	0	0	0	526
South Down	68	10	0	51	0	7	0	94	14	180	115	0	0	0	539
Strangford	56	0	0	28	0	0	0	55	39	13	47	0	0	0	238
Upper Bann	101	9	0	120	0	79	0	114	41	195	163	0	0	0	822
West Tyrone	171	0	0	74	0	80	0	65	36	241	161	0	54	5	887
Unknown**	7	1	3	0	0	289	5	485	24	144	45	7	0	16	1026
<b>Total</b>	<b>2996</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>2092</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>3433</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>2661</b>	<b>3867</b>	<b>2336</b>	<b>7316</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>27739</b>

**Notes:**

- 1 Data sourced from HR Connect & Additional DOJ databases at 1st Apr 2012. Data includes Uniformed Prison grades
- 2 Figures comprise Staff Headcount for staff working in the 13 Northern Ireland Departments and 'other', as defined below:
- 3 \*"OTHER" comprises civil servants working in the Health and Safety Executive for NI, the Office of the Attorney General for NI, staff of The Assembly Ombudsman for NI and, and The NI Commissioner for Complaints.
- 4 Includes NICS staff only and does not include staff on a career break
- 5 \*\*"Unknown" are staff whose work location was not recorded at time the information was extracted by the NI Statistics and Research Agency.

**NICS STAFF (HEADCOUNT) AT 1 APRIL 2012 BY COUNCIL AREA (1)**

	DARD	DCAL	DE	DEL	DETI	DFP	DHSSPS	DOE	DOJ	DRD	DSD	OFMDFM	PPS	OTHER*	TOTAL
Antrim Borough Council	224	0	0	43	0	0	0	0	15	35	66	0	0	0	383
Ards Borough Council	56	0	0	28	0	0	0	55	72	13	47	0	0	0	271
Armagh City & District Council	93	0	0	38	4	0	0	35	11	55	90	11	0	0	337
Ballymena Borough Council	118	0	0	50	5	65	0	99	29	154	63	0	63	0	646

	DARD	DCAL	DE	DEL	DETI	DFP	DHSSPS	DOE	DOJ	DRD	DSD	OFMDFM	PPS	OTHER*	TOTAL
Ballymoney Borough Council	2	11	0	36	0	0	0	0	0	28	18	0	0	0	95
Banbridge District Council	0	0	0	34	0	0	0	0	3	31	50	0	0	0	118
Belfast City Council	873	241	0	989	386	2752	613	1128	1382	632	5118	315	263	138	14830
Carrickfergus Borough Council	0	0	0	37	0	1	0	6	213	0	28	0	0	0	285
Castlereagh Borough Council	69	0	2	33	55	9	0	5	326	192	42	0	0	0	733
Coleraine Borough Council	176	0	0	44	0	0	0	461	11	146	92	0	0	1	931
Cookstown District Council	138	0	0	16	0	0	0	36	0	49	15	0	0	0	254
Craigavon Borough Council	101	9	0	86	0	79	0	114	38	184	113	0	0	0	724
Derry City Council	195	0	113	136	4	177	2	78	51	68	756	3	46	0	1629
Down District Council	65	10	0	39	0	7	0	94	14	160	97	0	0	0	486
Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	79	0	0	43	0	0	0	11	16	63	67	0	0	0	279
Fermanagh District Council	246	11	0	49	0	0	0	70	4	81	57	0	0	1	519
Larne Borough Council	22	0	0	28	0	0	0	24	0	12	35	0	0	0	121

**NICS STAFF (HEADCOUNT) AT 1 APRIL 2012 BY COUNCIL AREA (2)**

	DARD	DCAL	DE	DEL	DETI	DFP	DHSSPS	DOE	DOJ	DRD	DSD	OFMDFM	PPS	OTHER*	TOTAL
Limavady Borough Council	8	0	0	38	0	0	0	12	434	15	15	0	0	0	522
Lisburn City Council	109	0	0	57	0	36	0	267	1023	51	64	0	90	0	1697
Magherafelt District Council	62	0	0	36	0	0	0	1	0	0	80	0	0	0	179
Moyle District Council	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
Newry & Mourne District Council	128	0	0	87	0	0	0	30	20	47	91	0	53	0	456
Newtownabbey Borough Council	54	0	0	42	0	0	0	34	1	66	53	0	0	0	250
North Down Borough Council	1	0	486	29	0	225	0	6	149	12	53	0	0	0	961
Omagh District Council	167	0	0	48	0	80	0	88	36	200	115	0	54	6	794
Strabane District Council	4	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	41	46	0	0	0	117
Unknown**	6	1	3	0	0	2	5	7	19	1	45	7	0	15	111
Total	2996	294	604	2092	454	3433	620	2661	3867	2336	7316	336	569	161	27739

**Notes**

- 1 Data Sourced from HR Connect and Additional DOJ databases at 1 April 2012. Data includes Uniformed Prison Grades
- 2 Figures comprise Staff Headcount for staff working in the 13 Northern Ireland Departments and 'other' as defined below:
- 3 'Other' comprises civil servants working in the Health and Safety Executive for NI, the Office of the Attorney General for NI, staff of The Assembly Ombudsman for NI and, The NI Commissioner for Complaints
- 4 Includes NICS staff only and does not include staff on a career break.
- 5 'Unknown' are staff whose work location was not recorded at the time the information was extracted by the NI Statistics and Research Agency.

## Chancellor's 2013 Budget Statement

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what are the Barnett consequential of the Chancellor's 2013 Budget statement.

**(AQW 21224/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** There were some £38.2 million of Resource DEL Barnett reduction consequential applied to Northern Ireland over the next two years as a result of the Chancellor's 2013 Budget. The profile of these Barnett reductions is £20.7 million in 2013-14; and £17.5 million in 2014-15.

There were also £93.7 million of additional Capital DEL Barnett consequential allocated to Northern Ireland over the next two years. However, with the exception of £0.3 million in 2013-14 and £4.0 million in 2014-15, these score as a financial transaction and can only be used to offer loans or equity investment.

## Help To Buy Scheme

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the Help To Buy Scheme announced by the Chancellor in the 2013 Budget will apply here.

**(AQW 21247/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Help to Buy Scheme announced in the Chancellor's Budget has two key aspects, an Equity Loan Scheme (Help to Buy: Equity Loan) and a Mortgage Guarantee Scheme (Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee).

'Help to Buy: Mortgage Guarantee' will be UK wide and delivered through UK lenders and will therefore be directly available to Northern Ireland house buyers.

'Help to Buy: Equity Loan' applies to England only, however the Executive received Barnett consequential on the planned expenditure in England. Locally the Executive already has the Co-ownership scheme in place and the new shared equity scheme announced in January Monitoring. It will be for the Executive to consider whether there is a need to expand the existing loan equity provision in Northern Ireland.

## Contractors' Invoices

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether all Departments are paying contractors' invoices within the 28 day target.

**(AQW 21267/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** I am not aware of a 28 day target. However, figures on prompt payment performance for the Northern Ireland Civil Service Departments for the 2012/13 year to date can be found on the Account NI website at: [http://www.accountni.dfpni.gov.uk/nics\\_prompt\\_payment\\_table\\_2012-2013\\_feb\\_2013.pdf](http://www.accountni.dfpni.gov.uk/nics_prompt_payment_table_2012-2013_feb_2013.pdf)

## DFP: Trained Staff

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, pursuant to AQW 20694/11-15, for a breakdown of the number of staff who have availed of the training in each Department.

**(AQW 21272/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The breakdown of staff, by Department, who have attended the CIPFA training is as follows:-

Department	No. of Staff
DARD	5
DCAL	2
DE	110

Department	No. of Staff
DEL	16
DETI	34
DFF	3
DHSSPS	2
DOE	11
DOJ	39
DRD	1
DSD	23
OFMDFM	7
PPS	2

### Unemployed People

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people in the Foyle constituency area are unemployed.

**(AQW 21308/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The official measure of unemployment is sourced to the Northern Ireland Labour Force Survey (LFS). However, the LFS is a sample survey and estimates of unemployment, at sub-NI geographies, are not sourced to the LFS because of the relatively large confidence intervals around such estimates. This is due to sample size constraints in the LFS.

The following table is sourced instead to the claimant count measure of unemployment. This shows the number of persons claiming unemployment related benefits at February 2013 and this figure as a percentage of the resident working age population.

Parliamentary Constituency Area	Claimants	
	Number	Rate
Foyle	5,943	8.8

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Effective Employer's Pension Contribution for Staff

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what was the effective employer's pension contribution for staff, in terms of the percentage of pay contributed by the employer, in each North/South Body within his Department's ambit, in the last available calendar year.

**(AQW 20706/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** My Department has responsibility for one North/South body, the Food Safety Promotion Board (FSPB), also known as Safefood. The North South Pension Scheme is an unfunded scheme, so there are no employer contributions. The notional employer contribution rate for FSPB in 2012 was -0.01%.

## Lyme Disease

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many cases of (i) suspected; (ii) confirmed; (iii) treated Lyme Disease have been referred to infectious disease specialists, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 20736/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested about cases is not held. The number of cases reported to the Public Health Agency in the last five years is as follows.

Year	Number of cases reported to the Public Health Agency
2012	2
2011	1
2010	0
2009	2
2008	0

## Lyme Disease

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the pathway for diagnosis and treatment of Lyme Disease.

**(AQW 20737/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The initial detection and treatment of Lyme disease is usually the responsibility of a General Practitioner as the GP is the patient's first point of contact with the health and social care service. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) advises that anybody with clinical features suggestive of Lyme disease should be tested. Early treatment with antibiotics is recommended. In addition to the specialist advice and information provided by the HPA, further specialist opinion can be provided by infectious disease physicians if required.

There is no waiting time for the treatment of Lyme disease.

Prevention is key, and in summer 2012 the Public Health Agency issued advice to the public setting out the precautions that people can take to minimise the risk of tick bites when they are in a grassy or woodland area known to have a high tick population, i.e. wearing a long-sleeved shirt; tucking trousers into socks; using insect repellent; and checking themselves, their children and their pets for ticks.

## Lyme Disease

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for treatment of Lyme Disease, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 20738/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The initial detection and treatment of Lyme disease is usually the responsibility of a General Practitioner as the GP is the patient's first point of contact with the health and social care service. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) advises that anybody with clinical features suggestive of Lyme disease should be tested. Early treatment with antibiotics is recommended. In addition to the specialist advice and information provided by the HPA, further specialist opinion can be provided by infectious disease physicians if required.

There is no waiting time for the treatment of Lyme disease.

Prevention is key, and in summer 2012 the Public Health Agency issued advice to the public setting out the precautions that people can take to minimise the risk of tick bites when they are in a grassy or

woodland area known to have a high tick population, i.e. wearing a long-sleeved shirt; tucking trousers into socks; using insect repellent; and checking themselves, their children and their pets for ticks.

## **Lyme Disease**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who is responsible for the detection and treatment of Lyme Disease.

**(AQW 20739/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The initial detection and treatment of Lyme disease is usually the responsibility of a General Practitioner as the GP is the patient's first point of contact with the health and social care service. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) advises that anybody with clinical features suggestive of Lyme disease should be tested. Early treatment with antibiotics is recommended. In addition to the specialist advice and information provided by the HPA, further specialist opinion can be provided by infectious disease physicians if required.

There is no waiting time for the treatment of Lyme disease.

Prevention is key, and in summer 2012 the Public Health Agency issued advice to the public setting out the precautions that people can take to minimise the risk of tick bites when they are in a grassy or woodland area known to have a high tick population, i.e. wearing a long-sleeved shirt; tucking trousers into socks; using insect repellent; and checking themselves, their children and their pets for ticks.

## **Lyme Disease**

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the role of the Health Protection Agency in the detection and treatment of Lyme Disease.

**(AQW 20740/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Health Protection Agency (HPA) provides advice and information about Lyme disease including guidelines for health professionals on the diagnosis and treatment of the disease. The service for Lyme disease testing in the UK is delivered by the HPA.

Diagnosis of Lyme disease is complex, as is the interpretation of laboratory results. In view of the rarity of cases of Lyme disease in Northern Ireland my Department has not considered establishing a separate testing facility for Lyme disease and has no plans to consider such an investment.

## **McCollum Report**

**Mr Dunne** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the recommendations of the McCollum Report

**(AQW 20755/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I responded to the All Party Group on Muscular Dystrophy on 13 February 2013 and expressed my support for most of the recommendations contained in the McCollum Report.

I would encourage the All Party Group and the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, which supports the All Party Group, to engage with the Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency who are responsible for commissioning services for people with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular diseases. They will progress the implementation of those recommendations that can appropriately be taken forward at this time.

## **Pregnancy Termination**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 20607/11-15, when he will be able to publish the outcome of the departmental monitoring of the recorded reasons for terminations of pregnancy carried out in Health and Social Care facilities.

**(AQW 20786/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have recently written to the Northern Ireland Executive seeking their agreement to proceed with a consultation on guidance for health and social care professionals on termination of pregnancy. I intend to consider implementation of the data collection in Health and Social Care Trusts following this consultation exercise.

### **Sub-Regional Rehabilitation Centre**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on his Department's plans for a new sub-regional rehabilitation centre in Downpatrick for low risk mental health patients.

**(AQW 20806/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust has recently launched a public consultation exercise in respect of the revised proposal to locate the new centre of excellence facility adjacent to the Ulster Hospital site. This consultation also includes the Low Secure/Rehabilitation proposal, to be located on the Downe Hospital site. The Trust will review its position at the end of this consultation process. The proposed model of service provision mirrors the recommendations of relevant national and regional guidelines and would enhance the portfolio of mental health services provided by the Trust.

### **Acute Mental Health Facilities**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust's plans to centralise acute mental health facilities at the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald, how he will ensure that the hospital is accessible to patients in the South Down area.

**(AQW 20808/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In line with Bamford, a central tenet of the proposal is that, as a result of the significant investment in community services, there is a wider range of alternatives to hospital admission now available within local communities, including South Down. Continued service developments mean that it is likely that admission to hospital will only be required in the future for those severely ill patients who cannot be managed in any other way. Adult mental health services are becoming less reliant on in-patient beds for the delivery of mental health assessment and treatment.

The current mental health proposal are being consulted on until 17 April 2013. The final decision will take account of responses from consultees.

### **Acute Mental Health Facilities**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the proposed time-line for the centralisation of acute mental health facilities at the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald.

**(AQW 20809/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Trust's public consultation exercise is currently underway and will run until 17 April 2013. The findings of this consultation will be formally reviewed following conclusion of the exercise. Thereafter the Trust will be in a position to provide clearer information about the future model of inpatient care and potential timelines for implementation.

### **Inpatient Psychiatric Services in Downpatrick**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how mental health provision in the South Down area will be impacted by the withdrawal of inpatient psychiatric services in Downpatrick; and what steps he will take to ensure that mental health services across South Down are future-proofed following such a withdrawal.

**(AQW 20810/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The South Eastern Trust is currently consulting on a proposed model for acute inpatient mental health services. The Trust anticipates that the impact of the proposed model will be minimal and will be offset by the identified benefits associated with a centralised model of acute mental health inpatient provision and the sustained development of community mental health services and infrastructure.

A range of new services have been developed within the community as the Trust shifts a balance in resource from institutional to community care. New service provision within the South Down area includes a new 18 bed, 24 hour supported living facility in Downpatrick and the expansion of other supported living schemes within the locality. There has also been significant strengthening of Psychology and Psychological Therapy services within the Trust.

## Fluoride in Water

**Mr Wells** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department has carried out any research into the impact of the use of fluoride in water supplies in Tandragee and Holywood.

**(AQW 20820/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department does not hold records on any research studies into the impact of the use of fluoride in water supplies in the Tandragee and Holywood areas.

My officials have previously carried out an extensive search of Departmental records, including the archives of the Public Records Office to check for such records and none has been found.

## Children and Young People with Special Needs

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 12657/11-15, what progress has been made in relation to transferring children and young people with special needs to adult services.

**(AQW 20834/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Pursuant to AQW 12657/11-15, the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) continues to take forward work to ensure that appropriate transitions protocols are in place in each Trust and that all relevant agencies are appropriately engaged.

The CYPSP oversees a regional sub-group on Transition which focuses on the transition of disabled young people into adulthood.

Responses to the consultation on the sub-group's Transition to Adulthood of Young People with Disabilities Draft Action Plan (2011-2014) have now been incorporated, and a copy of the latest version may be found on the CYPSP website as follows:

[http://www.cypsp.org/publications/subgroups/transition/cypsp\\_transition\\_draft\\_action\\_plan.pdf](http://www.cypsp.org/publications/subgroups/transition/cypsp_transition_draft_action_plan.pdf)

## Controlled Music Therapy

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQO 2503/11-15, whether the Health and Social Care Board has identified funding for the procurement of a controlled music therapy service; and how much funding has been identified.

**(AQW 20835/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Health and Social Care Board advise that, following a procurement exercise, the contract for provision of a music therapy service has been awarded to the Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust, from the 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2016 at a value of £100,000 per annum.

## Fire and Rescue Service: Stolen Parts

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 18397/11-15, whether he has received details from the Fire and Rescue Service on the compensation paid for the stolen parts.

**(AQW 20837/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Details of compensation paid in each case are:

Compensation paid for	Amount
Replacement of stolen alloy wheels at Belleek Fire Station	£100
Replacement of stolen alloy wheels and axle at Cushendall Fire Station	£350
Replacement of stolen alloy wheels at Ballyclare Fire Station	£100

## Language Barriers

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the measures in place to help patients from an ethnic minority background to overcome language barriers.

**(AQW 20838/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland HSC Interpreting Service is managed on a regional basis by the Belfast HSC Trust and provides face to face and telephone interpreting services. Where this service cannot meet a request, alternative arrangements are in place.

The NI Ambulance Service HSC Trust has procedures in place for frontline staff which includes the use of a interpreters and access to a multi-lingual emergency phrasebook in 41 languages.

Translations are made available in accordance with the function of individual HSC organisations and local service requirements. Examples of translations include a general information booklet on how to access services (available in 14 languages); GP registration forms (available in 16 languages) and various Public Health documents such as those relating to immunisation and screening programmes.

In line with Equality Scheme commitments requests for documents in alternative formats will be considered by individual HSC organisations.

## 'Yearly MOT' for Patients

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what impact the proposed introduction of a 'yearly MOT' for patients will have on GPs' ability to provide core services, given that there will be no increase in the Global Sum and the removal of the minimum practice income guarantee; (ii) what reassurances he can give that patient safety will not be compromised by this workload; and (iii) whether the increased targets for the upper thresholds of Quality Outcomes Framework quartiles are practical and achievable.

**(AQW 20846/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

- (i) The Assembly debate on the issue of annual health checks on 4 February followed a Motion proposed by the Health Committee. Whilst I am in favour of the principle of the proposal I did highlight during the debate the need to ensure that proper consideration was given to the significant resource implications attached to providing such checks for the population, given that current resources are targeted at meeting the needs of patients based on clinical need. I also cautioned on the need to ensure that decisions on policy need to be evidence-based. There are no plans to introduce annual health checks.

- (ii) The proposed changes to the GMS Contract include new evidence-based indicators, recommended by the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), which are aimed at delivering more benefits to patients, therefore improving health outcomes and saving more lives.
- (iii) There are currently some 140 indicators in the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) and the proposals currently out for consultation are to increase the upper thresholds of six of them to 95%. The proposed increased target for the upper thresholds of the Quality and Outcomes Framework are based on past performance levels.

The provision of safe, sustainable healthcare for patients is my primary focus.

### **GP Working Hours**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the working hours of GPs are monitored and recorded to ensure patient safety and the safety of GPs.

**(AQW 20848/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There is no system which records the total hours worked by General Practitioners (GPs). GPs do not normally fall within the remit of the European Working Time Directive because the vast majority of GPs, as independent contractors, tend to be self-employed GP Partners. Only 5% are employed as salaried GPs and the Directive applies to them. GP Out of Hours (OOHs) Providers monitor the work commitments of sessional GPs for their individual organisations to ensure that they are not excessive. OOHs Providers have agreed to share information across organisations in relation to any GPs whose work commitments give cause for concern.

GPs have a professional obligation to ensure that they make patient safety and welfare their first priority in line with General Medical Council (GMC) guidance. As employers, they would also be responsible for the safety and welfare of their staff, including salaried GPs.

### **Mental Health Treatment**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients have sought mental health treatment in a hospital outside their catchment area and have been referred back to their local hospital for reassessment, over the last twelve months; and to detail the cost of a reassessment.

**(AQW 20849/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

### **Mental Health Services**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the transition from children's mental health services to adult mental health services.

**(AQW 20850/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** All Trusts have transitional protocols in place between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Adult Mental Health Services. Last year, the Health and Social Care Board issued regionally agreed Threshold Criteria for Specialist CAMHS, which provides specific detailed guidance to Trusts on transitional arrangements.

Not all young people in receipt of CAMHS require transfer to adult mental health services; some may be offered alternative support and directed to other age appropriate accessible services more suitable to meet their needs.

## People Being Treated for Depression

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what percentage of people have been diagnosed with depression in each year since 2003, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust; and how these figures compare with England, Scotland and Wales.

**(AQW 20857/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number of GP registered patients aged 18 and over diagnosed with depression has been recorded under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the General Medical Services contract since 2007; comparable information is not available prior to 2007.

The QOF is a system to remunerate general practices for providing good quality care to patients, and prevalence data is used within the QOF to calculate points and payments within the clinical domain areas.

For QOF payment purposes, the QOF prevalence rates use as their denominator the total number of patients, of all ages, registered at January of the relevant year. These unadjusted prevalence rates are published by all four UK countries.

For conditions such as depression where the register only includes patients aged 18 and over, the QOF-reported prevalence will appear lower than would be the case if the age restriction was also applied to the population denominator. For those indicators that have a specific age range, Northern Ireland and England also publish adjusted prevalence rates, which are calculated using the appropriate subset of the registered lists, so the denominator used to calculate depression prevalence is the number of registered patients aged 18 and over.

The QOF prevalence figures presented here are raw prevalence rates. This means that they take no account of differences between populations in terms of their age or gender profiles, or other factors that influence the prevalence of health conditions.

Care should be taken when looking at trends in prevalence over time as, particularly in the first year of reporting for a new indicator, changes in the size of QOF registers can be affected by improvements in recording and case finding by practices.

**TABLE 1: PATIENTS AGED 18 AND OVER DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION, EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL REGISTERED PATIENTS (ALL AGES), 2007 – 2012.**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Northern Ireland	6.5%	7.6%	8.3%	8.9%	9.4%	9.6%
England	-	7.6%	8.1%	8.5%	8.8%	9.2%
Scotland	6.2%	6.9%	7.7%	8.6%	9.0%	9.0%
Wales	7.3%	7.6%	8.2%	8.7%	9.0%	9.5%

Data Source: QOF data published by DHSSPS(NI); NHS Information Centre, England; ISD Scotland; and NHS Wales.

Note: England did not include depression in their published prevalence data for 2007.

**TABLE 2: PATIENTS AGED 18 AND OVER DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION, EXPRESSED AS A PERCENTAGE OF REGISTERED PATIENTS AGED 18 AND OVER, 2007 – 2012, PRESENTED BY HSC TRUST WITH NATIONAL COMPARISONS.**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belfast HSC Trust	8.0%	9.8%	10.7%	11.5%	12.2%	12.6%
South Eastern HSC Trust	9.5%	11.0%	11.8%	12.5%	13.0%	13.3%
Northern HSC Trust	9.1%	10.8%	11.7%	12.4%	12.6%	12.6%

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Southern HSC Trust	8.7%	9.2%	9.9%	10.9%	11.5%	11.9%
Western HSC Trust	7.6%	8.7%	9.5%	10.1%	11.4%	11.8%
Northern Ireland	8.6%	9.9%	10.8%	11.5%	12.1%	12.5%
England	-	-	-	10.7%	11.2%	11.7%

Data Source: The number of patients on the depression register in each Health Trust has been determined based on the HSC Trust area in which the GP practice is located. It should be noted that patients may not reside in the HSC Trust in which their practice is located.

NI register sizes were taken from the Payment Calculation and Analysis System (PCAS) as at National Prevalence Day. National Prevalence Day was changed from 14 February to 31 March from 2009 onwards to bring it into line with National QOF Achievement Day. Denominator populations were taken from the combined registered lists for patients aged 18 and over of all Northern Ireland practices as at January of the relevant year.

Figures for England are published by the NHS Information Centre and use the QOF register obtained from the QMAS system and age-banded list sizes obtained from the Prescription Pricing Division (PPD), NHS Business Services Authority

Note: England did not publish age-adjusted prevalence data for depression prior to 2010.

## People Being Treated for Depression

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much funding his Department has ring-fenced for treating patients diagnosed with depression; and how this funding compares with England, Scotland and Wales.

**(AQW 20858/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Funding provided for services for people with mental health needs cannot be disaggregated for specific conditions. Services for people with depression can be provided across primary and secondary services and may also be provided by voluntary sector organisations under contract with Health and Social Care Trusts. The aim is to provide a holistic response to their presenting health and social care needs.

## Lyme Disease

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration is being given to introducing a separate testing facility for Lyme Disease.

**(AQW 20878/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Health Protection Agency (HPA) provides advice and information about Lyme disease including guidelines for health professionals on the diagnosis and treatment of the disease. The service for Lyme disease testing in the UK is delivered by the HPA.

Diagnosis of Lyme disease is complex, as is the interpretation of laboratory results. In view of the rarity of cases of Lyme disease in Northern Ireland my Department has not considered establishing a separate testing facility for Lyme disease and has no plans to consider such an investment.

## Lyme Disease

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what safeguards are in place to prevent Lyme Disease being misdiagnosed as Multiple Sclerosis, rheumatoid

arthritis, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, lupus, Crohn's disease or other auto-immune and neurodegenerative diseases.

**(AQW 20879/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The initial detection and treatment of Lyme disease is usually the responsibility of a General Practitioner as the GP is the patient's first point of contact with the health and social care service. The Health Protection Agency (HPA) advises that anybody with clinical features suggestive of Lyme disease should be tested. Early treatment with antibiotics is recommended. In addition to the specialist advice and information provided by the HPA, further specialist opinion can be provided by infectious disease physicians if required.

There is no waiting time for the treatment of Lyme disease.

Prevention is key, and in summer 2012 the Public Health Agency issued advice to the public setting out the precautions that people can take to minimise the risk of tick bites when they are in a grassy or woodland area known to have a high tick population, i.e. wearing a long-sleeved shirt; tucking trousers into socks; using insect repellent; and checking themselves, their children and their pets for ticks.

### Kidney Donations

Mrs Dobson asked Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many offers of kidneys for donation have been turned down by each Health and Social Care Trust in each of the last three years; and to detail the reasons given for rejection.

**(AQW 20884/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested has been supplied by NHS Blood and Transplant, which is the organ donation organisation for the UK and is responsible for matching and allocating donated organs. The information in the table below, relates to Northern Ireland as a whole as information broken down by Trust for specific organs is not available. The information in the table below includes the reasons given for rejection.

**TABLE: REASON FOR NON-DONATION FROM CONSENTED POTENTIAL DONORS**

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13*
Organs deemed medically unsuitable by recipient centres	4	6	7
Organs deemed medically unsuitable on surgical inspection	0	1	1
Prolonged time to asystole	1	6	4
Logistical reasons	1	1	0
Other	3	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>

**Source** - NHSBT

\*This covers the year from 1 April 2012 to 28 February 2013.

### Organ Transplants

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of (i) kidneys retrieved by hospitals over the last three years; and (ii) deceased donor transplants conducted during this period; and for his assessment of the capacity that exists within the Health Service to cope with local transplant demand.

**(AQW 20888/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The following information has been supplied by NHS Blood and Transplant, which is the organ donation and transplantation organisation for the UK and is responsible for matching and allocating donated organs. Data is provided at a Northern Ireland regional level.

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Number of kidneys retrieved in Northern Ireland</b>	<b>Deceased donor kidney transplants carried out in Northern Ireland</b>
2010/2011	74	26
2011/2012	75	27
2012/2013	69 <sup>1</sup>	25 <sup>2</sup>

1 & 2 as at 13 March 2013

The capacity to deal with local transplant demand will be achieved through the planned expansion of the clinical team and supporting infrastructure in Belfast Trust to support the live donor and deceased donor programmes with the expectation that we can continue to provide at least 50 live donor transplants and 40 deceased donor transplants. A key challenge in sustaining these levels will be our ability to recruit 2 additional transplant surgeons.

### Capital Works Projects

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what capital works projects are currently being considered by his Department.

**(AQW 20907/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have been provided with an indicative capital allocation of £1470m for the period 2015/16 – 2020/21. Whilst this represents a significant investment, DHSSPS capital investment needs are estimated to be in the region of some £2300m over the same period, leaving a projected shortfall of over £800m.

The emerging needs of TYC also mean that the existing scenario will need to be kept under review and re-prioritised as necessary.

Current major capital projects under consideration include:

- Regional Children's Hospital;
- RVH Theatres Rationalisation
- RVH Outpatients Reconfiguration;
- BCH CHP Plant;
- BCH Ventilation System;
- BCH Theatre Rationalisation;
- BCH Renal Services;
- BCH Replacement Cardiac Catheterisation Lab;
- RVH Car Parking (incl Multi-Storey Option);
- BCH Renal Services;
- AAH Service Pressures;
- AAH- Extension to Neonatal Unit;
- Holywell- Acute Mental Health Unit;
- AAH MRI Scanner;
- NHST Renal Services;
- AAH Orthodontics- New Hospital Dentistry department;
- Causeway Wind Turbine;
- AAH Redevelopment;
- Tardree House- Extension & Alterations;
- Ulster Hospital Phase B;
- Lisburn Health & Care Centre;
- North Down & Ards Learning Disability Unit
- 3-1 Mental Health Unit;
- Ulster Maternity Expansion;
- Ulster Hospital Car Parking;
- CAH Mechanical & Electrical Infrastructure;
- Newry Health & Care Centre;
- Omagh Cranney;

- Altnagelvin Phase 5.2;
- Erne Decommissioning;
- Altnagelvin Replacement Radiology Room;
- Altnagelvin- Additional Theatre Capacity;
- Regional Digital Mammography.

In addition £100m is routinely needed each year to ensure that the HSC Estate is adequately maintained, to replace HSC and NIAS vehicles, to meet HSC ICT requirements and, to meet the capital requirements of the NIFRS.

### **Altnagevlin Hospital**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact the recent fire at Altnagevlin Hospital has had on waiting times for routine procedures in each medical discipline. **(AQW 20909/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am advised by the Western Health and Social Care Trust that the fire incident that took place on 23 November 2013 and associated water damage to the wards immediately resulted in several wards being relocated throughout the hospital and to the Waterside Hospital with some elective surgery in all specialities being cancelled.

The Trust's Business Continuity arrangements ensured that those patients whose procedures were cancelled during that week were rescheduled as quickly as possible and as a result this had no material impact on waiting times in most specialities.

The exception is the orthopaedic specialty. The orthopaedic ward was relocated to a ward with a reduced bed complement while work is underway to refurbish an alternative ward. This has resulted in a reduction of 14 beds and a loss of side rooms, which has had a significant impact on orthopaedic treatment times. The refurbished ward space with full bed numbers will be operational in June 2013.

I have made £19 million additional funding available to the Health and Social Care Board in 2012/13 to address lengthy waiting times across Northern Ireland, including waiting times in the orthopaedics specialty.

### **Northfield House Residential Home, Donaghadee**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the future of Northfield House residential home, Donaghadee. **(AQW 20911/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am advised that the South Eastern Trust is reviewing all Statutory Residential Homes for Frail Older People. Northfield House, Donaghadee, will be part of that review. The review will take account of the outcome of consultation on Transforming Your Care - Vision to Action, upon which I addressed the Assembly on 19 March 2013.

Any proposals relating to specific homes will be subject to a full public consultation; the Trust welcomes the opportunity to engage with key stakeholders as part of any initial Pre-Consultation Process.

### **Horse Meat**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what evidence exists to show that horse meat is not a risk to human health. **(AQW 20944/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There is nothing specific to horse meat that makes it any more or less safe than other meat products.

The Food Standards Agency has carried out a comprehensive food safety risk assessment concerning the contamination of beef products with horse meat. The assessment considered risks associated with microbiological and chemical contamination. The risk assessment concluded that, on the basis of

evidence, there is no food safety risk to consumers from affected products as long as they are cooked thoroughly and if general food hygiene practices are followed (e.g. washing hands after handling the raw meat and avoiding cross contamination).

## Hip Replacements

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the process by which Health and Social Care Trusts and Local Commissioning Groups assess the number of hip replacement procedures required in each Trust area annually.

**(AQW 20949/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Health and Social Care (HSC) Board in conjunction with commissioning staff in Local Commissioning Groups (LCGs) is responsible for the annual assessment of demand in each specialty and LCG area/ HSC Trust.

I am advised that the HSC Board uses a standard regional methodology for this purpose. This process uses the number of patients treated in the previous year and the increase in the waiting list (i.e. the patients not treated) in that year as a basis for updated estimates of annual demand in each specialty including orthopaedics.

## Waiting Times for Hip Replacements

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current waiting time for patients presenting with a condition requiring a hip replacement (i) to be assessed; (ii) to be seen by a consultant surgeon following initial assessment; and (iii) to have the relevant surgery following assessment by a consultant surgeon.

**(AQW 20950/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information is not collected as requested. The Department collects the waiting time for a first outpatient appointment and the waiting time for an inpatient treatment.

(i) The waiting time for a first outpatient appointment with a consultant in the Trauma and Orthopaedic (T&O) Surgery specialty, at 31st December 2012, the most recent quarter for which official statistics are available, is outlined in the table below.

	Patients Waiting for an Appointment, by Weeks Waiting							Total Waiting
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-18	>18-21	>21-26	>26	
Northern Ireland	5,134	2,040	2,142	1,870	249	308	522	12,265

**Source:** Departmental Return CH3

- (ii) The Department does not collect the current waiting time for patients seen by a consultant surgeon following an initial assessment.
- (iii) Hip replacement surgery, in the T & O specialty is only provided in the Belfast, Southern and Western HSC Trusts.

The average number of weeks waiting for hip replacement surgery in the T & O Surgery specialty, at 31st December 2012, the most recent quarter for which official statistics are available is 16.5 weeks.

## Surgical Waiting List Time

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety under which guidelines do Health Service staff advise a patient that the surgical waiting list time is nine months but offer the patient the opportunity to have the operation done privately by the same surgeon in two weeks.

**(AQW 20952/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The guidelines which you refer to and which apply to staff in Health and Social Care, formerly known as Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS), is the 'Code Of Conduct For Private Practice - Recommended Standards Of Practice For HPSS Consultants', published in November 2003.

Paragraph 2.9 of this Code of Conduct states that "in the course of their HPSS duties and responsibilities consultants should not initiate discussions about providing private services for HPSS patients, nor should they ask other HPSS staff to initiate such discussions on their behalf."

### **Fleming Fulton School**

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why pupils who attend Fleming Fulton school and use wheelchairs must now report any repairs required to their chairs to Musgrave Park Hospital instead of having them in school.

**(AQW 20954/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has advised that this is not the case and at no time was anyone in Fleming Fulton School advised to notify their wheelchair repair requests to Musgrave Park Hospital. Due to a combination of staff sickness and increased activity the regular Tuesday wheelchair repair clinic in Fleming Fulton School scheduled for 5 March 2013 could not be held. To mitigate this, Trust staff contacted Fleming Fulton School to establish if there were any urgent repairs required and they advised that there were none. The repair clinic was held on 12 March and all patients on the clinic's list were seen.

### **Health Service Waiting List Targets**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that the model of using private sector contractors to facilitate the delivery of Health Service waiting list targets has been utilized on an ad hoc basis, whether the strategy of service delivery access targets will continue for the duration of this mandate.

**(AQW 20992/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have already set challenging targets to reduce waiting times for access to hospital outpatient, diagnostic and inpatient/daycase services for 2013/14. By March 2014, I expect patients to wait no longer than 15 weeks for their first outpatient appointment, 9 weeks for a diagnostic test and 26 weeks for inpatient/daycase treatment.

I expect improving timely access to elective care will remain a key focus over the remainder of the Assembly term and that access targets for elective care will continue to be set.

### **Waiting Time Targets**

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the service delivery waiting time targets for (i) Orthopaedics; (ii) Cardiac Surgery; and (iii) Plastic Surgery, in terms of the number of weeks.

**(AQW 20993/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Waiting times for orthopaedics, cardiac surgery and plastic surgery are covered within the overall elective care targets included in the Commissioning Plan Direction for 2012-13 which state that:

- From April 2012, at least 50% of patients wait no longer than nine weeks for their first outpatient appointment with no one waiting longer than 21 weeks; increasing to 60% by March 2013 and no one waiting longer than 18 weeks;
- From April 2012, at least 50%, of inpatients and daycases are treated within 13 weeks with no one waiting longer than 36 weeks; increasing to 60% by March 2013, and no patient waiting longer than 30 weeks for treatment.

There are no specific targets for cardiac and plastic surgery, however there is an additional fracture target which states that from April 2012, 95% of patients, where clinically appropriate, wait no longer than 48 hours for inpatient treatment for hip fractures.

## Health Service Capacity

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail any plans to increase internal Health Service capacity in the next five to ten years.

**(AQW 20994/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Transforming Your Care identified many pressures on our health and social care system including a growing and ageing population, an increasing number of incidences of long term conditions and the need to keep up to date with the requirements of best practice in health and social care provision. It explains clearly that changes are needed to our Health and Social Care Services.

In order to meet the challenges we need to focus on making the best use of what we have and on new ways of providing services to enable resources to be used as effectively as possible. We will be working to ensure adequate capacity within the health and social care system in a number of ways. These include: networking between acute sites to ensure the provision of sustainable, safe and resilient services; new ways of working for staff including enhanced opportunities for primary/community care based roles; more joined up service provision –through integrated care partnerships which will enable locally-based collaboration between statutory, voluntary & community and independent sectors; and the use of technology to enable increase sharing of information across HSC organisations and with patients and clients. I updated the House on progress on Transforming Your Care in my Statement on 19 March.

Transforming Your Care will be implemented over the next 3-5 years with the pace of change will be influenced by the financial circumstances. Transforming Your Care is part of a wider ‘whole systems planning’ process which includes the Programme for Government, the new Public Health Strategic Framework, Commissioning Plans, Quality Improvements and Cost Reduction Plans, Trust Delivery Plans and Infrastructure Development Plans. This combined whole system planning approach to ensure that our health and social care services is able to meet the anticipated demands in future.

## Health Budget

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that 0.5 percent of the health budget is contracted out to the independent sector each year for acute services, whether this amount of spending will increase or decrease over the remainder of this mandate.

**(AQW 20995/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that this question relates to expenditure in the independent sector linked to elective health care waiting list initiatives.

The funding for transfers to independent sector providers for the period 2011/12 – 2012/13 is:

2011/12	£52.6m
2012/13	£53.7m (estimate)

The amount of expenditure to be allocated in future years will depend on a number of factors including the level of referrals and the increase in capacity within Health and Social Care. However, the Health and Social Care Board, which is responsible for commissioning health services, has advised that it would be prudent to assume that independent sector capacity will still be needed at current levels (£50m - £55m) at least to 2014/15.

## Health Budget

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that in England and Wales approximately 5-10 percent of the health budget is contracted out to the independent sector by various initiatives involving patient choice and commissioning, whether he plans to mirror this model. **(AQW 20996/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There are no plans to mirror the English and Welsh commissioning model or to fix a percentage of our health budget to contract out services to the Independent Sector.

The Health Service in Northern Ireland refers patients to the Independent Sector for a number of reasons, either as an Extra Contractual Referral, where a clinician can demonstrate an exceptional clinical need to do so; where it is not possible for clinical reasons to deliver a local service; or under the Waiting List Initiatives where there is a gap between the demand for a service and the capacity a Health and Social Care Trust can offer.

My overriding concern is the delivery of timely, high quality and safe health and social care services for patients and I look to the Health and Social Care Board and Trusts to ensure this continues to be their primary focus.

## Transgender Community

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, how his Department consults with the transgender community. **(AQW 21002/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department recognises the importance of its statutory equality duties and consults in accordance with the arrangements set out in its Equality Scheme. In line with the Scheme the Department maintains a consultation list which is reviewed annually and includes organisations representing the needs of the transgender community.

The Department also engages directly with the transgender community through the Trans Forum which includes transgender representative organisations and individuals. There is also engagement with the LGB&T Forum which covers both sexual orientation and transgender issues.

## Causeway Hospital

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of planned (i) inpatient; and (ii) outpatient procedures that were cancelled or postponed at the Causeway Hospital during the period 5 March 2013 to 12 March 2013. **(AQW 21004/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

- (i) The number of procedures that were cancelled or postponed at the Causeway Hospital during the period 5th March 2013 to 12th March 2013 is shown in the table below.

Cancellation Type	No of Cancellations
Hospital Cancellations	33
Patient Cancellations	14
Total Cancellations	47

**Source:-** Theatre Management System (TMS)

- (ii) Information on the number of outpatient procedures that were cancelled or postponed at the Causeway Hospital during the period 5 March 2013 to 12 March 2013 is not available as the

Trust does not record appointments for planned outpatient procedures within the Outpatient's record system.

### **Craigavon Area Hospital**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why there were no shower facilities for patients in Craigavon Area Hospital for a two week period in 4 South; and why toilets were not cleaned during this time.

**(AQW 21010/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As part of the management of water systems, water filters were fitted to showers in ward areas. Following the installation of these filters some problems with water pressure in some showers on the upper floors became evident. Whilst the showers were functioning, the water pressure was reduced. This has now been rectified and all showering facilities are now available. The showers will continue to be monitored to ensure no further issues arise.

The toilets on 4 South are routinely cleaned 3 times per day (morning, afternoon and evening). If staff discover that the toilets are in an unsatisfactory condition in between these times then additional cleaning is carried out.

### **Slievemore House, Derry**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the services that are delivered in Slievemore House, Derry.

**(AQW 21025/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Slievemore Nursing Unit operates within Slievemore House as a specialist nursing unit, providing short-term care and treatment for adults who have dementia with challenging behaviour. In addition, the Trust currently has 2 community service teams based in Slievemore House:

- Adult Mental Health Recovery Team
- Adult Physical Disability Community Services Team

Both community service teams will continue to operate in Slievemore House after 31st May 2013.

Slievemore Nursing Unit will cease to operate by 31st May 2013.

### **Slievemore House, Derry**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety which services will be delivered in Slievemore House, Derry after the planned closure of the nursing unit in May 2013.

**(AQW 21026/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Slievemore Nursing Unit operates within Slievemore House as a specialist nursing unit, providing short-term care and treatment for adults who have dementia with challenging behaviour. In addition, the Trust currently has 2 community service teams based in Slievemore House:

- Adult Mental Health Recovery Team
- Adult Physical Disability Community Services Team

Both community service teams will continue to operate in Slievemore House after 31st May 2013.

Slievemore Nursing Unit will cease to operate by 31st May 2013.

## Children and Young People with Disabilities

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Physical Disability Team based at Slievemore House, Derry will continue to deliver services for children and young people with disabilities at the site after May 2013.

**(AQW 21027/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Western Health and Social Care Trust has advised that, although a Physical Disability Team was located at Slievemore House, services for disabled children or young people were not provided at the facility. Following a reorganisation of disability services in 2012, the Children's Disability Team is now based in Lilac Villa, Gransha Park, Londonderry.

## Slievemore House, Derry

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether Slievemore House, Derry will continue to operate a specialist nursing unit to provide short-term care and treatment for adults who have severe dementia with challenging behaviour after May 2013.

**(AQW 21028/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Slievemore Nursing Unit operates within Slievemore House as a specialist nursing unit, providing short-term care and treatment for adults who have dementia with challenging behaviour. In addition, the Trust currently has 2 community service teams based in Slievemore House:

- Adult Mental Health Recovery Team
- Adult Physical Disability Community Services Team

Both community service teams will continue to operate in Slievemore House after 31st May 2013.

Slievemore Nursing Unit will cease to operate by 31st May 2013.

## Slievemore Nursing Unit, Derry

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) to detail the original purpose of Slievemore Nursing Unit, Derry when it opened in October 1994; (ii) whether this need still exists; and (iii) where these services will be delivered post May 2013.

**(AQW 21029/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Since its opening in October 1994, Slievemore Nursing Unit has operated as a specialist nursing unit, providing short-term care and treatment for adults who have dementia with challenging behaviour.

Slievemore Nursing Unit was never intended to be a permanent placement for any patient; therefore, the Western HSC Trust is working to engage with families to select suitable nursing home placements where the needs of the current patients, of Slievemore Nursing Unit, can be met appropriately in the long term.

The Trust has introduced a community led challenging behaviour service that provides support and training for staff in residential and nursing homes, to care for and, support people with dementia who may have challenging behaviour. One of its main objectives is to prevent inappropriate admissions to hospital facilities and to maintain people with dementia in their current environment where possible.

This community led service will be extended during 2013/14 with the recruitment of additional staff. It will provide support to people with challenging behaviour in residential, nursing and people's own homes.

In addition, Ward 1 Waterside Hospital will increase its bed complement and provide 3 short-term care and treatment placements for adults who have dementia with challenging behaviour.

## **Nursing and Residential Care Fees**

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, over the last twelve months, how many cases each Health and Social Care Trust has taken against people who have transferred their assets in order to avoid nursing and residential care fees.

**(AQW 21039/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Health and Social Care Trust officials have confirmed that no legal cases have been taken against clients who have transferred their assets in order to avoid contributing towards their respective nursing and residential care home fees.

## **Surgeries Using 0844 Numbers**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the surgeries that are still using 0844 numbers.

**(AQW 21046/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There are 23 practices (6%) out of the 355 GP practices in Northern Ireland that use 0844 telephone numbers.

A list of the practices that are still using 0844 numbers is provided on the following page.

**GP PRACTICES USING 0844 NUMBERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

<b>PC</b>	<b>Surgery Name</b>	<b>Address 1</b>	<b>Address 2</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Postcode</b>	<b>LCG Area</b>
PC69	Dr Tan & McGirr	Flax Centre	Ardoyne Avenue	Belfast	BT14 7DA	Belfast
PC193	Dr Greer	Dundrum Surgery	14 Church View	Dundrum	BT33 ONA	South Eastern
PC201	Newcastle Surgery	56 Main Street		Newcastle	BT33 OAE	South Eastern
PC204	Dr Deeny & Mulhall	12 The Green	Irish Street	Downpatrick	BT30 6BE	South Eastern
PC207	Stream Street Surgery	40 Stream Street		Downpatrick	BT30 6BE	South Eastern
PC252	Priory Surgery	26 High Street		Holywood	BT18 9AD	South Eastern
PC256	Ashley Medical Centre	140 Groomsport Road		Bangor	BT20 5PE	South Eastern
PC257	The Surgery	Brook Street		Holywood	BT18 9BB	South Eastern
PC261	Killynether Medical Practice	Regency Medical Centre	2A Frederick Street	Newtownards	BT23 4LR	South Eastern
PC275	Drs Webb, Stockman & Lindsay	Regency Medical Centre	2A Frederick Street	Newtownards	BT23 4LR	South Eastern
PC271	Old Mill Surgery	Church Street		Newtownards	BT23 4AS	South Eastern
PC274	Bloomfield Surgery	95 Bloomfield Road		Bangor	BT20 4XA	South Eastern
PC351	Portrush Medical Centre	17 Dunluce Anveue		Portrush	BT56 8DW	North
PC355	Kilrea Medical Centre	36 Garvagh Road	Kilrea	Coleraine	BT52 1JB	North
PC361	Ballymoney Health Centre	Robinson Memorial Hospital	21 Neval Road	Ballymoney	BT53 6HB	North

<b>PC</b>	<b>Surgery Name</b>	<b>Address 1</b>	<b>Address 2</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Postcode</b>	<b>LCG Area</b>
PC498	Drs McShane & Campbell	Moy Health Centre	Charlemont Street	Moy	BT71 7SL	South
PC501	Dr Tracey McConville	Moy Health Centre	Charlemont Street	Moy	BT71 7SL	South
PC504	Drs Millar & Mulvenna	Moy Health Centre	Charlemont Street	Moy	BT71 7SL	South
PC475	Aghalee Surgery	8A Lurgan Road	Aghalee	Craigavon	BT67 0DD	South
PC654	Grange Family Practice	Omagh Health Centre	Mountjoy Road	Omagh	BT79 7BA	West
PC657	Three Spires Surgery	Omagh Health Centre	Mountjoy Road	Omagh	BT79 7BA	West
PC662	Drumragh Family Practice	Omagh Health Centre	Mountjoy Road	Omagh	BT79 7BA	West
PC663	Strule Medical Practice	Omagh Health Centre	Mountjoy Road	Omagh	BT79 7BA	West

## South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Ambulances

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the average number of (i) ambulances; and (ii) rapid response vehicles which were on duty at any one time in the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust area at 11.00pm on Saturday evening in each month of the last three years; and to outline how this may change in the next 12 months.

**(AQW 21053/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the average number of ambulances and Rapid Response Vehicles (RRVs) which were on duty in the South Eastern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust area at 11.00pm on a Saturday evening during each month of the last three years, is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

However, the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) HSC Trust has indicated that between 1st April 2010 and 16th March 2013, based on planned resource levels within the South Eastern HSC Trust, there were an average of 12/13 A&E ambulances and 3 RRVs operating on a Saturday night at 11.00pm.

It is important to note that these numbers relate to those vehicles that were operational from stations located within the South Eastern Trust area. Ambulances are stationed in different locations across Northern Ireland and allocation is based on the nearest available appropriate ambulance at any given time, resulting in resources crossing over HSC Trust boundaries on a daily basis. It should therefore be noted that the number of ambulances available within a particular HSC Trust does not reflect the cover provided at any given time.

At this time, the NIAS have no plans to change the resource provision that currently operates in the South Eastern Trust area; however, this may be subject to review or change.

## GP Contracts

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the claims by GPs that the proposed new contracts will increase their workload by 15 percent; and whether the new contracts will enable GPs to deliver Transforming Your Care proposals.

**(AQW 21057/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The assessment of a 15% increase in workload arising from the proposals has been put forward by the General Practitioner's Committee (GPC) of the BMA. My Department does not have the details supporting this claim.

All parts of the Health and Social Care sector, including General Practice, have a role to play in contributing to the implementation of Transforming Your Care to improve the quality of patient and client care. The Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) within the General Medical Services Contract is aimed at resourcing and rewarding quality care. It is through this work that GPs can contribute to Transforming Your Care, specifically through the achievement of the Quality and Productivity Indicators which help to reduce hospital attendances and admissions, and through the achievement of the Clinical Indicators and the management of long term conditions, which seek to ensure that patients are cared for in the most appropriate setting.

## Diesel Spillage at Antrim Area Hospital

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what caused the recent diesel spillage at Antrim Area Hospital.

**(AQW 21074/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The recent diesel spillage at Antrim Area Hospital was caused by the rupture of a fuel filter housing supplying fuel oil to the two standby electrical generators within the Antrim Area Hospital generator house.

## Diesel Spillage at Antrim Area Hospital

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what was the cost of the diesel that was lost during the recent spillage at Antrim Area Hospital.

**(AQW 21075/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has indicated that the cost of the diesel that was lost during the recent spillage at Antrim Area Hospital is £13,450.

## Diesel Spillage at Antrim Area Hospital

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what was the cost of cleaning up after the recent diesel spillage at Antrim Area Hospital.

**(AQW 21076/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has indicated that the cost of cleaning up after the recent diesel spillage at Antrim Area Hospital is £31,000 to date. This figure may rise depending on further remedial measures that the Trust may have to take in regard to environmental protection measures.

## Distribution of Prescription Drugs to Prisoners

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what are the current arrangements in prisons for the distribution of prescription drugs to prisoners and to outline the circumstances where more than one dose is supplied at any one time.

**(AQW 21082/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The current arrangements for the distribution of prescription medicines to prisoners are based on the Department of Health / HM Prison Service document "A Pharmacy Service for Prisoners" (2003) and aims to meet the HM Inspectorate of Prisons Expectation no. 39 which states "Prisoners are cared for by a pharmacy service which assesses and meets their needs and is equivalent to that in the community."

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust has a contract with Lloyd's Pharmacy to provide dispensing services to all three prison establishments. Medicines are delivered to each prison's healthcare centre and then collected by healthcare staff to be administered or issued to prisoners in each individual house's treatment room.

On committal, each individual patient is risk-assessed to determine their ability to manage their own medications "in-possession". Three areas are taken into account when making this risk assessment:

- Patient factors e.g. whether a patient has a history of overdose or self-harm;
- Environmental factors e.g. whether the prisoner is sharing a cell; and
- Medicine factors e.g. how potentially dangerous a medication is in overdose or liable to misuse.

If a patient is determined to be suitable for in-possession medicine they will receive either 7 or 28 days supply depending on the medication in question. Those medications that are potentially dangerous in overdose or which have known abuse/misuse potential will only be supplied for a maximum of 7 days at any one time. Patients who are determined to be unsuitable for in-possession medication will have their medication administered by a nurse at the prescribed time. This is often referred to as supervised swallow.

## Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency Posts

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in each of the last five years, what was the average time taken in each hospital for (i) Health and Social Care Trust HR departments;

and (ii) locum agencies to fill Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency posts, broken down by speciality.

**(AQW 21088/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) is primarily responsible for the recruitment and placement of junior doctors into foundation and specialty training. Where doctor vacancies still remain following NIMDTA's recruitment process, HSC Trusts can attempt to fill those vacancies either directly or through locum agencies. The information is not held by Trusts in the format requested. HSC Trusts who record this information have indicated that the average length of time taken to fill posts directly varies significantly but usually ranges from between three and five months and for locum agency recruitment two days to three and a half months.

**Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency**

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of training posts at each hospital which were (i) left unfilled by the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency; (ii) filled by the Health and Social Care Trusts; and (iii) filled by locum agencies, in each of the last five years; and how many of these posts remain unfilled.

**(AQW 21089/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) has advised that the number of junior doctor training posts that remained unfilled in August in each of the last five years was as follows:

Year	Posts unfilled
2012	69
2011	69
2010	85
2009	53
2008	68

NIMDTA has advised that the number of junior doctor training posts that currently remain unfilled (March 2013) is 104

Information from HSC Trusts on doctors in training recruited either directly by Trusts or through locum agencies in each of the last five years is available in the format requested.

**Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency**

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency trainees at each training level in each hospital, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 21090/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency has detailed the number of training posts in each of the last five years, broken down by training grade and by HSC Trust, in the tables below. The data for 2008 gives a breakdown by training grade only as the information on Trusts is not readily available.

**TRAINING POSTS AT AUGUST 2012**

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>ST1/2 (SHO)</b>	<b>SpR / ST3 +</b>	<b>J/A</b>	<b>GP ST3</b>	<b>Academics</b>	<b>Total</b>
BHSCT	102	93	21	184	361	11	0	0	772
SEHSCT	42	42	12	76	77	0	0	0	249
NHSCT	41	45	22	91	50	0	0	0	249
SHSCT	33	33	17	75	58	0	0	0	216
WHSCT	34	34	19	72	61	0	0	0	220
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	6	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1777</b>

**TRAINING POSTS AT AUGUST 2011**

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>ST1/2 (SHO)</b>	<b>SpR / ST3 +</b>	<b>J/A</b>	<b>GP ST3</b>	<b>Academics</b>	<b>Total</b>
BHSCT	102	93	21	184	356	11	0	0	767
SEHSCT	42	42	12	76	77	0	0	0	249
NHSCT	41	45	22	91	50	0	0	0	249
SHSCT	33	33	17	75	58	0	0	0	216
WHSCT	34	34	19	72	61	0	0	0	220
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	6	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1772</b>

**TRAINING POSTS AT AUGUST 2010**

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>ST1/2 (SHO)</b>	<b>SpR / ST3 +</b>	<b>J/A</b>	<b>GP ST3</b>	<b>Academics</b>	<b>Total</b>
BHSCT	103	94	23	184	355	11	0	0	770
SEHSCT	42	42	12	78	78	0	0	0	252
NHSCT	40	45	22	91	51	0	0	0	249
SHSCT	33	33	17	74	58	0	0	0	215
WHSCT	34	34	19	72	61	0	0	0	220
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	6	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1777</b>

**TRAINING POSTS AT AUGUST 2009**

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>ST1/2 (SHO)</b>	<b>SpR / ST3 +</b>	<b>J/A</b>	<b>GP ST3</b>	<b>Academics</b>	<b>Total</b>
BHSCT	97	99	23	184	361	11	0	0	775
SEHSCT	38	38	12	78	70	0	0	0	236
NHSCT	40	46	22	91	51	0	0	0	250
SHSCT	30	33	17	74	58	0	0	0	212
WHSCT	32	32	19	72	58	0	0	0	213
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	6	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1757</b>

**TRAINING POSTS AT AUGUST 2008**

	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>GP</b>	<b>ST1/2 (SHO)</b>	<b>SpR / ST3 +</b>	<b>J/A</b>	<b>GP ST3</b>	<b>Academics</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1705</b>

**Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency**

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of doctors in training, at each training level, that were recruited by the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency, in each of the last five years, broken down by speciality.

**(AQW 21091/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) has detailed the number of doctors in training recruited in each of the past five years, by specialty and by training grade, in the tables below:

**DOCTORS IN TRAINING RECRUITED AT AUGUST 2012**

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3 /ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Foundation	252									252
Anaesthetics		12		10						22
Emergency Medicine		12			3	5				20
Core Medical Training		64	5	20						89
Acute Medicine				2						2
Cardiology				6				2		8
Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics				1						1
Dermatology				1				1		2
Endocrinology				1						1
Gastroenterology				3						3
Genitourinary Medicine				1						1
Geriatric Medicine				2				1		3
Haematology				5						5
Infectious Diseases				1						1
Neurology				1				2		3
Occupational Medicine				1						1
Palliative Medicine				2				1		3
Rehabilitation Medicine				1						1
Renal Medicine				1						1

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3 /ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Respiratory Medicine				1						1
Rheumatology				3						3
Medical Oncology				1						1
Clinical Oncology				3						3
ST6 Nuclear Medicine					1					1
Core Psychiatry Training	10					12	6			28
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry					1					1
General Adult Psychiatry					4					4
General Adult Psychiatry/Psychotherapy					1					1
Psychiatry of Learning Disability					0					0
Psychiatry of Old Age					3					3
Core Surgical Training	15									15
General Surgery				3						3
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery				5				5		10
Paediatric Surgery								1		1
Plastic Surgery				2				2		4
Cardiothoracic Surgery				1						1
Otolaryngology				1				1		2
Urology				2				2		4
General Practice	65									65

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ /ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Obstetrics & Gynaecology		6				15	6			27
Paediatrics		17					2			19
Radiology		7								7
Forensic Pathology				1						1
Histopathology		3								3
Medical Microbiology		2				1				3
Public Health		2								2
Neurosurgery		1								1
Ophthalmology		1								1
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>634</b>

**DOCTORS IN TRAINING RECRUITED AT AUGUST 2011**

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Foundation	252									252
Anaesthetics		10		24						34
Emergency Medicine		10	5	2	5	9				31
Core Medical Training		49		22						71
Acute Medicine				0						0
Cardiology				1						1

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Clinical Oncology				1						1
Clinical Pharmacology & Therapeutics				0						0
Dermatology				2						2
Endocrinology				1						1
Gastroenterology				1						1
Geriatric Medicine				4						4
Haematology				2						2
Immunology				1						1
Medical Oncology				2						2
Palliative Medicine				2						2
Rehabilitation Medicine				0						0
Renal Medicine				1				1		2
Respiratory Medicine				1						1
Rheumatology				1						1
Genitourinary Medicine				0						0
Neurology				1				1		2
Nuclear Medicine				1						1
Paediatric Cardiology									1	1
Core Psychiatry Training		10				5	1	2		18
General Adult Psychiatry					3					3

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Forensic Psychiatry					1					1
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry					2					2
Core Surgical Training	34									34
General Surgery				3						3
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery				5				5		10
Plastic Surgery				1				1		2
Cardiothoracic Surgery				1				1		2
Otolaryngology				2						2
Urology				2						2
General Practice	65									65
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	6	6	2	2		14	7			31
Paediatrics	17	17		1	1		4	4		27
Radiology	7	7								7
Histopathology	3	3								3
Medical Microbiology	1	1								1
Public Health	2	2								2
Ophthalmology	1	1		1				1		3
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>631</b>

**DOCTORS IN TRAINING RECRUITED AT AUGUST 2010**

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Foundation	252									252
Anaesthetics	8			13						21
Intensive Care Dual CCT				2						2
Emergency Medicine	14			1		7	1			23
Psychiatry	17									17
Core Medical Training	68		22							90
Acute Medicine				1						1
Cardiology				3						3
Dermatology								1		1
Endocrinology				2						2
Gastroenterology				3						3
Geriatric Medicine				3				1		4
Neurology				1				1		2
Haematology				2				2		4
Palliative Medicine				1						1
Medical Oncology				2						2
Respiratory Medicine				3						3
Renal Medicine				4						4
Rheumatology				0				2		2
Core Surgical Training		27								27

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
General Surgery				3						3
T&O Surgery				4				1		5
Urology				1						1
Plastic Surgery								1		1
Cardiothoracic Surgery								2		2
General Practice		65								65
Obstetrics & Gynaecology		12		3		7	6	5		33
Paediatrics		15	3	1			5		1	25
Radiology		6								6
Histopathology		2								2
Medical Microbiology		1								1
Public Health		2								2
Ophthalmology		3						1		4
Neurosurgery		1								1
<b>Total</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>615</b>

**DOCTORS IN TRAINING RECRUITED AT AUGUST 2009**

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Foundation	236									236
Anaesthetics		25		4						29
Emergency Medicine		6		1		26				33
Psychiatry		17	1	1						19
Medical Specialties										0
Core Medical Training		60	12							72
Cardiology				1						1
Dermatology				4						4
Gastroenterology				2				1		3
Geriatric Medicine				2						2
Haematology				2						2
Infectious Disease				4						4
Neurology				2				1		3
Neurophysiology				1						1
Paediatric Cardiology					1			1		2
Rehabilitation Medicine				1						1
Renal Medicine				1						1
Respiratory Medicine				2				1		3
Rheumatology				1						1
Surgical Specialties										0

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3/ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Core Surgical Training		33		1						34
General Surgery				2						2
Paediatric Surgery				1						1
ENT				2						2
Cardiothoracic Surgery								3		3
Plastic Surgery								2		2
T&O								2		2
General Practice		65								65
Obstetrics & Gynaecology		10		5		4	7	9		35
Paediatrics		12	1	0			8	3		24
Public Health Medicine		2								2
Radiology		8								8
Histopathology		4								4
Medical Microbiology		2								2
Ophthalmology		2					1			3
ICM - Dual CCT				4						4
Neurosurgery						1				1
<b>Total</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>611</b>

**DOCTORS IN TRAINING RECRUITED AT AUGUST 2008**

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3 / ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Foundation	234									234
Anaesthetics		11		2						13
Emergency Medicine		6				21	2			29
Psychiatry		17	7	5	1					30
Medical Specialties										0
Core Medical Training		56	23			9				88
Cardiology				3				1		4
Dermatology				1				4		5
Gastroenterology				1						1
Geriatric Medicine				1						1
Haematology				1						1
Infectious Disease				1						1
Neurology				1						1
Neurophysiology								1		1
Palliative Medicine				1						1
Rehabilitation Medicine								1		1
Renal Medicine				1						1
Respiratory Medicine				1						1
Rheumatology				1						1

Specialty	FY1	CT1	CT2	CT3 / ST3	ST4	FTSTA1	FTSTA2	FTSTA3	FTSTA4	Total
Medical Oncology								2		2
Surgical Specialities										0
Core Surgical Training		45	26			7				78
General Surgery				3				3		6
Paediatric Surgery				2						2
Plastic Surgery				1				1		2
Cardiothoracic Surgery								2		2
General Practice		65								65
Obstetrics & Gynaecology		9		2		7	11	3		32
Paediatrics		10	2	1	2	1	7	7		30
Radiology		8								8
Histopathology		3				2				5
Medical Microbiology		1								1
Ophthalmology		1	2				3			6
Neurosurgery		1						1		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>655</b>

## Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what role the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) has in relation to patient safety; and to whom the NIMDTA is accountable.

**(AQW 21092/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) has an important role to play in patient safety.

The General Medical Council (GMC) sets the overall standards for the delivery of postgraduate medical education and training. With regard to patient safety, the GMC requires that “the responsibilities, related duties, working hours and supervision of trainees must be consistent with the delivery of high quality patient care. There must be clear procedures to address immediately any concerns about patient safety arising from the training of doctors”.

NIMDTA, as the Northern Ireland Deanery, is responsible for managing the quality of junior doctor training in Northern Ireland and works in partnership with the HSC Trusts and GP training practices to ensure compliance with the standards set by the GMC. NIMDTA has an educational contract in place with each of the five Trusts setting out how training should be managed and delivered effectively in accordance with the requirements laid down by the GMC. NIMDTA ensures that Trusts are meeting GMC standards through a number of mechanisms including: Deanery visits to Trusts; trainee and trainer surveys; twice yearly reports from Trusts; and regular meetings with the Trust Directors of Medical Education.

With regard to accountability, NIMDTA is primarily accountable to the DHSSPS for its performance in the delivery of its business objectives and for ensuring that its services comply with all statutory, licensing and regulatory requirements. NIMDTA is also accountable to the General Medical Council for ensuring that the standards set by the General Medical Council for training are met and works in close partnership with local education providers to ensure that the training and supervision of trainees support the delivery of safe patient care.

## Transforming Your Care Proposals

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he intends to provide GPs with additional resources to help deliver Transforming Your Care proposals.

**(AQW 21116/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I made a Statement to the Assembly on the 19th March, on the outcome of the consultation exercise on the proposals contained in ‘Transforming Your Care: Vision to Action’. In that statement I acknowledged that all parts of the Health and Social Care sector, including General Practice, had a role to play in contributing to the implementation of the Transforming Your Care proposals.

I highlighted the role Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs) will play, enabling local health and social care professionals and the voluntary and community sector organisations to work more closely together on a collaborative basis to improve efficient and effective service delivery. I recognise the invaluable key role GPs will play as members of these collaborative networks of providers.

I announced that it is intended that over £15m would be invested in the development of ICPs and improvement of care over the Budget period to facilitate their work to respond innovatively to the assessed care needs of local communities and provide support for service users closer to home.

## Public Consultations

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of public consultations undertaken by his Department, in each year since 2007; (ii) the type of consultation; and (iii) the total cost of each consultation.

**(AQW 21141/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:**

- (i)(ii) All public consultations undertaken by my Department since 2007 can be accessed on the Department's website on <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/consultations>
- (iii) The information requested can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

**Infection Control**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the potential for infection in instances where patients, who have to leave hospital buildings in order to smoke, take medical equipment outside; and what policies exist in each Health and Social Care Trust to improve infection control and the safety of patients and hospital visitors.

**(AQW 21151/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There is no particular increased risk of infection associated with a patient taking medical equipment outside a hospital compared with the background risk associated with coming into contact with other patients and the public inside the hospital building.

Within the overarching framework of Changing the Culture 2012, the strategic regional action plan for the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections in Northern Ireland, each Health and Social Care Trust has an infection prevention and control plan. Signage for patients and hospital visitors reinforces the need for good infection control practice, including the need for handwashing and/or the use of alcohol hand-rubs. The Public Health Agency and the Trusts have developed leaflets which the Trusts use with visitors and patients. These include leaflets on hand hygiene; healthcare-associated infections; norovirus, and MRSA.

**Slievemore Nursing Unit**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what changes would have to be implemented at Slievemore Nursing Unit to enable it to be registered as a nursing home; and the estimated cost of implementing these changes.

**(AQW 21164/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Western Trust does not provide nursing home care as a statutory service therefore the Trust has not considered this option and does not intend to register Slievemore as a nursing home. In such circumstances, my Department is unable to comment on actual changes/costs, but it is understood that this facility would have required substantial redesign to bring it up to the required level to meet nursing home standards.

Families of patients who have been assessed as fit for discharge have been advised that their relative will be prioritised for placement within a local nursing home, which will effectively meet their needs.

**Assisted Living Accommodation**

**Mr Craig** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his plans to roll out to communities the £4m funding for the development of assisted living accommodation.

**(AQW 21167/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The £4m to which the Member refers was transferred from the Department of Social Development to my Department to assist in the resettlement of long stay patients from learning disability and mental health hospitals in Northern Ireland during 2013/2014.

This is part of an agreed 3 year transfer of supporting people funding totalling £12m over the period 2012/13 to 2014/15, to be utilised for assisting people who are resettled into supported living accommodation, allowing the DSD capital budget to be fully realised.

The Health and Social Care Board will allocate the funding in 2013/2014 to Supported Living Schemes or individual homes in the community for 55 people who are being resettled from mental health and learning disability hospitals.

The indicative full cost of these supported living homes is £4.6m. In addition, further substantial sums are being invested in nursing and residential homes for people being resettled, where their assessment indicates this is required, and on improvements in services to support these people in the community.

### **Organ Donation**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the public consultation on organ donation will begin.

**(AQW 21183/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Demand for organ transplants fluctuates on a daily basis, depending on the clinical condition of patients; therefore, it is not possible to provide a figure for how many more people would be needed to meet demand for organ donors either in Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole. It is therefore important to continue to encourage as many people as possible to join the organ donor register to ensure that we maximise the number of organs available for transplant.

I recently announced my intention to consult on public attitudes towards organ donation, including the introduction of an opt-out system for organ donation in Northern Ireland. The arrangements for the implementation of this consultation will be announced as soon as possible. My overall aim is to increase organ donation. I would therefore not wish to pre-empt the outcome of the proposed consultation by entering into speculation about the potential impact of a presumed consent or opt-out system.

### **Organ Donation**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many more people are needed on the organ donor register to meet current demand.

**(AQW 21186/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Demand for organ transplants fluctuates on a daily basis, depending on the clinical condition of patients; therefore, it is not possible to provide a figure for how many more people would be needed to meet demand for organ donors either in Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole. It is therefore important to continue to encourage as many people as possible to join the organ donor register to ensure that we maximise the number of organs available for transplant.

I recently announced my intention to consult on public attitudes towards organ donation, including the introduction of an opt-out system for organ donation in Northern Ireland. The arrangements for the implementation of this consultation will be announced as soon as possible. My overall aim is to increase organ donation. I would therefore not wish to pre-empt the outcome of the proposed consultation by entering into speculation about the potential impact of a presumed consent or opt-out system.

### **Organ Donation**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, should the number of people on the organ donor register increase to a level which meets the current needs, whether moving towards a presumed consent or opt-out system would still be required.

**(AQW 21187/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Demand for organ transplants fluctuates on a daily basis, depending on the clinical condition of patients; therefore, it is not possible to provide a figure for how many more people would be needed to meet demand for organ donors either in Northern Ireland or the UK as a whole. It is therefore important to continue to encourage as many people as possible to join the organ donor register to ensure that we maximise the number of organs available for transplant.

I recently announced my intention to consult on public attitudes towards organ donation, including the introduction of an opt-out system for organ donation in Northern Ireland. The arrangements for the implementation of this consultation will be announced as soon as possible. My overall aim is to increase organ donation. I would therefore not wish to pre-empt the outcome of the proposed consultation by entering into speculation about the potential impact of a presumed consent or opt-out system.

## Patients' Hospital Appointments

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients' hospital appointments were cancelled by their consultant in (i) 2008/09; (ii) 2009/10; (iii) 2010/11; (iv) 2011/12; and (v) 2012/13 to date; and how many of these cancelled appointments were due to the consultants' work commitments in the private sector.

### (AQW 21188/11-15)

**Mr Poots:** The Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR), which is the present methodology for the collection of consultant-led outpatient activity, was introduced by my Department's Hospital Information Branch from the beginning of 2008/09, as a direct result of a comprehensive review of collection of outpatient activity undertaken in 2007/08. Primarily the methodology changed from the reporting of the number of clinics held and cancelled to the reporting of the number of appointments held and cancelled.

Information on the number of hospital cancellations, in HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland, is collected and published broken down by reason for cancellation.

The variable on the Patient Administration System (PAS) that provides the breakdown of the variable 'reason for cancellation' was not a mandatory field until March 2013 and as such the rate of coverage varies across Trusts.

It is advised that when looking at the figures associated with 'reason for cancellation' that they should add together the categories of 'consultant not available', 'medical staff not available' and 'consultant cancelled appointment' to allow for variances in recording practices.

It is not possible to identify from these cancelled appointments how many of these were due to the consultant's commitments in the private sector.

The number of appointments cancelled by hospitals in each of the requested years is shown in the tables below, broken down by reason for cancellation.

### (I) 2008/09

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2008/09)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Consultant not available <sup>1</sup>	16,538	7,260	12,297	0	8,839	44,934
Medical staff not available <sup>1</sup>	1,752	0	1,031	0	205	2,988
Patient treated elsewhere	2,526	1,306	1,750	0	1,739	7,321
Consultant cancelled appointment <sup>1</sup>	149	13,697	1,692	0	805	16,343
Appointment brought forward	3,089	21	3,189	0	2,591	8,890
Appointment put back	14,942	2,079	8,227	3,069	20,308	48,625

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2008/09)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Cancelled following validation/audit	275	76	41	0	36	428
Administrative error by hospital/GP	2,313	0	5,448	0	842	8,603
Hospital transport not available	169	30	108	0	12	319
Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
No reason or incorrect reason recorded	34,240	5,963	1,497	23,878	12,771	78,349
<b>Total</b>	<b>75,993</b>	<b>30,432</b>	<b>35,280</b>	<b>26,947</b>	<b>48,148</b>	<b>216,800</b>

1 It is advisable to add these categories together when using the data.

N/A – Information not available prior to 2011/12

## (II) 2009/10

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2009/10)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Consultant not available <sup>1</sup>	15,117	7,126	12,057	3,872	10,621	48,793
Medical staff not available <sup>1</sup>	1,694	0	1,250	468	1,506	4,918
Patient treated elsewhere	4,701	1,177	1,661	1,406	4,380	13,325
Consultant cancelled appointment <sup>1</sup>	303	17,598	676	288	9,314	28,179
Appointment brought forward	2,004	44	3,699	2,113	3,145	11,005
Appointment put back	10,548	1,321	6,901	4,231	7,539	30,540

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2009/10)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Cancelled following validation/audit	396	75	50	4	20	545
Administrative error by hospital/GP	1,959	1,677	4,012	1,367	3,363	12,378
Hospital transport not available	118	38	128	20	19	323
Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
No reason or incorrect reason recorded	37,639	1,186	1,247	3,276	3,050	46,398
<b>Total</b>	<b>74,479</b>	<b>30,242</b>	<b>31,681</b>	<b>17,045</b>	<b>42,957</b>	<b>196,404</b>

1 It is advisable to add these categories together when using the data.

N/A – Information not available prior to 2011/12

### (III) 2010/11

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2010/11)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Consultant not available <sup>1</sup>	17,173	6,224	12,045	4,974	7,690	48,106
Medical staff not available <sup>1</sup>	1051	29	2,025	653	1,720	5,478
Patient treated elsewhere	798	958	1,700	835	2,069	6,360
Consultant cancelled appointment <sup>1</sup>	184	16,654	964	371	9,430	27,603
Appointment brought forward	1,792	0	3,299	2,096	1,613	8,800

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2010/11)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Appointment put back	11,152	2,844	5,049	3,511	3,124	25,680
Cancelled following validation/audit	400	28	109	3	3	543
Administrative error by hospital/GP	656	1,766	2,697	1,642	1,682	8,443
Hospital transport not available	84	53	222	27	31	417
Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method	1,282	0	5,849	0	17	7,148
No reason or incorrect reason recorded	39,104	1,190	1,043	1,489	2,193	45,019
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,676</b>	<b>29,746</b>	<b>35,002</b>	<b>15,601</b>	<b>29,572</b>	<b>183,597</b>

1 It is advisable to add these categories together when using the data.

N/A – Information not available prior to 2011/12

#### (IV) 2011/12

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2011/12)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Consultant not available <sup>1</sup>	17,686	5,976	10,179	4,834	9,258	47,933
Medical staff not available <sup>1</sup>	1,040	0	1,551	366	1,249	4,206
Patient treated elsewhere	537	917	2,086	840	537	4,917
Consultant cancelled appointment <sup>1</sup>	1,575	17,113	522	461	8,333	28,004
Appointment brought forward	1,618	0	2,718	2,151	1,744	8,231

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (2011/12)					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Appointment put back	15,188	1,424	5,812	3,188	3,087	28,699
Cancelled following validation/audit	444	31	122	5	4	606
Administrative error by hospital/GP	572	1,799	2,606	1,291	2,240	8,508
Hospital transport not available	81	30	169	19	27	326
Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method	4,153	0	3,427	0	111	7,691
No reason or incorrect reason recorded	38,717	1,061	709	1,229	1,976	43,692
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,611</b>	<b>28,351</b>	<b>29,901</b>	<b>14,384</b>	<b>28,566</b>	<b>182,813</b>

1 It is advisable to add these categories together when using the data.

**(V) 1ST APRIL TO 31ST DECEMBER 2012<sup>P</sup>**

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (1st April to 31st December 2012) <sup>P</sup>					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Consultant not available <sup>1</sup>	13,922	4,027	6,755	3,631	5,165	33,500
Medical staff not available <sup>1</sup>	600	0	656	499	1,232	2,987
Patient treated elsewhere	418	652	1,438	474	251	3,233
Consultant cancelled appointment <sup>1</sup>	1,579	9,804	471	327	6,150	18,331

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by each HSC Trust (1st April to 31st December 2012)P					
	Belfast HSC Trust	Northern HSC Trust	South Eastern HSC Trust	Southern HSC Trust	Western HSC Trust	Northern Ireland Total
Appointment brought forward	1,274	0	2,211	1,591	1,569	6,645
Appointment put back	10,642	1,135	3,213	2,249	2,416	19,655
Cancelled following validation/audit	465	50	32	27	4	578
Administrative error by hospital/GP	446	1,478	1,654	1,072	1,695	6,345
Hospital transport not available	41	31	98	8	22	200
Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method	1,562	0	43	0	536	2,141
No reason or incorrect reason recorded	26,689	898	447	1,070	2,026	31,130
<b>Total</b>	<b>57,638</b>	<b>18,075</b>	<b>17,018</b>	<b>10,948</b>	<b>21,066</b>	<b>124,745</b>

1 It is advisable to add these categories together when using the data.

P Data are currently provisional

### Ambulance Service's Paramedic in Training Programme

**Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Ambulance Service's Paramedic in Training programme will open.

**(AQW 21202/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Ambulance Service already has a 2-year Paramedic-in-Training programme which was advertised most recently in January 2010. Thirty six students have already completed training while a further 36 are currently progressing through the programme. There are no immediate plans to advertise a further recruitment to the programme.

### Ethnic Monitoring Data

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department has a mechanism in place for the collection and use of ethnic monitoring data; and, should he plan to develop such a system, whether it will follow the standard set by the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in July 2011 under the Guidance for Monitoring Racial Equality.

**(AQW 21220/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Mechanisms are in place to improve ethnic monitoring on Health and Social Care systems. The Health & Social Care Board has led on this work and during 2013/2014 the following systems are expected to implement ethnic monitoring: the Child Health System; the Community Systems - Social Services Client Administration and Retrieval Environment, and Regional Sure Start Database; and the Hospital Systems – Patient administration System (inpatients), A&E systems and Northern Ireland Maternity System. After a period of 12-18 months the systems will be evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

To support this work HSC ethnic monitoring guidance has been drafted incorporating the OFMDFM guidance. The guidance will also apply to any other Health and Social Care system(s) which implement Ethnic Monitoring.

### **Autism Awareness Month**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will consider hosting an event in Parliament Buildings to support Autism Awareness Month in April 2013.

**(AQW 21244/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I would be happy to consider hosting an event in Parliament Buildings to support Autism Awareness Month in April 2013, if requested to do so. I would point out however, that Autism awareness, like our response to Autism itself, is a cross-departmental responsibility so any event would ideally reflect that fact.

I am pleased however, to inform the Member that I have agreed, subject to Assembly Business, to open and lend my support to the Belfast Autism Steering Group's Conference to celebrate World Autism Awareness on 22 April 2013. The Conference will focus on the autism journey in Northern Ireland to date and will examine what services should look like in the next ten years.

I can also advise the Member that the draft Autism Action Plan 2013-2015 (part of the draft Autism Strategy) identifies that all NI Government Departments can participate in World Autism Awareness Day annually as part of developing awareness.

### **Occupational Therapists**

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action his Department is taking to deal with the expected increase in demand for occupational therapists following the introduction of the Personal Independence Payment.

**(AQW 21266/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In Northern Ireland Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA) from 10 June 2013 for eligible people of working age (16 to 64 years old) who make a new claim.

Personal Independence Payment is based on an assessment of individual need. The new assessment will focus on an individual's ability to carry out a range of key activities necessary to everyday life. Information will be gathered from the individual, as well as healthcare and other professionals who work with and support them.

It will involve health professionals considering personal circumstances to understand how the individual's condition or disabilities affect them.

The health professional will provide advice to a benefit decision maker who will then use this information to decide if the individual is entitled to Personal Independence Payment.

Occupational therapists (OTs) are experts in assessing functional performance. They have a unique understanding of the impact of disability and illness on occupation (e.g. activities) recognising that poor physical and mental health, disabilities, or the effects of ageing can affect people in different ways.

In addition to other professionals including GPs, district nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and health visitors, OTs are already involved in providing information for individuals who apply for Disability

Living Allowance (DLA). The impact of PIP assessments on occupational therapy services when this replaces the existing system for those applying for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will become more evident as the new system evolves.

### **Independent Living Fund**

**Ms Brown** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what safeguards his Department can put in place to ring fence the budget for the Independent Living Fund from 2015.  
**(AQW 21273/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department will do all it can to help ensure that those disabled people in Northern Ireland who are most in need of care and support are not disadvantaged by the decision of the Department for Work and Pensions to close the Independent Living Fund (ILF) with effect from April 2015.

My officials will work closely with the other devolved administrations to help develop alternative longer-term arrangements for the future provision of the care and support previously funded by the ILF.

The ILF monies will not be lost to NI and officials are currently developing transitional arrangements for current recipients of the ILF. As a first step in developing new arrangements, my Department plans to run a public workshop in June to seek stakeholder's views on we should proceed with this issue.

### **Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 20312/11-15, what are the component parts of the Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool; and to outline the financial allocation associated with each component part.  
**(AQW 21295/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool (NISAT) is made up of component parts. The number of components completed depends on the complexity of the individual's health and social care needs; assessment can stop at any stage if enough information has been gathered to address those needs. The 3 primary components are: Contact Screening; Core Assessment; and Complex Assessment. There are also 3 additional components which can be used in conjunction with those above: a Specialist Assessment Summary; a GP and Medical Practitioner Report; and a Carer's Support and Needs Assessment. There is no financial allocation associated with the completion of any component of the NISAT, which is published online at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/ec-community-care/ec-northern-ireland-single-assessment-tool.htm>.

Circular HSC (ECCU) 1/2010 Care Management, Provision of Services and Charging guidance reminds the HSC of its overriding duty to procure quality services at a price which represents value for money. Each year the Health and Social Care Board negotiate a regional rate with the independent sector for residential and nursing home care. The Regional Rate is a guide to what the HSC considers fair and affordable for the total cost of a care home placement, not a fixed price: a Trust must pay whatever charge is required in order to procure a necessary placement in a given locality. The actual cost will differ across the programmes of care that are listed in the question, according to the level of need presented.

HSC Trusts are required by the Health and Personal Social Services Order (NI) 1972 Articles 15, 36 and 99 to assess a person's ability to contribute to the cost of residential accommodation. The Health and Personal Social Services (Assessment of Resources) Regulations (NI) 1993 prescribe the financial assessment that must be carried out to determine how much each individual should contribute to the cost of their care. The HSC Trust will supply any shortfall in funding between the amount that the individual can afford to pay and the cost of the residential or nursing care home placement. The level of need that an individual presents has no bearing on the assessment of how much that person can afford to contribute to the cost of their care package. Thus the only situation in which a contribution that could be identified as "standard" from the Trust is made is in the case of those who are assessed as able to afford to pay for their placement in full, who are subsidised by £100 per week towards their nursing care.

Payments for Nursing Care were introduced in Northern Ireland in 2002. In establishing the weekly payment rate at £100, the Department carried out extensive research consulting residents, representative organisations and health and social care experts. The £100 per week rate is subject to periodic review but has remained unchanged since its introduction in 2002.

### **Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 20312/11-15, given that there are component parts of the Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool and an objective assessment resulting from same, how is the outcome in each category of elderly, mental illness, learning disability and physical disability a standard rate financial contribution, including an invariable amount for nursing care.

**(AQW 21296/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool (NISAT) is made up of component parts. The number of components completed depends on the complexity of the individual's health and social care needs; assessment can stop at any stage if enough information has been gathered to address those needs. The 3 primary components are: Contact Screening; Core Assessment; and Complex Assessment. There are also 3 additional components which can be used in conjunction with those above: a Specialist Assessment Summary; a GP and Medical Practitioner Report; and a Carer's Support and Needs Assessment. There is no financial allocation associated with the completion of any component of the NISAT, which is published online at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/ec-community-care/ec-northern-ireland-single-assessment-tool.htm>.

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### **Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 20312/11-15, given that a financial assessment should only commence after an assessment of the individualised service user's health and social care needs has been completed, what resulting variation

in the financial contribution made by his Department can be demonstrated for individuals within the (i) elderly; (ii) mental illness; (iii) learning disability; and (iv) physical disability categories.

**(AQW 21297/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Ireland Single Assessment Tool (NISAT) is made up of component parts. The number of components completed depends on the complexity of the individual's health and social care needs; assessment can stop at any stage if enough information has been gathered to address those needs. The 3 primary components are: Contact Screening; Core Assessment; and Complex Assessment. There are also 3 additional components which can be used in conjunction with those above: a Specialist Assessment Summary; a GP and Medical Practitioner Report; and a Carer's Support and Needs Assessment. There is no financial allocation associated with the completion of any component of the NISAT, which is published online at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/ec-community-care/ec-northern-ireland-single-assessment-tool.htm>.

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## Department of Justice

### Northern Ireland Prison Service

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether Prisoner A was charged with grievously assaulting a prison officer in HMP Maghaberry, leaving him with injuries which have caused him to be dismissed from the Northern Ireland Prison Service; (ii) to give reasons if no charge was brought; and (iii) if charges were brought, to detail the relevant dates and outcomes.

**(AQW 18451/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice ):** Details of assaults which take place whilst in custody cannot be disclosed. Information of this nature is classed as sensitive under section 2 of the Data Protection Act 1998. To place such information in the public domain would breach the first principle of the Data Protection Act 1998.

## G4S: Electronic Tagging

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how much G4S has been paid for electronic tagging in each of the last two years.

**(AQW 20692/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The expenditure on the Electronic Monitoring contract with G4S over the last two years is set out in the table below:

Financial Year	Expenditure
2011/12	£1.248 million
2012/13	£1.242 million*

\* This is the expected expenditure at 31 March 2013

## Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19601/11-15 and AQW 18621/11-15, and in relation to the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and NICS policies relevant to when a prison officer is assaulted in the course of duty, how such incidents are recorded, maintained, monitored and reviewed at Prison Service Headquarters given the potential for legal proceedings against the Service and the Excusal of Sickness Absence for periods of absence due to being assaulted.

**(AQW 20696/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Each establishment maintains an Accident Book in which staff record any accidents/incidents that occur. This includes assaults, or injuries received when carrying out Control and Restraint techniques on prisoners. This information is then logged by health and safety staff in their respective accident/incident spreadsheets. In addition, an Accident Report form is completed for each accident/incident. There is also additional paperwork to be completed if the incident involves the use of a Control and Restraint team.

Should the accident/incident fall under the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) the Health and Safety Executive would then be informed via an NI2508 form.

The NI Prison Service Health and Safety Advisor provides a quarterly report to the Prison Service Management Board. His report includes the RIDDOR figures as part of the overall update on health and safety issues.

In the event of legal proceedings or excusal of sick absence, cases are handled on a case by case basis.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19757/11-15, (i) whether he wishes to revise his answer given that in his response to AQW 17821/11-15 he did not state that a Grade 7 is working on this process alongside a range of key stakeholders from the Departments identified; (ii) whether the Grade 7 has a team to assist; (iii) to detail the number of staff in this team, broken down by grade; (iv) how many, and what grade of staff from (a) the Prison Service; (b) the Department of Finance and Personnel; (c) his Department; (d) the Prison Governors' Association; and (e) the Prison Officers' Association are working on the project; and (v) how they are contributing.

**(AQW 20697/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I refer the Member to the answers I gave to AQW 17821/11-15, AQW 18877/11-15, AQW 19757/11-15, and AQW 20578/11-15.

In my response to AQW 19757/11-15 I indicated that the Grade 7 is working on the process with the range of key stakeholders mentioned in earlier AQW responses. These stakeholders are contributing to ongoing consultation but are not assisting as part of a team.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 13999/11-15, (i) whether the Code Of Conduct and Discipline (COCD) training provided to new recruits, existing staff and managers is fully compliant with employment legislation, case law, and procedural requirements, including those that are statutory, and the Labour Relations Agency Code of Practice on Discipline and Grievance Procedures; (ii) where, and by whom, the training is delivered; (iii) to detail the content and duration of the training; (iv) how many Prison Service staff have received the training in the last five years, broken down by grade; and; (v) why, in his answer to AQW 16619/11-15, he intimated that 44 Governors did not receive specific investigative training under the COCD but that a number of managers have received specific training to conduct harassment investigations.

#### **(AQW 20698/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Whilst there is no statutory requirement to train staff or management on the COCD, the Northern Ireland Prison Service, recognising this as best practice, does provide a level of training to its staff. This is delivered by Staff Training Officers at the Prison Service College and in each establishment's training department. The training sessions are scheduled to last approximately one hour and thirty minutes.

The content of the course includes who the COCD is applicable to, differentiation between minor breaches and gross misconduct, an overview of the complete process, revision of learning points, questions and evaluation.

Prison Service records indicate that 487 staff have received COCD training in the last five years; this equates to 241 Custody Officers, 118 Occupational Support Grade Officers, 76 Prisoner Custody Officers, 30 attendees on Nurse Induction courses, 22 Night Custody Officers and 78 other staff through management development and vocational qualifications.

My response to AQW 16619/11-15 indicated that a number of managers received specific harassment investigation training. These managers were selected, following a trawl competition, and trained to conduct specific investigations into dignity at work issues. This training was specific to dignity at work investigations.

### **Seating Arrangements in Crown Courts**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice whether he has any plans to relax the seating arrangements in Crown Courts whereby accused on bail, and not deemed as a risk, can sit outside the dock.

#### **(AQW 20702/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I have no plans to change seating arrangements in the Crown Court.

When a defendant on bail attends a court hearing it is normal practice for the individual to be placed in the dock during proceedings. An application to change this arrangement for a specific case is a matter for the trial Judge.

### **Northern Ireland Judiciary**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice to list the meetings he has held with members of the Northern Ireland Judiciary since coming to office.

#### **(AQW 20703/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Since coming into office on 12 April 2010 I have had 10 regular stocktake meetings with the Lord Chief Justice. I met with the then High Court Judge, Mr. Justice Hart, at the Criminal Justice Delivery Group in October 2011. I also met with the Lord Chief Justice and a number of members of

the Northern Ireland Judiciary during the visit to Northern Ireland by the Lord Chancellor, The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP, on 6 February 2013.

In addition to formal meetings, I often meet the Lord Chief Justice and other members of the Northern Ireland Judiciary at conferences, seminars and other gatherings in the course of my official duties.

I also attended events organised by Ards Lay Magistrates Association, Belfast Lay Magistrates Association and Armagh and South Down Lay Magistrates Association on 8 December 2010, 3 October 2011 and 20 January 2012 respectively.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service: Scanning Technology**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Justice, given the commitment to seek alternative examples of scanning technology for use in prisons, to clarify if his Department has been in contact with the Irish Prison Service on this matter.

**(AQW 20756/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As part of the Northern Ireland Prison Service modernisation programme, officials throughout NIPS have ongoing contact with officials of the Irish Prison Service (IPS) on a range of possible improvements or alternative procedures. Discussions have taken place between officials about alternatives to full body searching and the range and nature of the technology that IPS deploys to facilitate this process.

I have personally discussed the issue with Alan Shatter TD, Minister for Justice and Equality, on a visit to Portlaoise Prison.

The Irish Prison Service does not use body scanning technology, nor has it been trialled in any of its establishments.

### **Maghaberry Prison**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with Martin McGuinness MLA in relation to conditions for prisoners at Maghaberry Prison.

**(AQW 20761/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I have not had any formal meetings with Mr. McGuinness in relation to conditions for prisoners at Maghaberry Prison. However, I have met with Mr. McGuinness in his role as deputy First Minister; meetings with both the First Minister and deputy First Minister cover a range of issues, including prisons issues.

### **Court Cases**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, to detail which agency is responsible for notifying victims of crime (i) when cases are due in court, particularly in relation to sentencing; and (ii) if cases are transferred to different courts including those outside the original court division.

**(AQW 20768/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** At present, responsibility for notifying victims of crime when their case is due in court or about a change of venue lies with both the PSNI and the PPS, depending on the type of case.

Currently, notification in relation to summary cases (heard in the magistrates' court) is undertaken by the PPS and indictable cases (heard in the Crown Court) by the PSNI.

In relation to sentencing, notification in summary cases is by the PPS. In indictable cases, the victim may have been in court and heard directly, or the PPS representative at court will advise them. If they were not at court they would be notified by PSNI.

While there is no formal process at present for informing a victim of crime of a venue change, in practice either the PPS or PSNI will advise the victim.

A Victim and Witness Care Unit (VWCU) is currently being piloted in the Belfast magistrates' court. Where cases are currently dealt with by the VWCU, it will provide a single point of contact for victims of crime. One staff member is responsible for the case from when it enters the system. That staff member is also responsible for informing victims of cases going to court, sentencing and changes of venue. It is intended to commence the roll-out of the unit to other court regions in April 2013, with full roll out across Northern Ireland by the end of the calendar year.

The introduction of the VWCU will serve to streamline various elements of the criminal justice system and keep victims better informed about the progress and outcome of their case.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, in the absence of the revised Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline, if the current version is still applicable.

**(AQW 20769/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I can confirm that the current version of the Code of Conduct and Discipline is applicable until the new one is introduced.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service: Hearing Loss Compensation**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19336/11-15, to detail (i) the number of retired prison officers that, to date, have received compensation for hearing loss attributed to firearms training; (ii) the number of outstanding claims for hearing loss compensation; (iii) whether any of the claims were made after the date of the cessation of firearms training provided by the RUC; and (iv) the date that the RUC Firearms Training Branch ceased to provide such training.

**(AQW 20770/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:**

- (i) The number of retired officers who have received compensation for hearing loss attributed to firearms training is 22.
- (ii) The number of outstanding claims for hearing loss compensation at this date is 142.
- (iii) Claims have been received for training carried out over many years, including after the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) stopped providing this service.
- (iv) The RUC Firearms Training Branch ceased to provide such training when the Northern Ireland Prison Service staff took over this training in 1987.

### **AccessNI Clearance**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice what plans his Department has to increase the turnaround time of applications for AccessNI clearance.

**(AQW 20771/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** AccessNI continually reviews its processes to reduce the time taken to turn around applications.

The average turnaround times in days for 2012/13 to 10 March 2013 are:

Basic	6.5
Standard	6.2
Enhanced	20

The Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) (Amendment No 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 changed the disclosure process resulting in a significant reduction in the number of cases being

referred to PSNI and improved turnaround times. During October 2012 the average time taken to return an AccessNI check was 24 days, while at the end of December 2012 it was 16 days and at the end of January 2013 it was 13 days.

I am aware, however, that applications referred to PSNI can, on occasion, take a significant time to complete. My department is continually working with PSNI to reduce the time it takes to complete this process.

In addition, I have accepted a recommendation made by Sunita Mason, the Independent Advisor for Criminality Information in England and Wales, that a system of portable disclosures and updated online checking be introduced in Northern Ireland. Legislative provision to make such a change is to be included in the next Justice Bill.

Once these changes are implemented, citizens who register on the system for portable disclosures may not need to re-apply for an AccessNI check as they move between employers.

### AccessNI Clearance

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many applications were made for AccessNI clearance, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 20773/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** AccessNI began processing disclosures on 1st April 2008. Accurate records were not kept for the number of applications received during 2008/09, but it is estimated that this was around 120,000. The information in relation to applications received by AccessNI over other annual periods (1-April-31 March) is:

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13 (to 31/1/13)</b>
Basic	17,464	17,808	16,791	17,434
Standard	9,784	3,369	2,423	6,088
Enhanced	120,140	104,707	103,837	88,993
<b>Total</b>	<b>147,388</b>	<b>125,844</b>	<b>123,051</b>	<b>112,515</b>

### AccessNI Clearance

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the average time taken to process an AccessNI clearance application, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 20774/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** AccessNI began operations on 1st April 2008. There are no accurate records for the average time taken to process applications during 2008/09, though it is a matter of record that there were significant delays during that period that were resolved by December 2008. The following table sets out the average processing time for subsequent years:

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13 (to 10/3/13)</b>
Basic	8.3	5.2	5.9	6.5
Standard	8.3	5.8	5.7	6.2
Enhanced	15.4	13.3	20.5	20.0

## Part Time Reserve Gratuity Scheme

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 17156/11-15, what decision has been made about the disposal of the £392,000 surplus arising from the Part Time Reserve Gratuity Scheme. **(AQW 20778/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** This residue will be retained until the Department is confident that no further payments may be made. No decisions have yet been taken on how the residue can and should be used.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice (i) for his assessment of whether the undue delay by the Northern Ireland Prison Service, as a functioning public body, in implementing a new Code of Conduct and Discipline is acceptable and reasonable; and (ii) to outline the risks and consequences for prison staff whilst the situation is not progressed.

**(AQW 20798/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I am satisfied that there has not been undue delay in the development of the new disciplinary system for the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS). NIPS continue to operate under the current Code of Conduct and Discipline and I do not believe there are specific risks for prison staff in doing so.

## Domestic Violence

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the strategies being pursued to tackle domestic violence. **(AQW 20817/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The current strategy for tackling Domestic Violence is "Tackling Violence at Home". This Strategy was published in 2005 and extended with the approval of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic and Sexual Violence to enable the development of a new single strategy to tackle both domestic and sexual violence. It is intended that this new Strategy will be published in early 2014.

## Northern Ireland Prison Officers

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19755/11-15, in view of the significant amount of employment legislation introduced in Northern Ireland and, the Labour Relations Agency Code of Practice on discipline and grievance procedure, for his assessment of whether this is fair to prison officers given the potential for prejudice, procedures not being followed and legal action against the Service.

**(AQW 20819/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I am satisfied that the existing disciplinary system for the Northern Ireland Prison Service is being operated fairly.

## Prison Officer's Benevolent Fund

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how much his Department has contributed to the Prison Officer's Benevolent Fund in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 20821/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service has made the following contribution to the Northern Ireland Prison Service Central Benevolent Fund.

Year	Total Contribution
2010-11	£11613
2011-12	£16925
2012-13	£17787

The contribution is in respect of the costs of the Annual Memorial Service held at the Prison Service College and the Annual Carol Service at St Anne's Cathedral.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19050/11-15, to detail (i) what level of input the Prison Officers' Association has within the Northern Ireland Prison Service part-funded Prison Service Trust; (ii) whether the Northern Ireland Prison Service carries out any audit of its financial input including how often; and (iii) whether the Northern Ireland Prison Service can stipulate to where funding should be directed.

**(AQW 20829/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Prison Officers' Association is an independent body and the Member may wish to contact it directly regarding its level of input into the Prison Service Trust (PST).

The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not perform an audit of the Prison Service Trust as a number of other assurances are in place to ensure funding is used in the correct manner. Funding is released on request to the PST in instalments against estimated expenditure for the quarter ahead, and with a summary of expenditure for the previous quarter. NIPS stipulates for what purposes monies provided from NIPS can be spent and may reclaim all or part of any grant which remains unspent or is expended for purposes other than those specified in the funding agreement.

PST publishes and forwards to NIPS within 2 months of the end of its financial year, a copy of its Annual Report of activities and Accounts prepared and audited in accordance with its obligations under the Companies Act and other legal requirements. The financial records of the PST are open to inspection by officials of NIPS, and/or staff of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

### **Courts Fitted with Bollards**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice to detail, including associated costs (i) the courts that have been fitted with bollards from 2011 to date; and (ii) the courts that will be fitted with bollards in the future.

**(AQW 20870/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** From 2011 to date bollards have been installed at the following courthouses: Antrim, Armagh, Ballymena, Coleraine, Craigavon, Downpatrick, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Lisburn, Londonderry, Newry, Newtownards, Omagh and Strabane.

The associated installation costs are estimated at £665,640.

It would not be appropriate to discuss future security arrangements.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AWQ 18261/11-15, given the concerns highlighted in the Pearson Review Report regarding a range of issues including difficulties in convincing neutral observers that fairness and transparency exists in Northern Ireland Prison Service disciplinary investigations, to detail (i) whether the new proposals will contain adequate steps to address this concern; and (ii) whether the system will be fair, fast and certain as asked by Dr Pearson.

**(AQW 20871/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I am content that the proposed new disciplinary system will be fair, transparent and timely in the processing of cases.

### **Carecall**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice how much his Department has contributed to Carecall, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 20873/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Department of Justice and its Agencies are part of a NICS contract which provides an EAP for staff. In each of the last three financial years the overall DOJ spend with Carecall is as follows:

Year	Amount
2009/2010	£46,143
2010/2011	£46,868.76
2011/2012	£40,025.86

### Reduced or Temporary Speed Limits

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Justice to detail of the discussions that his Department has had with the Department for Regional Development on the introduction of reduced or temporary speed limits in areas where roadworks are due to begin.

**(AQW 20887/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** My Department has not had any discussions with the Department for Regional Development on the introduction of reduced or temporary speed limits in areas where road works are due to begin.

This is a matter for the Department of Regional Development's Road Service who are empowered under Article 40 of the Road Traffic Regulation (NI) Order 1997 to introduce temporary speed limits.

You may therefore wish to direct your question to the Department for Regional Development.

### Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, to detail whether (i) the review of the Northern Ireland Prison Service Code of Conduct and Discipline is complete; and (ii) Trade Unions have been consulted.

**(AQW 20903/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** A Code of Conduct has now been developed in consultation with a number of key business partners, including the Trade Unions.

### Prisoner Release

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 18612/11-15, to detail (i) the reason for the delay in the response; (ii) whether his Department sought legal opinion when invoking the Data Protection Act; and (iii) whether the Data Protection Act applied to (a) the defendant; and (b) agencies involved in prisoner release schemes and monitoring.

**(AQW 20939/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The delay in the response to AQW/18612/11-15 was due to the use of the term "Prisoner A", as this phrase has been used to refer to more than one prisoner. Although legal opinion was not sought when invoking the Data Protection Act, advice was sought from staff who hold a recognised qualification in the application of data protection law.

The Act applied to the defendant only.

### Assaults on Prison Staff

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20093/11-15 and without naming individuals or circumstances but having now been made aware of same, whether he will revise his response to AQW 19302/11-15.

**(AQW 20940/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The answer to AQW 20093/11-15 does not require revision. Between 12 April 2010 and 31 December 2012 there have been no prison officers dismissed due to a disability following long-term sickness caused by an assault. The Northern Ireland Prison Service definition of assault, as contained

in Annual Reports, is as follows: 'When the victim has sustained an injury resulting in his death, or his detention in an outside hospital as an inpatient, or any of the following injuries whether or not detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushing, severe cuts or lacerations, severe bruising, burns or scalds or severe general shock requiring medical treatment'

### **Cost of Legal Aid**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20232/11-15, the number of cases to which these figures relate.

**(AQW 20942/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) records expenditure by reference to the legal aid certificates that were paid. Separate certificates may have been granted to a number of legal representatives involved in the same case and the NILSC does not record the total expenditure in respect of each case.

The number of Very High Cost Case certificates paid in the last two financial years are:

- 186 Certificates in 2010/11
- 125 Certificates in 2011/12

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 19228/11-15, to detail (i) why the Professional Standards Unit will not deal with retrospective cases; and (ii) the action the Northern Ireland Prison Service will take upon receipt of a retrospective complaint or report against a member of the Service where sufficient evidence exists to warrant a misconduct and/or a criminal investigation, particularly if the allegations are serious in nature.

**(AQW 20945/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Any new case referred to the Professional Standards Unit will be considered, however the Unit will not re-examine any investigations already completed. If the new Unit undertook to consider historic cases this would hinder the fresh start the Service needs in relation to disciplinary matters and could have resources implications.

### **DOJ: Finances**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Justice how much he expects his Department to return at the end of the current financial year.

**(AQW 20977/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Following the January 2013 in-year monitoring round, the Department's forecast Departmental Expenditure Limit (DEL) outturn position for 2012-13 is as follows:-

#### **Unringfenced Resource DEL**

The Department's Unringfenced Resource DEL budget is fully allocated and is being closely monitored to ensure that final outturn is as close to budget as possible.

#### **Ringfenced Resource DEL**

The Department has surplus Ringfenced Resource DEL funding across the Budget 2011-15 period. This is a budget for costs such as the depreciation of assets and cannot be spent on other areas. At the end of 2012-13, the Department forecasts an underspend of £16.4m.

## Capital DEL

The Department has a forecast 2012-13 underspend of £13.4m due to the phasing of the Northern Ireland Community Safety College at Desertcreat. This funding will be carried forward across the Budget 2011-15 period.

## Transgender Community

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Justice, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, how his Department consults with the transgender community.  
**(AQW 21003/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Department of Justice is fully committed to fulfilling its equality obligations in accordance with the approach set out in its Equality Scheme. This includes arrangements for consulting with representative groups of all Section 75 categories, including the transgender community.

The Department recently published a "User Guide on Stakeholder Consultation". This sets out best practice and key principles of consultation for staff working in the justice system. The Guide encourages using a targeted approach to identify and directly engage with those who may have a particular interest in the issue being consulted upon.

The Department maintains a list of all S75 statutory consultees, which includes those groups which represent the transgender community. The consultation list is reviewed annually in line with the Equality Scheme.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20042/11-15, why the Prison Service does not conduct formal compliance audits and scrutiny in all disciplinary cases investigated, adjudicated upon and determined, in light of the number of appeals upheld by the Prison Service and the Civil Service Appeals Board since 2008.

**(AQW 21006/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Examinations of individual cases have taken place although there is no requirement on the Northern Ireland Prison Service to carry out compliance audits in respect of internal disciplinary processes.

## Northern Ireland Prison Service

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant of AQW 18621/11-15, to detail the number of Prison Officers, recorded in the Accident Record Books of the prison establishments, who have taken sick leave as a result of an injury caused by a prisoner, during the past three years, who have returned to work on light duties; and under what legislation, Government policy or other arrangements these officers were permitted to return to work on light duties.

**(AQW 21008/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The information requested could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost.

There is provision for staff to return to work on a phased return on medical grounds. These arrangements are set out in Section 12 of the Sickness Absence Chapter of the NICS HR Handbook.

## Community Restorative Justice Schemes

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the funding awarded to each community restorative justice scheme in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 21024/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The funding provided to Community Restorative Justice Ireland and Northern Ireland Alternatives through the Department of Justice is set out in the table below.

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Community Restorative Justice Ireland</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Alternatives</b>
2008-09	£60,000	£70,000
2009-10	£125,922	£110,000
2010-11	£95,000	£90,000
2011-12	£101,000	£104,880
2012-13	£100,000	£103,485

## Compensation Payments

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Justice what distinction is made to victims of both physical and mental injury when awarding compensation payment.

**(AQW 21035/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** A person can be awarded compensation for physical or mental injury if their injury is sufficiently serious to be classified in one of the tariff bands attached to the Northern Ireland Criminal Injury Scheme 2009.

When a person suffers both a physical and a mental injury, if the tariff amount for the physical injury is higher than that for the mental injury, only the physical injury tariff can be paid as it includes an element of compensation for the degree of mental injury which a victim in normal circumstances would experience.

## Prison Estates Strategy Consultation

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Justice to detail the political parties, and local elected representatives from Limavady who responded to the Prison Estates Strategy consultation.

**(AQW 21157/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) Outline Estate Strategy was published for consultation in June 2012. Respondents from the Limavady area included George Robinson DUP MLA, Gregory Campbell DUP MLA, and David McClarty, Independent MLA.

A summary of responses to the consultation will be published alongside the final Estate Strategy at the end of April.

## Department for Regional Development

### Roads Service Car Parks: Monthly and Quarterly Season Tickets

**Mr McClarty** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQO 3174/11-15, (i) for a breakdown of monthly and quarterly season tickets allocated at each Roads Service car park in the Northern division; and (ii) what percentage of allocated tickets have been purchased since 31 March 2012.

**(AQW 20718/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** The numbers of season tickets which are made available at Roads Service's charged car parks in Northern Division and sales figures since 31 March 2012 are given in the following table:-

<b>Car Park Name</b>	<b>Spaces</b>	<b>Number of Season Tickets Available</b>	<b>Monthly season tickets Number of Sales 31/3/12 to 11/3/13</b>	<b>Quarterly season tickets Number of Sales 31/3/12 to 11/3/13</b>
<b>Antrim</b>				
Central (Castle Way)	438	23		
Railway Street	182	9	2	27
<b>Ballycastle</b>				
Anne Street	87	4		8
<b>Ballymena</b>				
Ballymoney Road	177	9	1	29
Broughshane Street	249	12		17
Church Street 1	193	10		1
Church Street 2	117	6		1
Church Street 3	140	7		
Harryville	86	4		16
Town Centre (Multi-Storey)	840	42		32
<b>Ballymoney</b>				
Castle Street	126	6		
Church Street	90	5		5
<b>Coleraine</b>				
Abbey Street	182	9		3
Long Commons	137	7		2
Mall	223	11		
Railway Place	154	25		38
Railway Road	319	16	1	3
Waterside	205	10	1	20
<b>Larne</b>				
Agnew Street	92	5		
Circular Road West	128	6		
Fairhill	28	1		
Narrow Gauge Road	73	4		8
Riverdale East	86	4		
<b>Limavady</b>				
Central	155	8		18

<b>Car Park Name</b>	<b>Spaces</b>	<b>Number of Season Tickets Available</b>	<b>Monthly season tickets Number of Sales 31/3/12 to 11/3/13</b>	<b>Quarterly season tickets Number of Sales 31/3/12 to 11/3/13</b>
Connell Street	119	6		7
Main Street	71	3		
<b>Londonderry</b>				
Bishop Street	133	7		42
Carlisle Road	25	1		
Foyle Road (GNR Site)	88	8	1	7
Foyle Street	43	8		
Queens Quay	162	8		
Society Street	23	1		
Spencer Road	25	1		4
Strand Road	87	4		
Victoria Market	93	5		2
William Street	150	8		

It is most likely that season tickets are used by all-day parkers. However, it should be noted that a season ticket does not secure the availability of a parking space within the car-park.

The availability and turnover of parking spaces is ultimately in the best interests of town centre traders and shoppers. However, any request for an increase in relation to a specific car park will be considered by Roads Service officials taking into account current utilisation levels and uptake on season tickets.

### **Narrow Water Bridge Proposal**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Regional Development pursuant to AQW 19657/11-15 and in the context of the Narrow Water bridge proposal, if there are any jurisdictional issues which could impinge on the exercise of any powers by his Department under Article 4 of the Roads (NI) Order 1993 and how they might be addressed.

**(AQW 20779/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** An order under Article 4 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 may not have legal effect outside Northern Ireland. If that power were to be exercised, provision would be made in the order to make it clear that the order did not have that effect.

### **Bus Station Closures**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the bus stations that have been closed in each of the last five years; and (ii) the proposed bus station closures in each of the next two years.

**(AQW 20814/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Translink has advised me that the following bus stations have been closed within the last five years:

- Lisburn in 2008 (but replaced with a larger station providing a full range of passenger waiting facilities);

- Comber in 2012 (small passenger-waiting facility and bus parking); and
- a small satellite depot at Saintfield in July 2007 (no passenger facilities at this location, merely bus parking).

Translink have further advised that it has plans to close a bus parking facility at Donaghadee with a small unit for bus drivers/cleaners and a bus shelter for intending passengers. Translink has advised that the Area Manager responsible for Donaghadee was to meet with local DUP councillors in the area on Monday 25 March to discuss the matter further.

### **Footpaths on Main Street, Millisle**

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Regional Development what action will be taken to improve the footpaths on Main Street, Millisle.

**(AQW 20825/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's Roads Service inspects the footways on Main Street, Millisle on a monthly cyclical basis. Any defects requiring remedial action are recorded and programmed for repair on a prioritised basis, in accordance with Roads Service Maintenance Standards.

The most recent inspection at this location, undertaken on 14 March 2013, identified five recordable defects.

### **Capital Works Projects**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister for Regional Development what capital works projects are currently being considered by his Department.

**(AQW 20905/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Over the Budget period to 2015, investment in the Strategic Road Network is concentrated on the provision of dual carriageways on the A8 (Belfast – Larne), A2 (Shore Road, Greenisland) and A5 routes. Construction work commenced on the A8 in July 2012 and on the A2 in March 2013. Whilst preliminary works have been carried out on the A5, progression of the scheme is now the subject of a legal challenge.

Beyond 2015, the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-21 includes for construction of a number of high priority schemes on the M2, A6 and A26, as part of a £390 million package, funded through alternative finance, in the period 2015/16 to 2020/21. However, a commitment to fund the revenue consequences of this roads package will be required, and so the timing for such schemes will depend upon future resource budget settlements. In the event of alternative finance not being available, the schemes could be included, together with other priority schemes, in the bidding process for conventional capital funds, in the next Budget period.

In the meantime, development continues on a range of schemes listed in the Department's strategic road improvement programme (<http://www.drni.gov.uk/index/roadimprovements.htm>)

Roads Service plans to carry out an extensive range of capital schemes during the 2013/14 financial year. These schemes include carriageway resurfacing, surface dressing, footway resurfacing, drainage, Local Transport Safety Measure Schemes, street lighting, etc. However, as the detailed budget for the 2013/14 financial year has not yet been finalised, it is not possible to provide specific details of future works programmes at this time.

Similarly, beyond 2013/14, budgets have not been finalised and Roads Service is unable to provide a list of proposed schemes for that period.

However, information on completed and proposed road schemes can be found in Roads Service's Spring and Autumn Reports to Councils. These reports can be accessed from my Department's internet site at the following address:

<http://www.drdni.gov.uk/index/publications-details.htm?docid=8571> Over the next two financial years (2013/14 and 2014/15), subject to the availability of the necessary finance, Translink is currently either progressing or is considering the major capital projects listed below, that have a cost value greater than £5 million. It should be noted, however, that the following projects reflect current plans and may be subject to change:

**Projects currently being progressed:**

- Class 3000 Train Overhaul
- Coleraine to Derry~Londonderry Track Renewals - Phase 2
- Building Services Upgrade Programme
- New Generation Ticketing
- Belfast Transport Hub

**Projects currently being considered subject to budget:**

- Class 4000 Trains Overhaul
- Lisburn to Lurgan Track Rehabilitation
- Lisburn West – New Halt and Park and Ride
- Bus Replacement Programme

The following capital works projects are also being progressed:

**Belfast Rapid Transit** - this project is currently being progressed by the Department with a view to completion in 2017.

**Belfast on the Move** - this project is currently being progressed by the Department and is due to be completed by summer 2013.

**Park & Ride Programme** - the Department is currently preparing an implementation programme which will identify and prioritise the individual Park & Ride projects to be delivered in the period 2013/14-2014/15.

**Rathlin Ferry New Build** - this project is currently being prepared by the Department with a view to completion in 2015.

**Enforcement of Moving** - the initial phase is currently being prepared

**Vehicles in Bus Lanes** - this project is currently being progressed by the Department with a view to completion later in 2013.

**Transport Model** - the Department has recently initiated a project to construct and operate a computer transport model of Northern Ireland. It is currently expected that the model will be ready for use in approximately two years.

**Active Travel Demonstration Projects** – projects are underway in Derry and Craigavon with further projects planned for Belfast and Strabane. All projects are due for completion in 2015.

**Ecar Project** – this project is currently being progressed by the Department with a view to completion in 2013.

In addition, Northern Ireland Water (NIW) intends to award construction contracts relating to the following projects in the period April 2013 to March 2015:

- Castor Bay to Belfast - Strategic Link;
- Carrickfergus - Phase 3 Watermains Improvements;
- Drumbeg Drive, Lisburn – Wastewater Pumping Station (WWPS) Enhancement;

- 
- Donaghmore – Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTW) Upgrade;
  - Dromore, Tyrone - WWTW Feasibility Study;
  - McVeighs well to Old Park Service Reservoir (SR), Belfast - Gravity II Trunk Watermain;
  - Market Street, Downpatrick – WWPS Upgrade;
  - Bangor Drainage Area Plan (DAP) - Lukes Point WWPS - Upgrades to intermittent discharges (UIDs);
  - Nixons Corner, Londonderry - WWTW Feasibility Study;
  - Ballydougan to Newry - Main Link Reinforcement;
  - Stoneyford - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Panel Engineer Recommendations – East Phase 1 – Remedial Works to Impounding reservoirs;
  - Belfast - M1 Crossing Replacement;
  - Province Wide - Service Reservoir Enhanced Security Phase 2;
  - Ormeau Avenue, Belfast - Sewer investigation and feasibility study for pollution resolution;
  - County Down - Sewers Structural Rehabilitation Package 2;
  - Drumsurn – WWTW Upgrade;
  - Lisnarrick - WWTW Feasibility Study;
  - Ballintoy - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Province Wide - Watermains identified as priority 1 for replacement;
  - Hunter's Mill, Downpatrick - Storm Attenuation and Network Improvements;
  - Magheramason - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Ballymagorry - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Londonderry DAP - Buncrana Road Work Package;
  - Ballymartin & Blackrock - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Milltown, Killyneese & Portglenone - Sewers Structural Rehabilitation Package 1;
  - Armagh - DAP Stage 1;
  - Ballyhornan - Outfall Screen;
  - UWWTW MCERT compliance – Required Flow measurement by NIEA at Urban Wastewater Treatment Works for EC Compliance;
  - Panel Engineer Recommendations - North Phase 1 - Remedial Works to Impounding Reservoirs;
  - Ballysally, Coleraine – Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Works Package;
  - Clabby - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Base maintenance at water supply non-infra sites – Capital maintenance at Water Treatment Works (WTW), required to maintain standards;
  - Artigarvan - WWTW Feasibility Study;
  - Ards South, Portavogie, Ballyhalbert, Cloughey, Kirkistown – Wastewater treatment solutions;
  - 26 Ballyscullion Road, Bellaghy - Flood alleviation;
  - Dungiven - WWTW Inlet Sewer Hydraulic Assessment/Upgrade;
  - Green Road, Conlig - Storm Sewer Extension;
  - Blackcave Catchment, Larne - Networks Repairs;
  - Ballygally - Sewer Rehabilitation;
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- St Judes Gardens, Rostrevor - Flood Alleviation;
  - Waringfield - SPS Upgrade;
  - Killylane - WTW Upgrade/replacement;
  - Hollywood - Sewer Catchment Investigations;
  - Castlewellan Road, Newcastle - Sewerage Scheme;
  - Greyabbey WWTW - Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
  - Lylehill – Service Reservoir (SR) Rehabilitation;
  - Dernagh - WWPS Upgrade;
  - Blackwater Town - WWPS Upgrade;
  - Bog Road, Strabane - WWPS Upgrade;
  - Tamlaght Road WWPS, Omagh - Feasibility Study;
  - Province Wide - Capital Investment – Water Pumping Station (WPS) Pump Efficiency;
  - Crieve - SR upgrade and extension;
  - Armoy - WWTW Upgrade;
  - Erganagh - WWPS Replacement;
  - Westland Rd, Cookstown - SPS Upgrade;
  - River Road, Dunmurry - SPS Upgrade;
  - Hilltown - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
  - Bangor DAP - Works Package 5 - Clandeboye Stream UIDs – Remediation of intermittent discharges to local streams;
  - Carrickmore - WWPS Upgrade Including Replacement of Pumping Main;
  - Millisle - DAP Stage 2, Phase 2;
  - Tempo - WWTW Feasibility Study;
  - Tullynakill Road, Ardmillan - WWTW Feasibility Study;
  - Belfast - Preparation of redundant Storm Pumping Stations for disposal;
  - Ardnalvalley, Comber - Sewer Pumping Main Extension;
  - Roddens Crescent, Belfast - Sewer Upgrades;
  - Copeland Road, Comber - Tank Sewer;
  - Cornakinnegar Road, Lurgan - Foul and Storm Sewer Extension;
  - Strathfoyle - Sewerage Syphons Upgrade;
  - Roseville, Bangor - Removal of Screens and Installation of Solid Handling Pumps at WWPS;
  - Meadowbank Park / Reaville, Dundonald - Flood Alleviation;
  - Cargan - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
  - Carrowdore - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
  - Shore Road, Glynn, Larne - Storm Sewer and Foul Pumping Main Extension;
  - Millturn - WWPS Feasibility Study;
  - Kirkistown North – WWPS Refurbishment;
  - New Holland - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
  - Neilsbrook - WWPS Upgrade;
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- Drumglass Park, Lisburn Road, Belfast - Storm Separation;
- Moneymore - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Old Belfast Road, Bangor - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Cushendall Road, Ballymena - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Churchview, Armagh Road, Moy - WWPS Upgrade;
- Granville, Dungannon - Watermain Extension;
- Millbay - WWPS Flow Survey;
- Drumsough Road, Randalstown - Sewerage Scheme;
- Faughan Crescent, Londonderry - Pumping station and Pumping main upgrade;
- Martins Yard, Gilford - Pipe Bridge Condition Survey;
- Old Lotus Shoe Factory, Old Newry Road, Banbridge - Sewerage Scheme;
- Rosscooile Park, Newtownabbey - Foul and Storm Sewer Extension;
- Lapwing, Newtownards - Article 11 Enforcement Site;
- Edenvale Avenue, Carrickfergus - Sewer Replacement;
- Steps Road, Magheralin - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Province Wide - Metering and Treatment of WTW effluents;
- Donaghbrook, Ballymoney – Flood Alleviation;
- Ballyregan Road, Dundonald - Storm Sewer;
- Glynn - Relocation of Overflow Pipe at WWPS;
- Ballykine – SR Rehabilitation;
- North Coast - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Strangford - Sewer Network Salinity Reduction;
- Dundrum - DAP, UIDs Upgrades;
- Millbay - WWPS Flow Survey;
- Meadow Lane and Bann Street, Portadown - Drainage Area Network Improvements;
- Chambers Park, Omagh - WWPS Feasibility Study;
- Chapel Hill, Stewartstown, WWPS Inlet Screen Removal;
- Castlewellan - DAP Stage 1;
- Portaferry Road, Newtownards - WWPS Upgrade;
- Gortalowry Park, Cookstown - Sewer Network Misconnections;
- Annahilt - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- School Road, Forkhill - Storm Sewer Extension;
- 157a & 155 Groomsport Road, Bangor - Additional Studies – Flood Alleviation;
- Carnesure Park, Comber - Foul Sewer Replacement;
- Fernisky Road, Kells - Storm Sewer;
- Newmills Road, Coleraine - Storm Sewer Upgrade;
- Gransha Road, Bangor - Trunk Sewer replacement;
- Coney Island – Drainage Area Study (DAS);

- Dublin Road, Newry - Out of Sewer Flooding;
- Springfield Crescent, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Umry Lodge, Antrim – CSO;
- Craigmole Road, Maghera - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Longstone Road, Annalong - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Aikens Town Parks, Magherafelt - WWTW PH2 Base Maintenance;
- Monteith Road, Annaclone - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Belleek (Armagh) - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Stranocum - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Hallidays Road, Belfast - Storm Sewer;
- Mount Eagles, Lisburn - Foul Sewer;
- Glenmore, Lisburn - CSO Upgrade at WWPS;
- Gortinreid Bridge, Londonderry - Pumping Main Upgrade at WWPS;
- Edgewater, Lisburn - WWPS H&S Upgrade - Feasibility Study;
- Newtownards, Lisburn and Down - Base Maintenance at Multiple WWTW East IWWF <£100k;
- Movilla Street, Newtownards - Replacement Sewer;
- Main Street, Cloughy - Pumping main, Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Ballygudden Road, Eglinton – Sewer Extension;
- Brians Well Road, Poleglass - Foul Sewer Extension;
- North Road, Newtownards - Storm Sewer;
- Orchard, Annahilt - Feasibility Study at WWPS;
- Whitepark Road, Ballycastle - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Gortatray, Cookstown - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Longfield, Eglinton - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Curran Road, Larne - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Glenbrook Road, Newtownards - Storm Sewer Extension;
- High Street, Ardglass - Sewer Realignment;
- Donaghbrook, Ballymoney - Flood Alleviation;
- Ballysally, Coleraine – CSO Works Package;
- Dervock - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Milltown Road, Ballymoney - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Strand Road, Coleraine - Network Appraisal Study;
- Slievebann Drive, Belfast - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Devonshire Street, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Annvale, Armagh - SPS Upgrade and Feasibility Study;
- Nutts Corner Road, Crumlin - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Creevy Road, Lisburn - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Dromintee Primary School - Storm Sewer Extension;

- Cyprus Avenue, Belfast - Sewer Rehabilitation;
- Ballywalter - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Mill Rd, Newtownabbey - Foul and Storm Sewer;
- Downpatrick Street, Crossgar - Storm Sewer;
- Park Road, Belfast - Sewer Appraisal Study;
- Maloon, Cookstown - WWPS Access Improvements;
- 24-30 Redfort Drive, Carrickfergus - Flood Alleviation;
- Seaside Road, Killyleagh - Watermain Extension;
- Derry Road, Strabane – Sewer Extension;
- Flying Horse Road, Downpatrick - Sewer Extension;
- Cloughy - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Cornakinnegar Road, Lurgan - Water Main Extension;
- Waringfield, Moira - SPS Upgrade;
- Garland Avenue, Lurgan - Sewer Extension;
- Marine Apartments, Ballycastle – Watermain Extension;
- Lurganare, Newry - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- 4 Steeple Road, Antrim - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Blackcave Catchment, Larne - Networks Repairs;
- Milltown, Maghery - WWTW Phase 2 Base Maintenance;
- Strand Road, Coleraine - WWPS and Network Appraisal Study;
- Sandyknowes, Newtownabbey - WWPS Refurbishment;
- Flying Horse Road, Downpatrick - Sewer Extension;
- Hunters Mill, Annesborough Road, Lurgan - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Breagh Road, Portadown - Storm Sewer;
- Umry Lodge, Antrim – CSO;
- Whitepark Road, Ballycastle - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Churchview, Armagh Road, Moy - WWPS Upgrade;
- South Parade, Belfast – Flood Alleviation;
- Rashee Drive, Ballyclare - Storm Sewer Extension and Upgrade;
- Millmount, Randalstown – WWPS;
- Killyhevlin - WTW Feasibility Study;
- Coa Road, Enniskillen - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Kilmore - WWTW Feasibility;
- Province Wide - SR Assessments - Site Access;
- Villawood, Dromore - Sewage Scheme;
- Hatfield Street, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- South Circular Road, Bangor - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Park Parade, Ormeau Embankment, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;

- Desertcreat, Cookstown - System Upgrade for proposed Development;
- Connswater Community, Greenway - Desilting and Closed Circuit Television Survey;
- Annvale, Armagh - SPS Upgrade and Feasibility Study;
- Carran Hill / Creamery Road, Newry - Sewer Extension;
- Ravenhill Road, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- 35/37 Hawthornden Road, Belfast - Feasibility Study;
- Annalong - DAP and UIDs;
- Moybrick Road, Dromara - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Breagh Road, Portadown - Storm Sewer;
- Hillmount Crescent, Tobermore - Storm Sewer;
- Woodlawn Park, Dungannon - Storm and Foul Sewer;
- Main Street, Belcoo - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Dublin Road, Omagh - Storm Sewer;
- Ardmore Road, Armagh - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Desertcreat College, Cookstown - Foul Pumping Main Extension;
- Nettlehill Road, Lisburn - Storm Sewer;
- Lismourne Place, Strabane - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Lower Stanfield Street, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Annsfield Close, Killyleagh - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Dorisland WTW - Granular Activated Carbon Filters Feasibility Study;
- Pembroke Loop Road / Good Shepherd Road, Poleglass - Sewer Extensions;
- Glencam Road, Omagh - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Primacy Road, Bangor - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Garvagh School - WWPS Upgrade;
- Carrickaness Road, Benburb - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Magheraknock Road, Ballynahinch - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Meadowvale, Dublin Road, Newtownstewart - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Robinsonstown - WWTW Feasibility Study;
- Moneymore Road, Magherafelt - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- 131 Doagh Road, Ballyclare - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Dunmurry - Watermain Improvements;
- South Zone (Cookstown, Dungannon, Fermagh and Omagh) - Watermain Improvements;
- Ballyrobert Road, Ballyclare - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Glenavy Road, Crumlim - WWPS Site Investigation;
- Begny Hill, Dromara - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Bangor - DAP Work Package 2: Rathmore Stream UIDs;
- Bangor - DAP Work Package 4: Bangor Marina UIDs;
- Killuney Road, Armagh - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;

- Sevensprings, Ballyhampton Road, Larne - Storm Sewer;
- 187 West Circular Road, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- 25 Moor Road, Kilkeel - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Mountpleasant, Newtownards - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Enniskillen Road, Ballinamallard - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Mill Street / Bridge Street, Hilden, Lisburn - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Glenlough, Ballymoney - Pumping Station & Pumping Main;
- Stewarts Hill, Armagh - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Coolmillish Road / Green Road, Markethill - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Trewmount Road, Killyman, Dungannon - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Old Antrim Road, Ballymena - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Ballygassoon Road, Loughall - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Gracefield Road, Magherafelt - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Ballynahinch Road, Lisburn - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Birch Hill Road, Antrim - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Crebilly Road, Ballymena - Foul and Storm Sewer Extension;
- Willow Gardens, Dunmurry - Sewer Extension;
- Raby Street, Belfast - Sewer Alignment;
- Circular Road, Belfast - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Main Street, Bellaghy – Sewer extension for new development;
- Magheralave Road, Clonevan - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Lisburn - DAP Stage 1;
- Portadown - DAP Stage 2;
- Kilkeel - DAP Phase 1;
- Lake Street, Lurgan - Foul and Storm Sewer Extensions;
- Springfield Road, Portavogie - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Moneymore Road, Cookstown - Sewerage Scheme;
- Annadale Avenue, Belfast - Storm Sewer;
- Mersey Street, Belfast - Storm Sewer;
- Crossdened Row, Keady - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Campbell Terrace, Plumbridge - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Killyharry Road, Castlecaufield - Storm Replacement;
- Fintona Road, Clogher - Foul Pumping Main Extension;
- Castlefin Road, Castledearg - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Ballycastle - WWTW Upgrade and replacement;
- Fincairn Road, Drumahoe - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Newry Road, Mayobridge - Storm Foul Sewer Extension;
- Rostrevor Road, Hilltown - Storm Sewer Extension;

- Cloncarrish Road, Birches - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Scarva Road, Loughbrickland - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Telephone Exchange/Flax Mill, Sion Mills - Foul Sewer Extension;
- Monaghan Street, Newry - Sewerage System Investigation;
- Art Road, Artigarvan - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Birches Road to Cloncarrish Road, Craigavon - Sewer Extension;
- McKeown Street, Lisburn - Environmental Improvements;
- Strawhill, Donaghcloney - Storm Sewer Extension;
- Ballywalter Road, Millisle - Storm Sewer Extension; and
- The Castle, Dungiven – Storm Sewer Extension for new development adjacent to the Castle.

This list may change as priorities or funding allocation may change in year. NIW is unable to forecast projects beyond March 2015, as this is the start of a new Price Control Period (PC15). This period is outside the current business plan period and the programmes and projects have yet to be agreed with a wide range of stakeholders including DRD, NIEA and DWI.

### **Access to the Comber Greenway at Ballyrainey Road**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps are being taken to address the problems with access to the Comber Greenway at Ballyrainey Road following the construction of a bridge.

**(AQW 20915/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I would refer the Member to my answer to her Assembly Question, AQW 18795/11-15.

### **Portaferry Road/Shore Road/Rowreagh Road**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration has been given to introducing overtaking lanes on the Portaferry Road/Shore Road/Rowreagh Road along the Ards Peninsula to improve road safety.

**(AQW 20916/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Unfortunately, the sinuous and restricted nature of the main Newtownards to Portaferry Road and its relative position to Strangford Lough restricts the options for carrying out any significant realignment or road widening to provide suitable overtaking stretches along this route.

However, my Department's Roads Service has completed a number of safety improvements schemes on this main route from Newtownards to Portaferry, the most recent being a junction sightline improvement scheme completed during 2011 at Rowreagh Road/Gransha Road, outside Kircubbin. It is hoped that a further sightline improvement scheme, for the A20 Rowreagh Road/Rubane Road, will commence during the 2013/14 financial year, subject to the availability of funding and successful acquisition of lands required for the scheme.

Roads Service officials continually monitor and inspect this route, in conjunction with the PSNI Road Policing Unit, and implement additional traffic management measures to enhance road safety, in so far as funding pressures and physical constraints permit.

### **Portaferry Road/Shore Road/Rowreagh Road**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister for Regional Development what consideration has been given to the introduction of no overtaking zones with associated signage, on the Portaferry Road/Shore Road/Rowreagh Road along the Ards Peninsula to improve road safety.

**(AQW 20917/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Unfortunately, the sinuous and restricted nature of the main Newtownards to Portaferry Road and its relative position to Strangford Lough, generally restricts overtaking opportunities along this route. As a result, my Department's Roads Service has placed appropriate warning signs and road markings to highlight the hazards along this route. On the basis of the measures already provided and in light of the physical constraints affecting the route, Roads Service currently is not intending to introduce formal no overtaking zones through the use of double white lines and associated signage.

However, Roads Service officials will continue to monitor and inspect this route, in conjunction with the PSNI Road Policing Unit, and implement additional traffic management measures to promote Roads Safety where it would be appropriate to do so.

As you will also appreciate, it is incumbent upon motorists using this route to drive with due care and attention and show respect and consideration to other road users whilst taking into account the prevailing road and weather conditions.

If the Member has specific concerns that she would like to raise with Roads Service Officials, I would be grateful if she would contact Roads Service Southern Division at Rathkeltair House, Downpatrick.

### **Budget for Motorway Resurfacing**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the budget available for motorway resurfacing in the financial year 2013/14.

**(AQW 20938/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The total budget for motorway resurfacing during the financial year 2013/14 is yet to be finalised but is estimated to be in the region of £1.5 million. This includes those sections of motorway maintained by the DBFO Companies, on behalf of Roads Service, as well as those sections maintained by Roads Service directly.

### **Senior Citizens Entitled to Free Transport**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development what has been the change in the number of journeys taken on public transport by senior citizens entitled to free transport between 2002 and 2012.

**(AQW 20968/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The table below details the relevant statistics from April 2003 to April 2012. These have been provided by Translink:

	<b>Journeys</b>	<b>Increase/Decrease on Previous Year</b>
2003/04	7,477,619	N/A
2004/05	7,633,437	2.1%
2005/06	7,585,338	-0.6%
2006/07	7,720,354	1.8%
2007/08	8,213,819	6.4%
2008/09	8,537,686	3.9%
2009/10	8,537,628	0.0%
2010/11	8,511,246	-0.3%
2011/12	8,701,595	2.2%

The overall percentage rise from 2003/04 to 2011/12 is 16.4%.

Senior citizens is defined as those over the age of 65.

## **DRD: Finances**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development how much he expects his Department to return at the end of the current financial year.

**(AQW 20976/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department has a good track record in managing its budget, and had excellent results last year (2011-12) when total underspend was just 0.1% of the Department's total resource and capital. While the actual position for the current financial year will not emerge until May, I expect a similar level of performance will be achieved for all areas outside the A5, where specific budget flexibilities have been agreed.

## **Pumping Stations in North Down**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development which pumping stations in the North Down constituency will be adopted in the next six months.

**(AQW 21020/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that since the adoption process for sewerage systems is developer driven, it is unable to identify or predict which pumping stations in the North Down constituency will be adopted in the next six months.

NIW continues to work with my Department's Roads Service to take forward several enforcement actions involving the adoption of pumping stations in developments, but it can take time to liaise with developer's successors and assignees, identify options, agree solutions and arrange for completion of the work required to bring sewerage systems to an adoptable standard. For these reasons it is difficult to provide a timescale for this work or to predict if pumping stations will be adopted within the next six months. Inspections are on-going at several development sites which may eventually result in a number of pumping station adoptions within the North Down constituency.

## **Transgender Community**

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked Minister for Regional Development, in terms of its legal obligation under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, how his Department consults with the transgender community.

**(AQW 21065/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department consults with the transgender community in accordance with the commitments and procedures set out in its Equality Scheme 2011 – 2016.

Chapter 3 of the Department's Equality Scheme sets out our arrangements for consulting on matters likely to be relevant to the Section 75 duties including the likely impacts of proposed policies on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.

As part of the development of policies my officials consult with a wide range of Section 75 groups. Appendix 3 of the Equality Scheme lists the Section 75 groups which are notified of consultations, including equality screening exercises, as a matter of course. It contains a range of groups representative of the transgender community. All consultations are published on the Department's website.

In addition, targeted consultations are carried out with relevant groups which might have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and for which the matter /policy may be of particular relevance.

Selected Section 75 groups are also invited to annual meetings of the Department's Equality Forum. A group representative of the transgender community is included in the invitation list.

## NI Water Pumping Station

**Ms P Bradley** asked the Minister for Regional Development how frequently screens should be cleaned at NI Water pumping stations.

**(AQW 21086/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that screens at all of its pumping stations are cleaned at least once a month in dry weather conditions and more frequently, if required, during wet weather. Frequency can also be affected by the type of screen, history of station performance and/or make up of incoming flow.

## NI Water Pumping Station

**Ms P Bradley** asked the Minister for Regional Development how frequently screens are cleaned at the NI Water pumping station at Sandyknowes, Newtownabbey.

**(AQW 21087/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that the screens at Sandyknowes Wastewater Pumping Station are cleaned a minimum of once a month in dry conditions and more frequently, as required, during wet weather. The Pumping Station has operated well with no major operational issues being encountered since new pumps were fitted in September 2011.

## Narrow Water Bridge Project

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the reasons for delaying the Bridge Order for the Narrow Water Bridge project, which is required for the project to remain on schedule, given that the Bridge Order by Louth County Council has already been approved.

**(AQW 21112/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** With regard to the processing of the Bridge Order, I would refer the Member to my answer to her Assembly Question, AQW 21325/11-15.

I can assure the Member that there is no delay on the part of my Department and every effort is being made to progress these necessary Orders. With regard to the Member's reference to Louth County Council already having a Bridge Order in place, I should explain that Louth County Council only requires the consent of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, which has been granted, whereas in Northern Ireland the construction of a bridge over navigable waters requires appropriate legislation.

The timescales will inevitably be different given the significant differences between the processes adopted within the respective jurisdictions.

## Narrow Water Bridge Project

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will ensure that his Department expedites the processing of a Bridge Order to allow the Narrow Water Bridge project to remain on schedule.

**(AQW 21325/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I can confirm that in order to facilitate the Narrow Water Bridge Project, my Department's Roads Service personnel are working closely with representatives from Louth County Council and their technical advisors, to prepare the necessary documents, including drawings that are required for both a Bridge Order and a Diversion & Extinguishment Order under Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993.

Unfortunately, while working draft documents, including drawings referred to in the draft Orders, have been prepared, these are now being redrafted to take account of late changes to the vessel protection system being provided in association with this bridge. Roads Service was advised of these changes at a recent meeting with representatives from Louth County Council and their technical advisors, which took

place on 12 March 2013. On 20 March 2013, officials received revised drawings from Louth County Council's technical advisers and these are currently with Departmental Solicitor's Office for clearance.

I can assure the Member that there is no delay on the part of my Department and every effort is being made to progress these necessary Orders. It is currently estimated that the Bridge Orders will be drafted and ready for publication by mid-April. When ready, the Draft Orders will have to be advertised on two successive weeks and following this, a statutory consultation period of at least 30 days is required. If no objections are received, the Orders could be made towards the end of June or early July. However, if objections are received, I will have to consider whether a Public Inquiry is required.

## Department for Social Development

### Benefit Appeals Tribunals

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he will consider permitting formal note-taking to be carried out at benefit appeals tribunals, to ensure that there is an accurate recording of proceedings, particularly to assist in instances post-hearing when a complaint has been submitted as to the conduct of a panel member.

**(AQW 20632/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** There is legislative provision for formal note taking in benefit appeal tribunals to support the decision making process. Regulation 55(1) of The Social Security and Child Support (Decisions and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999 stipulates that a record of the proceedings at an oral hearing, which is sufficient to indicate the evidence taken, shall be made by the Chairman or a member sitting alone in an appeal tribunal in such medium that he may determine. Currently the practice is for a hand written note to be taken. Parties to the proceedings may take a note of the hearing with the permission of the Tribunal.

The Appeal Tribunal panel members are judicial office holders and independent of Government. The operation of tribunals, including matters relating to the conduct of panel members, is the responsibility of the President of Appeal Tribunals, Mr Conall MacLynn who can be contacted at the Office of the President of Appeal Tribunals, 6th Floor, Cleaver House, 3 Donegall Square North, Belfast, BT1 5GA.

### One Bedroom Properties

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many one bedroom properties there are in each constituency.

**(AQW 20680/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, the Housing Executive has advised that the number of their one bedroom dwellings (including bedsits) by District Office area is as follows:

District Office Area	1 Bed	Bedsit	Total
Antrim	375		375
Armagh	239		239
Ballycastle	109		109
Ballymena	373	1	374
Ballymoney	81	2	83
Banbridge	260	18	278
Bangor	498	0	498

<b>District Office Area</b>	<b>1 Bed</b>	<b>Bedsit</b>	<b>Total</b>
Carrickfergus	340	7	347
Castlereagh	630	52	682
Coleraine	303	7	310
Collon Terrace	201	0	201
Cookstown	42	0	42
Downpatrick	326	0	326
Dungannon	198	0	198
East Belfast	287	22	309
Fermanagh	127	3	130
Larne	280	0	280
Limavady	172	0	172
Lisburn Antrim Street	657	5	662
Lisburn Dairy Farm	207	0	207
Lurgan Brownlow	356	51	407
Magherafelt	32	0	32
Newry	487	8	495
Newtownabbey 1	372	39	411
Newtownabbey 2	475	0	475
Newtownards	472	1	473
North Belfast	531	2	533
Omagh	180	0	180
Portadown	301	10	311
Shankill	238	0	238
South Belfast	327	20	347
Strabane	112	0	112
Waterloo Place	349	16	365
Waterside	176	0	176
West Belfast	483	52	535
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10,596</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>10,912</b>

The majority of Housing Associations have advised that they hold a total of 1,316 one bedroom properties across their stock by constituency as follows:

<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Number of one- bed properties</b>
Belfast East	135
Belfast North	161

<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Number of one- bed properties</b>
Belfast South	277
Belfast West	88
East Londonderry	24
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	0
Foyle	315
Lagan Valley	2
Mid-Ulster	13
Newry & Armagh	79
North Antrim	9
East Antrim	88
South Antrim	0
North Down	22
South Down	1
Strangford	30
Upper Bann	72
West Tyrone	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,316</b>

Three Housing Associations could not provide details of their one bed stock by Parliamentary Constituency and instead provided the information by District Council area:

<b>Council area</b>	<b>Number of one- bed properties</b>
Antrim	44
Armagh	0
Ballymena	76
Ballymoney	23
Banbridge	32
Belfast	1046
Carrickfergus	52
Castlereagh	58
Coleraine	122
Cookstown	28
Craigavon	95
Londonderry	40
Down	7
Dungannon	85

<b>Council area</b>	<b>Number of one- bed properties</b>
Fermanagh	29
Larne	43
Limavady	0
Lisburn	180
Magherafelt	37
Moyle	27
Newry & Mourne	1
Newtownabbey	57
Newtownards	50
North Down	51
Omagh	10
Strabane	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>2236</b>

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### **Boiler Replacement Scheme**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been spent on the administration of the Boiler Replacement Scheme to date.

**(AQW 20789/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** To date £850,000 in staff costs (7 offices across the province and headquarters staff in Belfast) are attributable to the Boiler Replacement Scheme.

From a start up position in September the following has been achieved;

- 30,000 enquiries received and processed,
- 27,500 application forms issued,
- 12,800 application forms received and processed, including checking of income and home ownership,
- 12,500 installer forms issued,
- 7,200 installer forms received and processed,
- 6,500 formal approvals for boiler replacements issued,
- 2,500 completions received,
- 1,500 payments made.

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## Boiler Replacement Scheme

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how much has been allocated for the Boiler Replacement Scheme; and how much has been spent on the scheme to date.

**(AQW 20790/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The boiler replacement scheme was launched in September 2012 and the funding allocation for this year is £4m with a further £4m allocated for each of the following two years in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015.

Up to the 15th March 2013;

- 6,500 formal approvals issued equating to £4.55m budget spend when the applicants complete the works (applicants are allowed 3 month to complete)
- 2,500 cases confirmed as actually complete (although some are waiting for Building Control confirmation) equating to £1.75m budget spend.
- £1.10m of the budget has actually been paid out to date

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## Donaghadee Public Realms

**Mr Easton** asked the Minister for Social Development what is the timetable for the commencement of the Donaghadee Public Realms work.

**(AQW 20800/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Ards Borough Council is in the process of running a competition to appoint an Integrated Consultancy Team to prepare the concept design and economic appraisal for a public realm scheme in Donaghadee. The Integrated Consultancy Team is due to be appointed in April 2013 and it will take them in the region of 5 months to complete this work and send the economic appraisal to DSD for consideration. The public realm works will commence in August 2014, subject to funding being available and all necessary approvals being in place.

## New Build Social Housing

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister for Social Development how many new build social housing apartments, houses or flats will be provided in the (i) Ballymena; (ii) Ballymoney; and (iii) Moyle council areas, during the next three years.

**(AQW 20822/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested in relation to a breakdown of apartments, houses or flats. However, the Housing Executive has advised that the Social Housing Development Programme for 2013/14 – 2015/16 in respect of the District Council areas is as follows:

-

Year	Ballymena	Ballymoney	Moyle
2013/14	10	0	33
2014/15	82	0	42
2015/16	30	3	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>89</b>

Details of the Social Housing Development Programme (which has various search facilities including by District Council) are available at: -

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/housing\\_need.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/housing_need.htm)

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## Atos Healthcare Staff

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the procedure for submitting a complaint against Atos Healthcare staff, in relation to medical assessments which return inaccurate information, particularly on people who are assessed as fit for work having scored 0 points, but who have this score overturned on either review or appeal.

**(AQW 20824/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Atos Healthcare undertake medical examinations using information and evidence provided by the claimant. Decisions on benefit entitlement are made by Social Security Agency decision makers, using all available information including any medical advice provided by Atos Healthcare.

If claimants are not content with the decision they have the right to ask for a reconsideration and/or appeal of the benefit decision. These rights are explained to claimants in their benefit decision notification.

A claimant can make a complaint on any matter to either the Atos Healthcare Customer Relations Team or the Social Security Agency, by telephone, in writing or by e-mail. Atos Healthcare is responsible for responding to complaints regarding dissatisfaction about their staff or medical assessments that have been carried out whereas the Social Security Agency is responsible for responding to complaints regarding the decision making process or for providing advice on benefit specific matters.

The Social Security Agency's Health Assessment Advisor independently monitors the quality of Atos Healthcare's work to ensure that medical assessments are carried out in line with professional medical standards and to an acceptable quality standard.

## Replacement Boilers and Double-Glazing

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister for Social Development how many replacement (i) boilers; and (ii) double-glazing units have been (a) granted; and (b) completed in Upper Bann, in the last twelve months.  
**(AQW 20832/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, they advise that since the introduction of the Boiler Replacement Scheme in September 2012 there have been 189 replacement boilers granted across the Craigavon and Banbridge District Council area. With regard to double glazing, three schemes were started in 2012/13 in Craigavon District Council area for a total of 678 dwellings, of which there have been 520 completions; no double glazing schemes were started in the Banbridge District Council area.

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## Emigration

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department will factor emigration into its budgetary considerations.

**(AQW 20836/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department's main business areas are social security (including child maintenance & enforcement), housing and urban regeneration/community development. As advised in my response to the Member's similar Question last month, emigration potentially reduces the demand for these services, so it is not something factored into departmental budgetary considerations.

## Warm Homes Scheme

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have (i) applied to the Warm Homes Scheme; and (ii) had assistance from the scheme, in the past three years, broken down by constituency.

**(AQW 20861/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive who manages the scheme does not collate data by parliamentary constituency but by District Council.

Table 1 details the total number of eligible applications by year from 1 April 2010 to 28 February 2013 which is the latest date for which information is available.

Table 2 details only the number of works completed by District Council area as this is the only data collated.

**TABLE 1**

	<b>1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011</b>	<b>1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012</b>	<b>1 April 2012 to 28 February 2013</b>	<b>Total</b>
Eligible Applications	16,803	17,189	13,173	47,165

**TABLE 2**

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011</b>	<b>1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012</b>	<b>1 April 2012 to 28 February 2013</b>	<b>Total Measures</b>
Antrim	200	279	210	689
Ards	313	312	228	853
Armagh	365	411	349	1,125
Ballymena	292	367	293	952
Ballymoney	131	149	146	426
Banbridge	252	270	240	762
Belfast	1,166	1,043	850	3,059
Carrickfergus	211	185	161	557
Castlereagh	264	247	141	652
Coleraine	319	339	284	942
Cookstown	430	287	237	954
Craigavon	586	702	453	1,741
Londonderry	819	918	1,017	2,754
Down	307	409	328	1,044
Dungannon	414	417	318	1,149
Fermanagh	477	608	449	1,534
Larne	194	131	158	483
Limavady	297	367	256	920

<b>Council Area</b>	<b>1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011</b>	<b>1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012</b>	<b>1 April 2012 to 28 February 2013</b>	<b>Total Measures</b>
Lisburn	571	436	339	1,346
Magherafelt	303	261	221	785
Moyle	118	101	91	310
Newry&Mourne	595	682	456	1,733
Newtownabbey	419	434	293	1,146
North Down	319	329	212	860
Omagh	496	590	385	1,471
Strabane	511	377	314	1,202
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,369</b>	<b>10,651</b>	<b>8,429</b>	<b>29,449</b>

During this time there was 47,165 eligible applications to the Warm Homes Scheme, this does not necessarily mean that all of these homes go on to have works completed. Each home is subject to an initial survey visit, upon investigation some applicants will not proceed for the following reasons:

- Further investigation revealing that the householder is not actually in receipt of the prescribed benefit required to fit the criteria.
- Unable to obtain landlord permission to carry out work to the property
- Once the survey has been carried out it may reveal that the home does not need any additional measures
- The householder decides to opt out of the scheme due to the potential disruption the work may cause

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### **Homeless People in County Fermanagh**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of people in County Fermanagh are currently registered as homeless.

**(AQW 20862/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive advises that as at 28 February 2013, a total of 341 households had presented as homeless within the current financial year to their Fermanagh District Office, of which 76 households have been accepted as homeless and are awaiting rehousing.

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.

### **Temporary Accommodation in County Fermanagh**

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of temporary accommodation (i) premises; and (ii) bedspaces in County Fermanagh; and what is the current waiting time for temporary accommodation in County Fermanagh.

**(AQW 20863/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive advises that it has 32 single let temporary accommodation properties in Fermanagh totalling 104 bedspaces. There are also 11 units of self contained supported

temporary accommodation at Castle Erne which total 39 bedspaces. The Housing Executive has access to a range of shared bed and breakfast type accommodation across County Fermanagh, but it is not possible to quantify the amount as access is subject to availability. This type of accommodation is generally used as crisis accommodation pending availability of self contained/single let accommodation. There is currently no waiting time for temporary accommodation in County Fermanagh.

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### Housing Waiting List

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of people on the housing waiting list in County Fermanagh, broken down by electoral ward.

**(AQW 20864/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by electoral ward. However, the table below provides detail of the Social Housing Waiting list for the Housing Executive's Fermanagh District Office as at 1 March 2013.

	<b>Total</b>
Waiting List	867
Housing Stress	306

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### Temporary Housing Accommodation in County Fermanagh

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Development what plans are in place to increase temporary housing accommodation in County Fermanagh.

**(AQW 20865/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive advises that they review the level of temporary accommodation required at least once a year. A review of the Homeless Action Plan is also due to take place in 2013/14. The Housing Executive advises that there is currently sufficient level of temporary accommodation in County Fermanagh.

### Housing Executive Waiting List

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the average number of people who were on the Housing Executive waiting list in North Down, in each of the last five years; and how many of these people were classed as priority.

**(AQW 20899/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, the Housing Executive has provided details of the waiting list, including the numbers in Housing Stress, in its Bangor District Office for the last five financial years and the current year (at 1 March 2013) as set out in the table below: -

<b>Position at:-</b>	<b>Total Applicants</b>	<b>Applicants in Housing Stress (30 points or more)</b>
31 March 2008	1913	1011
31 March 2009	1930	1006
31 March 2010	1885	958

<b>Position at:-</b>	<b>Total Applicants</b>	<b>Applicants in Housing Stress (30 points or more)</b>
31 March 2011	1323	748
31 March 2012	2197	1081
1 March 2013	2406	1194

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### **Under-Occupancy Tax**

**Mr Clarke** asked the Minister for Social Development when the under-occupancy tax will be introduced. **(AQW 20910/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Under the Housing Benefit reforms contained within the Welfare Reform Bill, which is currently being considered by the Northern Ireland Assembly, a size criteria restriction is proposed for working age claimants under-occupying in the social rented sector. At present claimants living in that sector generally have no restriction placed on the size of accommodation they occupy, and the amount of Housing Benefit to which they are entitled. The change would bring the social rented sector more into line with the approach already in place in the private rented sector, where the rate of Housing Benefit is related to the size of dwelling the claimant needs.

While I am supportive of the need to reform our existing benefit system to ensure that it supports people back into work and offers help to those who are genuinely in need of assistance, I am also very aware of the concerns people have about the size criteria restriction and the need to protect the vulnerable in our society. As a result I have raised this specific issue with Lord Freud and am in continuing discussion with him and DWP.

I cannot therefore advise on any introduction date until these discussions and those around welfare reform in general are finalised.

### **People with a Disability living in Poverty**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development how his Department will assess the impact that welfare reform will have on the number of people with a disability who are living in poverty. **(AQW 20929/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Whilst my Department does not hold information on the number of people with a disability who are living in poverty, work is ongoing to assess the impact of the proposed changes on all vulnerable groups, including those with a disability. The outcome of this work will inform actions to ensure the appropriate support mechanisms are in place.

An Executive Sub Committee was set up to consider all the proposals under Welfare Reform and develop an Executive response to mitigate any negative impacts and achieve long term benefits for the people of Northern Ireland.

The Social Security Agency continues to actively engage with a wide range of disability organisations and the advice sector on a regular basis. This ensures the needs of disabled customers are represented in shaping and influencing how Welfare Reform is implemented in Northern Ireland to best meet the needs of local people, including those with disabilities.

### **Co-Ownership Schemes**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) number; and (ii) location of co-ownership schemes. **(AQW 20931/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Affordable homes delivered through Co-Ownership are demand led and therefore the locations of homes supported by the scheme are dictated by applicants to the scheme.

The number of homes purchased through the scheme with a breakdown by location (Council area) up to 28 February 2013 is outlined in the first table below. In the second table the figures as at 31 March 2012 allows comparison which therefore enables activity during the course of the 11 months to be determined.

**CO-OWNERSHIP HOMES: DISTRIBUTION BY COUNCIL AREA**

<b>At 28 February 2013</b>		<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Homes Currently Owned Through Co-Ownership</b>
<b>Council Area</b>		<b>Purchases</b>	<b>Sales</b>	
1	Londonderry City Council	1296	1016	280
2	Limavady Borough Council	402	326	76
3	Coleraine Borough Council	1183	983	200
4	Ballymoney Borough Council	331	247	84
5	Moyle District Council	114	96	18
6	Larne Borough Council	321	231	90
7	Ballymena Borough Council	525	362	163
8	Magherafelt District Council	419	362	57
9	Cookstown District Council	376	296	80
10	Strabane District Council	224	171	53
11	Omagh District Council	318	270	48
12	Fermanagh District Council	295	251	44
13	Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	229	158	71
14	Craigavon Borough Council	1559	1099	460
15	Armagh City and District Council	292	245	47
16	Newry and Mourne District Council	572	424	148
17	Banbridge District Council	436	306	130
18	Down District Council	823	653	170
19	Lisburn City Council	2132	1451	681
20	Antrim Borough Council	672	455	217
21	Newtownabbey Borough Council	1635	1134	501
22	Carrickfergus Borough Council	1033	848	185
23	North Down Borough Council	2676	2089	587
24	Ards Borough Council	1382	1027	355
25	Castlereagh Borough Council	953	686	267

<b>At 28 February 2013</b>		<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Homes Currently Owned Through Co-Ownership</b>
<b>Council Area</b>		<b>Purchases</b>	<b>Sales</b>	
26	Belfast City Council	2686	1819	867
		<b>22884</b>	<b>17005</b>	<b>5879</b>

**Notes:** All figures as at 28 February 2013 (11 months)

#### **CO-OWNERSHIP HOMES: DISTRIBUTION BY COUNCIL AREA**

<b>At 31 March 2012</b>		<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Homes Owned Through Co-Ownership @ 31 03 12</b>
<b>Council Area</b>		<b>Purchases</b>	<b>Sales</b>	
1	Londonderry City Council	1261	1000	261
2	Limavady Borough Council	389	324	65
3	Coleraine Borough Council	1171	977	194
4	Ballymoney Borough Council	321	245	76
6	Larne Borough Council	309	228	81
7	Ballymena Borough Council	500	359	141
8	Magherafelt District Council	416	362	54
9	Cookstown District Council	368	296	72
10	Strabane District Council	220	171	49
11	Omagh District Council	316	269	47
12	Fermanagh District Council	294	249	45
13	Dungannon & South Tyrone Borough Council	210	157	53
14	Craigavon Borough Council	1495	1092	403
15	Armagh City and District Council	288	245	43
16	Newry and Mourne District Council	546	424	122
17	Banbridge District Council	419	300	119
18	Down District Council	802	653	149
19	Lisburn City Council	2004	1438	566
20	Antrim Borough Council	624	452	172
21	Newtownabbey Borough Council	1565	1126	439
22	Carrickfergus Borough Council	1018	839	179
23	North Down Borough Council	2604	2073	531
24	Ards Borough Council	1347	1008	339
25	Castlereagh Borough Council	917	684	233

<b>At 31 March 2012</b>		<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Cumulative Property</b>	<b>Homes Owned Through Co- Ownership @ 31 03 12</b>
<b>Council Area</b>		<b>Purchases</b>	<b>Sales</b>	
26	Belfast City Council	2568	1797	771
		<b>22084</b>	<b>16864</b>	<b>5220</b>

**Notes:** All figures as at 31 March 2012

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### **Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Housing Association Tenants**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of (i) Northern Ireland Housing Executive tenants; and (ii) Housing Association tenants that are in (a) rent arrears; and (b) receipt of housing benefit.

**(AQW 20932/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive advises that as at 28 February 2013, there were 23,177 Housing Executive tenants in rent arrears; 12,111 of these were also in receipt of Housing Benefit. The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations has advised that as at November 2012, there were 24,448 Housing Association tenants who receive Housing Benefit, of which 3,185 are in rent arrears.

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### **External Cyclical Maintenance Schemes**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Social Development how many External Cyclical Maintenance schemes are under way, or are planned, for the installation of timber frame double glazing units in social housing.

**(AQW 20947/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has advised that timber framed double glazing was installed in 295 of their properties during 2012/13. With regard to future planned double glazing schemes, the Housing Executive has advised that the type of frame (uPVC or timber) to be used can only be determined for each property after a pre-scheme survey is carried out to consider factors such as value for money and the existing frames in the property. Pre-scheme surveys do not take place until the scheme is on site.

### **Hostel Accommodation Places in North Down**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development what is the total number of hostel accommodation places in North Down.

**(AQW 20961/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, the Housing Executive has advised that there are 38 hostel places within their Bangor District Office area.

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## Housing Executive Properties in North Down

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development what was the average number of vacant Housing Executive properties in North Down, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 20962/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, they have provided details regarding their vacant properties for their Bangor District Office area: -

Position at: -	Vacant Properties
28 February 2013	68
31 March 2012	59
31 March 2011	63
31 March 2010	94
31 March 2009	168
31 March 2008	199

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## Under Occupancy Tax

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Social Development, in light of the announcement by the Department of Work and Pensions on Tuesday 12 March 2013 on exemptions from the under occupancy tax in the Welfare Reform proposals, how many households are likely to benefit.

**(AQW 20965/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I have noted and indeed I welcome Iain Duncan Smith's Written Ministerial Statement of 12 March 2013. I am conscious that the 'parity' principle effectively dictates that an individual in Northern Ireland should receive the same level of social security benefit; subject to the same conditions as an individual elsewhere in GB and I would therefore expect that claimants here would be afforded the same flexibilities as those elsewhere in GB. However, I will consider the implications for Northern Ireland of any policy changes in full before making decisions with regard to this provision.

I have asked my Officials to ascertain the number of households potentially affected in the event that similar exemptions were to be introduced here.

## Benefits

**Mr Gardiner** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 18254/11-15, to detail the cost differential accrued through the reduction in the benefits paid to 22,750 claimants compared to the increase in benefits payable to 26,480 claimants for claims made between June/July 2012 and December 2012.

**(AQW 21052/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The analysis below has been based on claims that were live in June/July 2012 and were still active in December 2012.

A claimant can claim more than one benefit and therefore the figures below may include multiple separate claims for one claimant. In addition, the amount paid by way of an income based benefit may reduce because of the award of, or increase in another benefit

Of the 898,370 claims that remained active during the period set out above:

- (i) 22,750 benefit claims were reduced by the total value of £842,887.
- (ii) 26,480 benefit claims were increased by the total value of £920,861.

The table below shows the cost differential of benefit claims that were reduced or increased in each Local Government District.

<b>Local Government District</b>	<b>Cost differential through reduction in benefit</b>	<b>Cost differential through increase in benefit</b>	<b>Net Cost differential</b>
Antrim	-£21,242	£21,778	£536
Ards	-£30,033	£35,630	£5,597
Armagh	-£26,035	£24,747	-£1,288
Ballymena	-£26,583	£26,659	£75
Ballymoney	-£14,007	£13,619	-£389
Banbridge	-£20,023	£21,015	£992
Belfast	-£165,027	£183,519	£18,492
Carrickfergus	-£14,578	£16,324	£1,745
Castlereagh	-£20,796	£27,266	£6,470
Coleraine	-£26,138	£29,436	£3,298
Cookstown	-£16,797	£19,539	£2,743
Craigavon	-£44,782	£46,532	£1,749
Londonderry	-£60,487	£67,339	£6,852
Down	-£33,768	£37,353	£3,585
Dungannon	-£30,311	£30,577	£266
Fermanagh	-£25,222	£31,707	£6,485
Larne	-£12,233	£15,876	£3,644
Limavady	-£18,164	£19,725	£1,561
Lisburn	-£46,736	£50,898	£4,162
Magherafelt	-£17,218	£17,674	£456
Moyle	-£7,319	£8,659	£1,341
Newry And Mourne	-£50,809	£50,702	-£106
Newtownabbey	-£27,125	£36,435	£9,310
North Down	-£28,465	£29,190	£724
Omagh	-£26,244	£30,417	£4,173
Strabane	-£26,198	£23,864	-£2,335
Unknown	-£6,547	£4,384	-£2,163
<b>Total</b>	<b>-£842,887</b>	<b>£920,861</b>	<b>£77,975</b>

The table below shows the cost differential of benefit claims that were increased in each Parliamentary Constituency.

<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Cost differential through reduction in benefit</b>	<b>Cost differential through increase in benefit</b>	<b>Net Cost differential</b>
Belfast East	-£39,001	£41,810	£2,809
Belfast North	-£63,473	£74,285	£10,812
Belfast South	-£39,337	£48,521	£9,185
Belfast West	-£72,337	£77,600	£5,262
East Antrim	-£32,389	£38,771	£6,381
East Londonderry	-£47,171	£51,950	£4,778
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	-£44,728	£50,760	£6,033
Foyle	-£57,617	£64,550	£6,933
Lagan Valley	-£33,529	£37,102	£3,572
Mid Ulster	-£44,820	£48,736	£3,916
Newry And Armagh	-£58,008	£54,166	-£3,842
North Antrim	-£46,157	£47,429	£1,271
North Down	-£32,839	£34,618	£1,779
South Antrim	-£32,713	£38,402	£5,689
South Down	-£49,845	£54,104	£4,259
Strangford	-£33,541	£40,717	£7,176
Upper Bann	-£56,393	£58,677	£2,285
West Tyrone	-£52,443	£54,281	£1,838
Unknown	-£6,547	£4,384	-£2,163
<b>Total</b>	<b>-£842,887</b>	<b>£920,861</b>	<b>£77,975</b>

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### **Minimum Price for a Unit of Alcohol**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development what progress is being made on the introduction of a minimum price for a unit of alcohol.

**(AQW 21100/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I have been working closely with Health Minister Poots on commissioning research to model the likely impact of minimum unit pricing in Northern Ireland.

This research is essential as it will help inform our future decisions in this area and allow us to bring forward proposals that will have a proportionate and positive impact on physical and mental health well being in Northern Ireland.

It is intended that an appointment to carry out the research will be made by the end of June and that the research will be complete before the end of 2013.

### **Peace Bridge, Derry**

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister for Social Development when the Bridge Order application was made for the Peace Bridge, Derry; and when was it completed.

**(AQW 21111/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Peace Bridge across the River Foyle in Londonderry was constructed by Ilex Urban Regeneration Company.

There was no requirement for Ilex to make a Bridge Order application for the Peace Bridge. The Bridge remains in Ilex's ownership until adopted by the Department for Regional Development.

### **Chemotherapy or Radiotherapy Treatment**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister for Social Development whether he will consider a relaxation of the Social Security Agency requirements for people who are receiving, or recovering from, chemotherapy or radiotherapy treatment.

**(AQW 21135/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The vast majority of people who are awaiting, receiving, or recovering from any form of chemotherapy or radiotherapy for cancer are currently placed in the Support Group for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), where they get the necessary long term support they need while unable to work.

Current processes mean that benefit decisions for those receiving treatment for cancer are assessed on supporting medical evidence without the need in most instances for a face-to-face assessment. Most people are therefore placed in the Support Group for ESA where financial support is unconditional and there is no requirement on them to take steps to return to work.

I remain committed to the continual improvement of the Work Capability Assessment process for entitlement to ESA to ensure it is as fair and effective as possible.

### **Replacement Boilers and Double-Glazing**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development how many replacement (i) boilers; and (ii) double-glazing units have been (a) granted; and (b) completed in North Down, in the last twelve months.

**(AQW 21154/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Parliamentary Constituency. However, they advise that since the introduction of the Boiler Replacement Scheme in September 2012 there have been 150 replacement boiler approvals issued, and 66 replacement boilers installed across the North Down Council area. With regard to double glazing, three schemes were started in 2012/13 in the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office area for a total of 592 dwellings, of which 143 are completed to date.

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### **New Social Homes in the South Belfast Constituency**

**Mr Maskey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 20318/11-15, to detail the plans for the delivery of 358 new social homes in the South Belfast constituency over the next three years.

**(AQW 21161/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My previous answer covered the three year period 2012/13 to 2014/15. The Housing Executive has published the new Social Housing Development Programme for the three year period 2013/14 to 2015/16, which allows me to extend my previous answer by a further year into 2015/16.

Plans are to deliver 503 new homes over the four year period 2012/13 to 2015/16, as currently published on the Housing Executive's website at [http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/housing\\_need.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/housing_need.htm)

For your convenience the schemes are listed in the tables below.

## **SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

### **ON SITE YEAR 2012/13**

#### **PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY SOUTH BELFAST**

<b>Scheme Name</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Year On Site</b>	<b>Year Completion</b>
Onslow Parade	16	2012/13	2013/14
Farnham Street	1	2012/13	2013/14
Finnis Drive, Taughmonagh	15	2012/13	2014/15
Village Rehabs	2	2012/13	2013/14
Village Rehabs	7	2012/13	2013/14
Kerrington Court	3	2012/13	2012/13
Muckamore Resettlement	5	2012/13	2013/14
Killynure Road	42	2012/13	2013/14
Annadale Avenue	15	2012/13	2013/14

## **SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS**

### **ON SITE YEAR 2013/14**

#### **PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY SOUTH BELFAST**

<b>Scheme Name</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Year On Site</b>	<b>Year Completion</b>
McClure Street	20	2013/14	2015/16
Ormeau Road	15	2013/14	2014/15
Posnett Street	30	2013/14	2014/15
Village Phase 3	27	2013/14	2015/16
Rosetta Cottages	2	2013/14	2014/15
Village Phase 1	6	2013/14	2014/15
Annadale Avenue	8	2013/14	2014/15

**SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS****ON SITE YEAR 2014/15****PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY SOUTH BELFAST**

Scheme Name	Units	Year On Site	Year Completion
Woodstock Road/ Mount Street	10	2014/15	2015/16
College Site/ Brunswick Street	150	2014/15	2016/17
Belfast Trust/ Knockbracken Resettlement	20	2014/15	2015/16

**SOCIAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS****ON SITE YEAR 2015/16****PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY SOUTH BELFAST**

Scheme Name	Units	Year On Site	Year Completion
Finaghy Road North	109	2015/16	2018/19

**Social Security Benefit**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people, currently receiving a social security benefit, will be affected by the proposed changes to the welfare system.

**(AQW 21193/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The series of tables below provide a breakdown of the impact of the proposed changes to the welfare reform system to claimants currently in receipt of social security benefits and households within Northern Ireland. The figures relating to Universal Credit also include those people in Northern Ireland currently receiving Child and Working Tax Credits as administered by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.

Table 1 shows, as at November 2012, the number of working age claimants claiming those benefits that will be replaced by the introduction of Universal Credit.

**TABLE 1**

Benefits replaced by Universal Credit	Working Age Claimants
Income based JSA	51,760
Income based ESA	32,200
Income Support	65,880
Housing Benefit	127,750

**Source:** ASU Midas Scans. JSA and ESA 30th November 2012, Income Support 1st December 2012 and Housing Benefit November 2012

Analytical Services Unit has used the Policy Simulation Model to estimate the impact of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland. The figures take account of those claimants on social security benefits and tax credits.

Table 2 shows the estimated impact on benefit entitlement on affected households.

**TABLE 2**

	<b>Higher Entitlement</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Lower Entitlement</b>
Total Households	102,000	99,000	86,000

**Source:** DWP Policy Simulation Model (based on FRS 2010/11), 2014/15

All those who are currently receiving benefits or tax credits and who will be receiving a lower entitlement will be protected at their current higher level entitlement until there has been a substantive change in their circumstances following migration to Universal Credit.

Table 3 shows the number of working age social rented sector claimants impacted by under occupancy rules. Northern Ireland Housing Executive figures are of February 2013 and Housing Association figures are of October 2012.

**TABLE 3**

<b>Under-occupation of accommodation by</b>	<b>NIHE</b>	<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>Totals</b>
One bedroom	19,120	5,050	24,160
Two or more bedrooms	7,270	1,220	8,480
All bedrooms	26,380	6,260	32,650

**Notes:** Under-occupation level of working age social rented sector claimants (NIHE data February 2013, Source: Housing Division. Numeric totals may not sum due to rounding

Table 4 shows the number of claimants within the Working Age liveload of Disability Living Allowance as at November 2012, who could be potentially impacted by the introduction of Personal Independence Payment and the reassessment of Working Age claimants commencing in 2015.

**TABLE 4**

<b>DLA</b>	<b>Claimants</b>
16-64 years	118,010

**Source:** ASU DLA Midas Scan 25th November 2012

Table 5 shows the number of potential Employment and Support Allowance contribution based only claimants that could be impacted by ESA time limiting at the assumed go live date of 23 September 2013. This figure does not take into account any claimants that may leave the benefit between now and assumed go live.

**TABLE 5**

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Customers claiming for at least 1 year by 23rd September 2013</b>		
	<b>Work-Related Activity Group</b>	<b>Assessment Phase</b>	<b>Total</b>
Contribution based ESA customers	6,880	1,340	8,220

**Source:** ASU ESA Midas scan 30th November 2012

Table 6 shows the number of households estimated to be impacted by the introduction of the Benefit Cap. This figure is based on benefit data extracts from May/June 2012 and HMRC data. It assumes no change in claimant circumstances before the policy is implemented.

**TABLE 6**

<b>Number of Households impacted by Benefit Cap</b>
620

My Department are currently publishing a series of detailed reports on each of the major reform projects and copies of these will be available in the Assembly Library or on the Department for Social Development website at [www.dsdni.gov.uk](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk).

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### **Under-Occupancy Penalisation of Benefit**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development what progress has been made with the Government on the issue of reform of housing benefit, particularly the under-occupancy penalisation of benefit.  
**(AQW 21222/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I have raised the issue of the reform of Housing Benefit and in particular the size criteria restriction and the impact it may have on people in Northern Ireland on a number of occasions during discussions with Lord Freud and other DWP Ministers.

Representatives of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations also had the opportunity to raise their concerns Lord Freud during a recent visit.

However, as you will appreciate, the principle of parity means there is limited scope for Northern Ireland to vary from the Great Britain Welfare Reform agenda. Any financial costs resulting from divergence between the Northern Ireland system and policy in Great Britain would need to be met by the Northern Ireland Executive from the Northern Ireland block grant, with implications for other spending priorities such as schools or hospitals.

As you are aware, the Welfare Reform Bill is currently progressing through the Northern Ireland Assembly, and members will have the opportunity to debate the content of the Bill during the Consideration Stage which is scheduled for 16 April 2013. I will continue to discuss the implications of the Welfare Reform agenda for Northern Ireland with Lord Freud with a view to securing a sensible and balanced approach to the proposed changes.

### **Universal Credit**

**Mr Hilditch** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the progress of Universal Credit.  
**(AQW 21236/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Work is continuing to progress the implementation of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland from April 2014. Castle Court has been identified as the Joint Service Centre for the delivery of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland and the target operating model for both front and back office activities is being developed. Related to these plans is development of the Human Resources Strategy which will address how to resource the service centre and front office activities with suitably trained staff.

My officials are also working with their counterparts in the Department for Work and Pensions on the changes needed to the ICT to support the flexible payment arrangements which I have secured from Lord Freud. Development of criteria for eligibility to a more flexible payment arrangement is ongoing and I am currently considering options for the criteria for split payments and more frequent payments. In addition, my officials are working on the operational details of how direct payments to landlords will be made.

In light of recent press speculation about senior leadership changes in the Department for Work and Pensions Universal Credit Programme, I recently met with Lord Freud. At this meeting he confirmed

plans are well advanced for the introduction of Universal Credit in Great Britain at the end of April 2013 with a Pathfinder in the Greater Manchester area. This will allow the systems to be fully tested before the start of the wider rollout of fresh claims for Universal Credit from people who become unemployed and are actively seeking employment.

My officials will be fully engaged with the Department for Work and Pensions throughout the Pathfinder to ensure that any learning is reflected in the implementation plans for go-live of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland in April 2014.

## **Housing Benefit**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 20796/11-15, why a non-dependent deduction is made in Housing Benefit if the child who has turned 19 years of age is not in education, employment or training.

**(AQW 21291/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** As I previously explained, for the purposes of Housing Benefit a non-dependant is someone who normally resides with the claimant on a non-commercial basis and typical examples are adult sons, daughters, other relatives and friends. It is ordinarily assumed that a non-dependant will contribute to the claimant's rent and/or rates. This contribution is known as the non-dependant deduction and is deducted from the eligible rent in the calculation of maximum Housing Benefit.

If a non-dependant is aged 19 and not in education, employment or training they may be eligible for a social security benefit such as Jobseekers Allowance which would enable them to contribute to rent or rates. However, notwithstanding the ability to claim a social security benefit, the Housing Benefit Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 prescribe that deductions for non-dependants aged over 18 (and not in remunerative work) must be made. In cases where a non-dependant is not in remunerative work, deductions of £11.45 for rent and £3.30 for rates per week will be made.

No non-dependant deductions are made in certain circumstances, for example if the claimant or their partner is blind or has recently regained their sight, receives the care component of disability living allowance at any rate, or receives attendance allowance at any rate.

## **Peace Bridge, Derry**

**Ms Ruane** asked the Minister for Social Development when the Bridge Order was applied for in relation to the Peace Bridge in Derry; and when it was completed.

**(AQW 21310/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Peace Bridge across the River Foyle in Londonderry was constructed by Ilex Urban Regeneration Company.

There was no requirement for Ilex to make a Bridge Order application for the Peace Bridge. The Bridge remains in Ilex's ownership until adopted by the Department for Regional Development.



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