

Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

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Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 3 May 2013

Written Answers to Questions

Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister

Education and Skills Authority

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the role of the Strategic Investment Board (SIB) in the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority; and the work done by the SIB to date.

(AQW 21708/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister): The Strategic Investment Board (SIB) supports the public sector in meeting targets set by the Programme for Government (PfG). SIB currently supports the Department of Education actions on its PfG target for the implementation of the Education and Skills Authority through the provision of expertise in change management, estates planning, operational services and recruitment.

Six Signature Delivering Social Change Projects

Mr Nesbitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how many (i) recently graduated teachers; and (ii) health workers, have been engaged by the six signature Delivering Social Change projects that were announced in October 2012.

(AQW 21741/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Under the 'Improving Literacy and Numeracy' Signature Programme, which is being led by the Department of Education, two hundred and thirty recently graduated teachers will be appointed prior to the beginning of the 2013/14 academic year. It is envisaged that the recruitment exercise will run during May and June 2013.

A Strategic Oversight Group has been established and has undertaken work to develop a proposed recruitment scheme and ensure it is practical and compatible with legal requirements.

The programme will ensure extra support for children in primary schools to achieve the expected levels in reading and maths at Key Stage 2. It will also provide tuition to pupils in post-primary schools who are not predicted to get at least a 'C' grade in GCSE English and/or maths.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has lead responsibility for two of the Delivering Social Change signature projects, the provision of 10 additional Family Support Hubs and Support for Parents.

The Family Support Hubs are being delivered by the Health and Social Care Board and Support for Parents projects by the Public Health Agency. The two signature projects will enable the commissioning of additional early intervention support for families and parents experiencing difficulties.

Family Support Hubs are intended to be coalitions of community and voluntary organisations and agencies which provide early intervention services for children and young people locally in order to enhance awareness, accessibility, co-ordination and provision of family support resources in local areas.

Family support needs may vary across localities and on that basis the work undertaken by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and its Locality Planning Groups, is vital.

Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry

Mr McDevitt asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they will announce the result of the tender for services for victims and survivors as part of the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry; and when these services will be operational.

(AQW 21763/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: We refer the Member to our answer to AQW 17178/11-15 issued 27 March 2013.

Work is ongoing on the recent tender for a broader service for victims and survivors. The results will be made public once a decision has been reached.

Strategic Investment Board

Mr Allister asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how much the Strategic Investment Board spent on consultants in each year since 2007; and what arrangements are in place for Ministerial approval of recourse to consultants.

(AQW 21765/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Strategic Investment Board expenditure on Consultancy since 2007 is as follows:

Year	
2007/2008	£2,323k
2008/2009	£1,200k
2009/2010	£1,437k
2010/2011	£1,500k
2011/2012	£1,059k
2012/2013	£1,155k (unaudited figures)

SIB receives an annual Ministerial derogation to approve its own consultancy business cases, subject to it maintaining a high standard of business case and financial propriety as assessed by OFMDFM, DFP and internal and external auditors. The annual renewal is subject to our approval on receipt of information on SIB's consultancy performance in the past year and the projected strategy for the coming year.

Unanswered Question: AQO 3406/11-15

Mr Lunn asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to explain the delay in answering AQO 3406/11-15.

(AQW 21788/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: A response to AQO 3406/11-15 was issued on 26 April 2013.

Investing in Children: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage

Mr Agnew asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what actions they are taking to implement the recommendation made by the European Commission on 20 February 2013, Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage.

(AQW 21790/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Commission's recommendation calls for an integrated approach to child friendly social investment. Investing in children and young people is seen as being especially effective in breaking inter-generational cycles of poverty and social exclusion and improving people's opportunities later in life.

Many of the recommendations within the Report are being taken forward in part through the Executive's Delivering Social Change Framework. This aims to deliver a sustained reduction in poverty and associated issues across all ages as well as improving the health and wellbeing and life opportunities of our children and young people.

The Commission's recommendation has been forwarded to all relevant departments to inform their work and their consideration of a range of possible future programmes and initiatives.

Social Investment Fund Area Steering Groups

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their assessment of the adequacy of the three month period granted to Social Investment Fund Area Steering Groups to analyse and prioritise the needs of their social investment zone and engage and consult with the local community. **(AQW 21946/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Nearly five months was provided for area planning, not three. Steering Groups were appointed in early October 2012 and following a two-day workshop on 17 and 18 October were commissioned to engage with communities and develop area plans. In December 2012, in response to feedback received from Steering Groups, we decided that the first phase of the Fund would be extended to March 2016 and as a consequence the area planning phase was also extended to 28 February 2013.

We consider Steering Groups were given sufficient time to consult and engage across their communities as evidenced by the detailed area plans which are currently now being appraised.

Social Investment Zone Steering Groups

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how Social Investment Zone Steering Groups will be involved in the monitoring and reporting of the implementation of Social Investment Fund area plans. **(AQW 21947/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Social Investment Zone Steering Groups will oversee delivery of the area plans. Lead partners will be contracted by OFMDFM to manage delivery of the individual projects and they will be expected to report progress to the Steering Groups on a regular basis.

Social Investment Fund

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how they are communicating the progress of the Social Investment Fund delivery process to the public. **(AQW 21948/11-15)**

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Delivery of the Social Investment Fund (SIF) is primarily through the development of strategic area plans, co-ordinated by steering groups.

Steering groups delivered short-term engagement plans during the area planning process and have developed longer-term plans to maintain communication during this first phase of delivery.

Information on SIF has also been available on the NI Direct website for some months now. The intention is to enhance this citizen facing portal once final plans and projects have been appraised to include detailed Area Plans and project information.

Social Investment Fund

Mr Lyttle asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how delivery of the Social Investment Fund will promote good relations.

(AQW 22023/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Social Investment Fund (SIF) has four strategic objectives -

- Build pathways to employment
- Tackle the systemic issues linked to deprivation
- Increase community services
- Address dereliction

While not an explicit aim of SIF, it is reasonable to expect that a reduction in poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration would have a generally positive impact on good relations, particularly in those areas which currently experience high levels of deprivation.

Strategic Investment Fund

Mr Milne asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the roll out of the Strategic Investment Fund.

(AQO 3827/11-15)

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. 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.

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

Six Signature Projects

Mr Beggs asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the six signature projects announced in October 2012.

(AQO 3828/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Work on the implementation of the six initial Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes is ongoing and close discussions between our officials and lead departments continue in order to ensure effective delivery at the earliest opportunity.

The Department of Education (DE) has been given lead responsibility for the 'Improving Literacy and Numeracy' Signature Programme. The programme will ensure extra support for children in primary schools to achieve the expected levels in reading and maths at Key Stage 2. It will also provide tuition to pupils in post-primary schools who are not predicted to get at least a 'C' grade in GCSE English and/or maths.

Two hundred and thirty recently graduated teachers will be appointed prior to the beginning of the 2013/14 academic year. It is envisaged that the recruitment exercise will run during May and June 2013. A Strategic Oversight Group has been appointed to oversee the implementation of the programme. The Western Education and Library Board will lead the practical delivery of the programme.

The Department for Employment and Learning is leading on the 'Pathways to Employment for Young People' Signature Programme. A 26-week pilot of the Community Family Support programme commenced in January 2013 which is designed to focus on the needs of 44 disadvantaged families in the targeted areas of Belfast (both West and East), Strabane, Cookstown and Newtownabbey. All 5 Family Liaison Officers have been recruited to support the families and they are currently working with mainstream provision to deliver the pilot. This pilot will be scaled up and rolled out as a Signature Programme to areas of greatest need where the levels of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) are highest. The intention is to replicate the model and help support over 500 families.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety has lead responsibility for the 'Direct Family Support' and 'Support for Parents' Signature Programmes. Significant progress has been made by the Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency on both programmes since the launch.

As part of the Family Support Hub programme, the development infrastructure has been put in place. In the Northern Trust area an additional Hub is coming "on-line" and one hub is currently in planning for the Belfast Trust area. In line with the Outcomes Group's priorities to enhance the existing early intervention services, the planning for additional family support services has been completed and is ready to move to procurement. An evaluation system for Hubs has been introduced across all existing Hubs and data capture will start across all Hubs for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Under the Support for Parents programme, a suite of parenting support programmes to be delivered has been developed from the Public Health Agency's ongoing engagement with stakeholders through the Child Development Programme Board and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. The programmes focus on parenting programmes for the vulnerable groups.

The Department for Social Development and the Department of Education are working collaboratively to deliver 20 new Nurture Units under the 'Early Intervention for Vulnerable Children' Signature Programme. Twenty schools were invited to participate in an awareness session on 10 April 2013. Plans have been developed with the aim of having all Nurture Units in place by the start of the 2013/2014 academic year.

Finally, the Department for Social Development is also working in partnership with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to bring forward proposals to establish 10 Social Enterprise Incubation Hubs under the 'Accelerating Social Enterprise' Signature Programme. The hubs will be established in currently vacant commercial premises and will offer a range of business advice and practical support to social enterprise entrepreneurs including facilities from which their businesses can operate on a 'test-trading' basis.

Budget Review Group

Mr McAleer asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the work of the Budget Review Group.

(AQO 3832/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: The Budget Review Group met on 10 April. It discussed alternative options for accessing finance and asset management and commissioned work on NI Water structural issues. It also received updates on its priority work programme including the transfer of social housing stock, release of value from Belfast Harbour Commissioners and drawdown of European funding. It continues to meet on a quarterly basis.

Childcare Strategy

Mr Kinahan asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the proposed Childcare Strategy; including the projected resources which will be available for its implementation.

(AQW 22155/11-15)

Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness: Public consultation on the Childcare Strategy ended on 5 March 2013. All responses and views received are currently being reviewed. These, together with the findings from OFMDFM commissioned research, will inform the detail of the Strategy, including the actions it will support and the resources needed for implementation. We expect to be able to make an announcement on the Strategy shortly.

Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Farm Assistance Requests

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to the recent heavy snow, to detail (i) how many requests for assistance for farms were received by her Department; (ii) how many of these requests resulted in RAF helicopter assistance; and (iii) how many requests remained outstanding when the helicopters were stood down.

(AQW 21565/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development): At the 14 April the Helpline had received 902 calls. 525 related to fallen stock issues and 377 related to other adverse weather issues such as requests for fodder; access issues; and reports of structural damage.

A total of 46 air drops were made to assist farmers, 41 by the RAF and 5 by Irish Air Corp. These fodder air drops were targeted to the worst affected and isolated areas based on information received from the DARD Helpline, CAFRE Advisers contacting farmers, and air reconnaissance carried out in the Glens of Antrim area on 26 March and in the Slieve Croob area on 27 March.

Following the helicopter flights on 28 March our technical and logistical assessment indicated that there were no outstanding requests for help that required aerial support. Intelligence from both farmers and DARD staff on the ground indicated that access to remote areas was improving and that priority fodder needs had been addressed. While helicopter support was stood down it was kept under review, and all of the farmers who had requested assistance to move fodder successfully received support via our ground support programme involving Forest Service soft track machines.

Staff continue to work with farmers to address any ongoing adverse weather related issues.

Farm Fence Damage

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she is aware of the damage caused to farm fences by the recent severe weather conditions and what direct assistance she can provide to farmers to keep the resultant disruption to livestock to a minimum.

(AQW 21726/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am very aware of and fully sympathise with the very difficult situation that farmers face at this time arising from the recent snow storm and I am aware that damage has been caused to farm fences.

I have obtained Executive agreement to hardship funding measures to assist farmers worst affected by livestock losses arising from the recent snow storm. The first element of this is that my Department will pay for the costs of collection and disposal of fallen stock from the farmers most severely affected. This relieves those farmers of a potential cost to their business and protects both the environment and animal health by encouraging the proper disposal of fallen stock.

I also intend to bring to the Executive proposals for a hardship scheme, which will be the second element of the hardship measures. The hardship scheme will help to mitigate the costs of the livestock losses that have been sustained by farmers arising from the snow storm. This will be under the EU de minimis rules and capped at a maximum of 7,500 euro per farmer, including the collection and disposal costs of the fallen animals. Farmers, who have fallen stock disposed of during the period 2 April – 19 April 2013 by approved renderers, will be eligible for the hardship funding. The scheme will

be framed in light of the information gathered on the extent and nature of losses, which we will build as farmers have stock removed and disposed of by the approved renderers.

The hardship payment will be specifically for livestock losses arising from the recent snow storm. I hope to release details of the scheme and how to apply as soon as possible.

You may wish to raise the issue of damage caused to farm fences when clearing roads with the Minister for Regional Development.

£5m Rescue Package for Farmers

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the qualifying criteria for the £5m rescue package for farmers affected by the recent severe weather.

(AQW 21859/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I have obtained Executive agreement to hardship funding measures to assist farmers worst affected by livestock losses arising from the recent snow storm.

The first element of these measures is that DARD is paying for the costs of collection and disposal of fallen stock that have died as a direct result of the snow storm. The second element will be a hardship scheme, which will help to mitigate the costs of the livestock losses that have been sustained by farmers arising from the snow storm. This will be under the EU de minimis rules and capped at a maximum of 7,500 euro per farmer, including the collection and disposal costs of the fallen animals. Farmers, who had livestock losses as a result of the snow storm and had fallen stock disposed of during the period 2 April – 19 April 2013 by approved renderers, will be eligible for the hardship funding.

The scheme will be framed in light of the information gathered on the extent and nature of losses, which we will build as farmers have stock removed and disposed of by the approved renderers. I hope to release details of the scheme and how to apply as soon as possible.

RAF Helicopter Assistance

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development when a request for RAF helicopter assistance was submitted.

(AQW 21860/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I made contact with the British Secretary of State Theresa Villiers MP on Monday 25 March to request the provision of helicopter support to assist the delivery of feed to farmers affected by the severe weather conditions.

Satellite Broadband

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what financial assistance is available to help rural property developers purchase equipment to gain access to satellite broadband and related services.

(AQW 21872/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: Under Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme the only opportunity for a developer to purchase equipment to gain access to satellite broadband and related services would be where the developer was setting up a service that they would maintain and run as a business for a minimum of 5 years from the date of any grant payment. They would have to apply to a competitive open call for applications in the Local Action Group area covering their location, a list of these can be found at

<http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/rural-development/rdp-campaign/rdp-campaign-development-funding-schemes-and-programmes/rdp-campaign-development-rural-life/rdp-development-local-action-group-contacts.htm>

Impact of the Snow Crisis on the Farming Community

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what discussions she has had with Executive colleagues regarding the impact of the snow crisis on the farming community, including on mental health.

(AQW 21904/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: My Department and I are committed to supporting the farming community through the impact of the severe weather in March including the mental health of those affected. I made a statement to the Assembly on the 9th April 2013 and an update to the Executive on the 11th April 2013.

Recent Severe Weather Assistance

Mr Frew asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many staff from her Department and its agencies were deployed on the ground to assist in the crisis during the recent severe weather, broken down by agency and responsibilities.

(AQW 21907/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: 201 staff assisted in the recent severe weather crisis as outlined in the table below.

Number of Staff	Division	Responsibility
143	Rivers Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Snow clearance; ■ Flood response; and ■ Dealing with potential thaw - grille clearance etc.
20	Forest Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Supervisory management and industrial staff who were involved in various issues. The majority of help provided was delivering animal feed using Soft Track Vehicles.
18	Veterinary Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff present at the point when carcasses are removed from the farm to record numbers and mark recorded animals; ■ Visits to farms outside postcode areas to verify losses; and ■ Staff present at rendering plants to reconcile the paperwork to be submitted to DARD.
18	College for Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assisting in air support activities including reconnaissance and co-ordination of food drops; ■ Providing advisory support to farmers; and ■ Transportation of feed to pick up points.
1	Countryside Management Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participation in reconnaissance helicopter flights to identify site coordinates where animal fodder needed to be dropped.
1	Loughs Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Assisting PSNI access to mountain region.

These figures relate to staff engaged in external field activities and do not include office based administrative staff who also provided assistance during that the severe weather incident.

Emergency Planning Strategy

Mr Hussey asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in light of the recent severe winter weather and the resulting problems faced by farmers, what consideration she has given to including Sky Watch Civil Air Patrol NI in the emergency planning strategy.

(AQW 22004/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: As part of our response to the problems faced by farmers in light of the recent severe weather, officials considered an offer of assistance from Sky Watch Civil Air Patrol. We did not avail of this offer as we already had sufficient air reconnaissance capacity in place, coupled with ground intelligence. However, we would consider the use of Sky Watch aircraft in future emergency planning strategy with its application being dependent on the nature of emergency.

Bovine Viral Diarrhoea Eradication Programme

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the uptake by farmers of the voluntary phase of the Bovine Viral Diarrhoea eradication programme; and to outline her plans in relation to the voluntary nature of the scheme.

(AQW 22108/11-15)

Mrs O'Neill: I am pleased that industry, through Animal Health and Welfare NI (AHWNI), has commenced a voluntary bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD) eradication programme. While the programme is still in its infancy, initial figures with respect to uptake by farmers, the number of cattle tested and the low level of BVD positive cases identified to date are encouraging given the nature of seasonal calving which is focused both in spring and autumn here in the north.

I am aware it is AHWNI intention to make a case to my Department to move to mandatory BVD testing and therefore industry will need to demonstrate sufficient uptake by farmers during the voluntary BVD testing phase. In addition AHWNI will have to prove that it has sufficient industry funding to secure its on-going financial viability. Any future proposals to introduce mandatory BVD controls will be subject to consultation with both stakeholders and the ARD Committee, and will require the agreement of the EU Commission.

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

Competitions Held on Lough Erne

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail for each species of fish the (i) total; and (ii) average catch rates in quantity and mass from competitions held on Lough Erne, in each of the last six years.

(AQW 18495/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure): The Department does not retain specific information for fishing competitions but obtains information from the event organisers when required. In the case of coarse fishing competitions, the organisers usually hold the total catch weight for each competitor, but do not retain the numbers of fish caught or details of the catch of different species.

In future, the Department will make it a condition of the consent issued to organisers of angling events booked on Public Angling Estate waters that numbers participating and catch data are provided to the Department.

Loans and Grants Awarded to Organisations in East Antrim

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for a breakdown of loans and grants that her Department and its agencies have awarded to organisations in East Antrim, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 18755/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I have assumed that as well as the Department and its agencies, you are also interested in the loans and grants awarded by my Arms Length Bodies.

It should be noted that the Department, its Agencies and its Arms Length Bodies do not provide loans to other organisations.

The total amount of grants awarded to organisations in the East Antrim constituency in the last five years is summarised in the tables below, divided between resource and capital:

	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000
Resource	132	214	340	212	246
Capital	540	0	151	247	245
Total	672	214	491	459	491

Detailed breakdowns by project are provided in Annex A

I should point out that if there was any doubt as to whether the East Antrim constituency benefited from the grant, then that grant was excluded from the answer. For example, if an organisation situated in the East Antrim constituency spent the funding further afield, it was excluded from the answer.

ANNEX A

RESOURCE - EAST ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY

ALB/ Branch	Organisation	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
NIMC	Larne Museum			22		1
NIMC	Railway Preservation Society of Ireland		1	5	2	8
NIMC	Flame - Gasworks Museums	3				
Languages	MAGUS - Carrickfergus Council - Andrew Jackson Cottage	0	0	0	0	17
Community Festivals	Newtownabbey, Larne, Carrickfergus Councils	9	22	22	20	22
ACNI	Various Organisations	28	66	91	17	5
Ulster Scots Agency	Ballycarry Community Association		6	6	7	12
Ulster Scots Agency	Cairncastle LOL 692 Community & Cultural Group		14	23	21	28
Ulster Scots Agency	Bannside Community Safety Group		3			
Ulster Scots Agency	Larne District LOL No 1 Education & Cultural Group		1	9		
Ulster Scots Agency	Naggyburn US & Schomberg Orange Culture Soc			2	2	5

ALB/ Branch	Organisation	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Ulster Scots Agency	East Antrim (killyglen) Accordion Band			1		
Ulster Scots Agency	Sir Henry Inglesbys Fife & Drum Corps			2	1	2
Ulster Scots Agency	Ballyboley Pipe Band				2	2
Ulster Scots Agency	Cairnalbana True Blues Flute Band				2	
Ulster Scots Agency	Cairncastle Flute Band				2	2
Ulster Scots Agency	Glenfield Community Association					2
Ulster Scots Agency	Carnlough Flute Band					1
Foras na Gaeilge	Glór Dhál Riada			1	1	
Sport NI	Belfast Lough Sailability			1		
Sport NI	British Gymnastics					94
Sport NI	Carrickfergus Sailing Club		14			
Sport NI	Greenisland FC			1		
Sport NI	Gymnastics Northern Ireland	58	56	109	89	17
Sport NI	Junior Ulster Elks					5
Sport NI	Larne Borough Council					1
Sport NI	Larne RFC					6
Sport NI	Larne Swimming Club					5
Sport NI	NI Volleyball Association	34	31	45	46	11
		132	214	340	212	246

CAPITAL - EAST ANTRIM CONSTITUENCY

ALB/ Branch	Organisation	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Inland Waterways	Larne BC	20				
Sport NI	Belfast Lough Sailability			9	29	
Sport NI	Cairndhu Rowing Club				29	
Sport NI	Carnlough Rowing Club				19	
Sport NI	Carrick Rangers FC				53	245
Sport NI	Carrickfergus RFC			1		
Sport NI	Carrickfergus Sailing Club				15	
Sport NI	East Antrim Boat Club			9		
Sport NI	Greenisland FC			3		
Sport NI	Gymnastics Northern Ireland				30	
Sport NI	Larne Borough Council			100		
Sport NI	Larne Bowling and Lawn Tennis Club	520				
Sport NI	Larne FC				53	
Sport NI	Monkstown Amateur Boxing Club				14	
Sport NI	Monkstown Community Sports Facility			10		
Sport NI	NI Volleyball Association			7		
Sport NI	Shane O'Neill's GAC			5		
Sport NI	The Cliff			2		
Sport NI	The Shetland & Riding Pony Club			5		
Sport NI	University of Ulster Archery Club (Jordanstown)				5	
		540	0	151	247	245

DCAL: Special Adviser

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure (i) whether her Special Adviser has made any declarations of interest, pursuant to the obligation on civil servants; (ii) how such declarations are recorded; and (iii) whether they are open to public inspection.

(AQW 19247/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) No declarations of interest have been made by my Special Adviser.
- (ii) Declarations of interest are recorded in departmental registers
- (iii) The registers are accessible under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Soccer, Rugby and Gaelic Games

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure for a breakdown of the funding allocated by her Department to soccer, rugby and gaelic games, over the last five years.

(AQW 19383/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The table below outlines the exchequer and Lottery funding awarded by Sport NI to soccer, rugby and gaelic games (GAA) over last five financial years.

Year	Soccer		Rugby		GAA	
	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery	Exchequer	Lottery
2007/08	2,412,038	3,569,719	650,710		4,788,199	981,342
2008/09	1,932,514	3,633,828	2,124,129		4,778,270	2,298,250
2009/10	5,813,927	350,000	372,080		7,563,766	10,000
2010/11	2,712,446	688,837	394,980	109,788	3,458,732	182,751
2011/12	2,289,308	138,709	502,817	139,277	982,176	273,593
Totals	15,160,233	8,381,093	4,044,716	249,065	21,571,143	3,745,936

Participation in Gymnastics

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to increase participation in gymnastics.

(AQW 20108/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for increasing participation in gymnastics rests, in the first instance, with the governing body for the sport, British Gymnastics (NI). Having said that, my Department's strategy for sport, Sport Matters, identifies a number of high level targets aimed at increasing participation rates in sport generally, including gymnastics. To help achieve these targets Sport NI has, during the last three financial years up to March 2012, invested £329,952 of exchequer funding in gymnastics to assist with the development of the sport and increase participation rates. In addition, Sport NI provided £28,756 towards the establishment of a Pre-Games Gymnastics Training Camp in the north prior to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This was intended to provide an opportunity for the sport to build relationships with the wider community.

Participation in Boxing

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what plans her Department has to increase participation in boxing.

(AQW 20111/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Responsibility for increasing participation in boxing rests, in the first instance, with the governing body for the sport, the Irish Amateur Boxing Association. Having said that, my Department's strategy for sport, Sport Matters, identifies a number of high level targets aimed at increasing participation rates in sport generally, including boxing. To help achieve these targets, Sport NI has invested a total of £1,796,941 in exchequer and lottery funding over the last three financial years, up to March 2012 to assist with the development of the sport and increase participation rates.

In addition, the £3.27 million Boxing Investment Programme, initiated by me, includes targets to increase member participation by 10% in the sport by 2015; and increase female participation in that time by 20%, through the development and improvement of boxing club facilities across the north of Ireland.

Bush, Margy, Carey and Glenshesk Rivers

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure whether worming is permitted at all times on the (i) Bush; (ii) Margy; (iii) Carey; and (iv) Glenshesk Rivers.

(AQW 20472/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: Worming is permitted on the following rivers during the periods specified:

- (i) River Bush - (a) Dundarave Stretch worming permitted 1st March – 20th October
 - (b) New Stretch worming permitted 1st March – 20th October
 - (c) Town Stretch worming permitted 1st March – 20th October
 - (d) Leap Stretch worming permitted 1st March – 20th October

River Bush wild fishery – worming permitted – 1st March - 30th June

- (ii) Margy River – worming permitted 1st June – 31st October except from Bonamargy Bridge to the confluence of the Carey River.
- (iii) Carey River – worming permitted 1st June - 31st October from its confluence with the Glenshesk River upstream to Ballyvoy Bridge.
- (iv) Glenshesk Rivers – worming permitted from 1st July – 31st October from that portion of the Glenshesk River from its confluence with the Carey River upstream to Glenshesk Bridge.

Department Overtime Payments

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail the total overtime payments made to staff in her Department, in each of the last three financial years.

(AQW 20521/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: The total overtime payments made to staff in DCAL in each of the last three financial years were:

2009/2010	£126,457.18
2010/2011	£133,573.26
2011/2012	£137,656.59

Track Cycling Facilities

Mr Girvan asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure what funding is available to address the lack of adequate track cycling facilities despite the level of success on the international stage, including the recent world championship success of Martyn Irvine from Newtownards.

(AQW 21320/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am aware of the recent success of Martyn Irvine in winning gold and silver medals at the World Track Championships in Belarus. On the back of this, I have received a number of calls to look into the provision of track cycling facilities and I have asked my officials to meet with Cycling Ulster to discuss the needs of the sport. I have also recently written to my counterpart in the south of Ireland, Leo Varadkar TD, about the possibility of a meeting to consider how both Governments can work more closely to address major sports facility deficits on the island. I expect that the needs of cycling will feature prominently in those discussions.

Glenavon Football Club

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, given the reported financial difficulties at Glenavon Football Club, to detail (i) how her Department is liaising with the club; and (ii) what direct help her Department can provide to assist the club.

(AQW 21401/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín: I am aware of reported financial difficulties at Glenavon Football Club. These are not matters for me but wholly for the club and the Irish Football Association (IFA). However, sports organisations, including Glenavon FC, that are experiencing financial difficulties can seek advice from Sport NI on options to help address these. It would, though, be a matter for the organisation to decide if it wished to discuss such issues with Sport NI. I understand from Sport NI that, to date, it has received no approaches from Glenavon FC or the IFA on this matter.

Salmon Fishing

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) the closing date for applications to fish for salmon with nets; (ii) the number of applications received to date; and (iii) the number of licences that have been issued.

(AQW 22085/11-15)

Ms Ní Chuilín:

- (i) An application for a tidal draft net licence must be received by the Department on or before 1 March in the calendar year to which the licence relates. No other salmon net licences have closing dates for applications.
- (ii) 1 tidal draft net licence application;
1 drift net licence application;
11 Lough Neagh draft net applications.
- (iii) All applications outlined in (ii) have been granted and licences issued.

Department of Education

Education and Library Boards: Expenditure

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 20240/11-15, to outline the reasons for the difference in expenditure in each Education and Library board area.

(AQW 21503/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education): Expenditure is separated between capital for minor works and resource funding for maintenance.

The Education and Library Boards have responsibility for maintenance in the controlled and maintained sectors. In previous years the Boards were provided with a block grant at the beginning of each financial year to support the delivery of a range of services, including landlord maintenance. The Boards had discretion to determine the amount of the block grant they wished to attribute to their

landlord maintenance budget, taking into consideration the level of backlog maintenance and health and safety risks in their Board area, along with other budgetary pressures.

Currently, initial allocations are made to the Education and Library Boards based on the backlog of maintenance and floor areas in each Board area. The amount of resource funding allocated for maintenance will therefore vary between Board areas.

Additional funding may be secured via in year bids, and I have continued to support these bids going to Department of Finance and Personnel in order to reduce the maintenance backlog. If the bids are successful, allocations are based on need and capacity to spend within the financial year.

Capital budget allocations for minor works are made equally between the controlled sector and the non controlled sector, which includes voluntary and maintained schools.

In the controlled sector, the initial budget allocation is usually divided equally between the five Boards. In the voluntary and maintained sectors, capital allocations are distributed on the basis of the agreed priorities and are not distributed by school management type or by geographical area.

The agreed priorities are as follows:

- 1 Minor works schemes that meet the inescapable statutory requirements such as Health and Safety, fire protection and our statutory obligations under DDA;
- 2 Essential minor works to ensure the integrity and suitability of the schools estate;
- 3 Curriculum based minor works that would meet currently unmet needs in schools;
- 4 Minor works schemes where application has been made for additional accommodation.

In addition, Boards can make in year bids for additional funding.

The Department then collates these bids with funding requirements from the voluntary maintained sector which are then considered in line with the total capital budget. There may be capacity to fund these bids from within the existing capital budget. If the capital budget is fully committed, the Department can make a bid to DFP for additional funding in the monitoring rounds and, if successful, can then distribute funding according to bids made and the capacity to spend within a financial year.

Primary Schools: Nurturing Projects

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education what funding he is putting in place for primary schools which have expertise in nurture projects but were not on the recent list for funding.

(AQW 21544/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The funding which was recently made available for a small number of schools with existing nurture provision had to be found from within the Department's current budget. The Department is not in a position to provide any further funding for nurture provision at this time.

The Department is commissioning an evaluation of nurture provision. The findings will inform a policy position on this type of intervention, including the targeting of any future support.

Catholic Certificate of Religious Education

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education, for his assessment of how St Mary's University College and Stranmillis University College will be affected by the ruling that the maintained primary sector will accept teachers who have been made redundant without a Certificate in Religious Education, to take posts in the maintained sector with support to complete the Certificate in Religious Education over three years.

(AQW 21845/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I consider that there will be no impact on either St Mary's or Stranmillis University College arising from the requirement for redeployed teachers who take up posts in the maintained sector to complete the Certificate in Religious Education within three years of appointment.

The Colleges are responsible for providing initial teacher education rather than in-service training for serving teachers, who can obtain the Certificate via distance learning.

Sperrinview Special School, Dungannon

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education what is the current cost per pupil allocated to Sperrinview Special School, Dungannon.

(AQW 21962/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The cost per pupil at Sperrinview Special School for the 2011/12 financial year was £16,563. This includes the school's delegated portion as well as staffing and all other associated costs.

St Ita's Primary School, Belfast

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Education (i) how many children applied for admission to St Ita's Primary School as their first choice; (ii) how many were successful in securing a place; (iii) for a breakdown of the criteria on which successful applicants were awarded their place; and (iv) what provision is in place for those children who were unsuccessful but whose parents want their child to enjoy a faith based, Catholic education.

(AQW 21992/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the South Eastern Education and Library Board that applications for admission to St Ita's Primary School in September 2013 were as follows:

- (i) The school received 105 1st preference applications.
- (ii) 87 of the 1st preference applicants have been admitted.
- (iii) The school is responsible for drawing up the admissions criteria which decides which children are admitted to the school. Successful applicants were admitted under the following published admissions criteria:
 - Criterion 1 39 (siblings lower end of parish)
 - Criterion 2 3 (siblings upper end of parish)
 - Criterion 3 5 (siblings from outside the parish)
 - Criterion 4(a)(g) 40 (other lower parish children who applied to St Ita's Nursery: then by random selection on initial letter of surname).
- (iv) The applications of those children who did not secure a place at St Ita's have all been processed in accordance with the further preferences listed by the parents. Two remaining unplaced children have been given a list of schools that still have places including Holy Rosary Primary School, Sunnyside Crescent, a maintained school in the BELB area.

Project Bank Accounts

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 18944/11-15, what plans his Department has to introduce Project Bank Accounts for all building contracts to help protect sub-contractors.

(AQW 22019/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) of the Department of Finance and Personnel introduced (in January 2013) a requirement to include Project Bank Accounts (PBAs) in all contracts awarded by the CPD on behalf of government departments. This is applicable to contracts with a value of over £1m that have a significant subcontracting element.

The CPD is currently trialling two projects that utilise project bank accounts. The trials will test the suitability of this application and, following completion, adjustments will be made from lessons learned to suit the North of Ireland construction sector. Departments have been asked to consider the wider application of PBAs across the public sector in the North of Ireland.

Following the completion of the trial projects the Department will take advice from CPD and will consider whether the process should be introduced across education sector construction projects.

Rasch Mathematical Model

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education, in light of the question presented in writing to his officials on 5 March 2013 by Dr H. Morrison of Queen's University Belfast on the conceptual mathematical error contained in the Rasch mathematical model, which is fundamental to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Programme for International Student Assessment, why, in mathematical terms, the Rasch model is still viable.

(AQW 22049/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I am aware of the ongoing academic discussion on the mathematical model that Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) uses. I understand that recent criticism of PISA methodology has been strongly refuted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The methodological debate is of an academic nature and does not affect my views on the value of a benchmark that is used and valued by 65 participating countries.

Number of Mobile Classrooms in Use

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many mobile classrooms are in use in each constituency.
(AQW 22057/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of mobile classrooms in each constituency is as follows;

Constituency	No of Mobile Classrooms
Belfast East	50
Belfast North	55
Belfast South	65
Belfast West	106
East Antrim	112
East Derry	98
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	155
Foyle	72
Lagan Valley	105
Mid Ulster	210
Newry & Armagh	228
North Antrim	194
North Down	43
South Antrim	102
South Down	201
Strangford	96

Constituency	No of Mobile Classrooms
Upper Bann	140
West Tyrone	124

Primary 1 School Places in North Down

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many pupils in North Down have yet to receive a Primary 1 school place.

(AQW 22058/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) that, as at 23 April 2013, there were 18 children in the North Down area who remain unplaced in the primary schools admissions process.

The SEELB are responsible for administering the admissions process and Transfer Officers from the Boards will continue to work with parents to ensure all children are placed for September 2013.

Donacloney Primary School

Mr Moutray asked the Minister of Education, given the increase in the birth rate in the area and the fact that 10 children, some of whom live within a 1 to 2 mile radius, have not received a Primary 1 place in their local primary school, whether he will reconsider his decision not to grant Donacloney Primary School an additional class for September 2013.

(AQW 22068/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I turned down Development Proposal (DP) No'279 which sought to increase the capacity at Donacloney Primary School having been satisfied that there are sufficient places in other controlled primary schools in the local area to meet the current demand.

The Development Proposal process is a legal process and there is no recourse for an appeal or review of my decision.

The Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) has recently published its draft primary school area plan for public consultation and is exploring local solutions for many schools experiencing difficulties in this area. Any proposed expansion of Donacloney Primary School needs to be considered in this strategic context and brought forward as part of a managed change in line with the overall pupil population planning figure.

There are currently seven other schools in the locality with a total of 81 Year 1 places available. To allow Donacloney Primary School to increase beyond its current approved enrolment number, at this time, would have the potential to impact adversely on those other schools and increase the level of unfilled places.

I understand that of the 10 children that did not obtain a place in Year 1 at Donacloney PS, seven have been placed in line with parental preference in alternative schools and three are currently unplaced.

The SELB will work to secure places at alternative schools with places available for these three children.

Primary Schools Permitted to Exceed Admissions Limits

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education to list the primary schools in each constituency that have been permitted to exceed their admissions limit in each of the last two academic years; and the reasons that the limit was allowed to be exceeded.

(AQW 22075/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The primary schools in each constituency that have been permitted to exceed their admissions limit in each of the last two academic years are detailed in the tables below.

The Department considered each request for an additional place on its own merits though, typically, approval was given for the following reasons:

- The request represented the only way a child could access a place in the appropriate category (at first preference) of primary school within a reasonable travelling distance of their home address. Appropriate categories are controlled, maintained, Irish medium and integrated.
- A sibling was in attendance at the school.
- Compassionate or exceptional circumstances existed.

2011/12 SCHOOL YEAR

Constituency	School Name
Belfast North	Ligoniel PS
	Holy Family PS
	Gaelscoil Eanna
Belfast South	Forge Integrated PS
	St Ita's PS
Foyle	Ballougry PS
	Greenhaw PS
	Chapel Road PS
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	St Patrick's PS, Mullanaska
	Carntall PS
	Fivemiletown PS
	Roan St Patrick's PS
	St Mary's PS, Aughnacloy
East Derry	Damhead PS
West Tyrone	Strabane Controlled PS
	Drumlish PS
	St Lawrence's PS
	St Columbkille's PS
	St Dympna's PS, Dromore
	Gaelscoil na gCrann
South Antrim	Parkgate PS
	Creggan PS
	Mount St Michael's PS
	St Macnissi's PS, Newtownabbey

Constituency	School Name
North Antrim	The Diamond PS
	Clough PS
	Broughshane PS
	Carniny PS
East Antrim	St Macnissi's PS, Larne
Mid Ulster	New Row PS
	St Trea's PS
	St Columba's PS, Draperstown
	St Brigid's PS, Magherafelt
	Edendork PS
	St Mary's PS, Dungannon
	Gaelscoil Ui Neill
Lagan Valley	Maghaberry PS
	Rowandale Integrated PS
North Down	Rathmore PS
Strangford	Londonderry PS
	Drumlins Integrated PS
South Down	Cumran PS
	St Malachy's PS, Kilclief
	St Patrick's PS, Saul
	St Francis PS, Castlewellan
	St Mary's PS, Ardglass
	Our Lady & St Patrick PS, Downpatrick
	Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche
	All Children's Integrated PS
	Dromore Road PS
	Bronte PS
	Holy Cross PS, Kilkeel

Constituency	School Name
Newry & Armagh	Mullavilly PS
	St Brigid's PS, Crossmaglen
	St Brigid's PS (Drumilly), Belleek
	St Mary's PS, Tassagh
	St Mary's PS, Jerrettspass
	St Mary's PS, Mullaghbawn
	St Patrick's PS, Cullyhanna
	St Jarlath's PS, Blackwatertown
Upper Bann	St Francis PS, Aghderg
	Seagoe PS

2012/13 SCHOOL YEAR

Constituency	School Name
Belfast North	Our Lady of Lourdes PS
	St Therese of Lisieux PS
	Holy Family PS
	St Bernard's PS
	Gaelscoil Eanna
Belfast West	Forth River PS
Belfast South	Forge Integrated PS
	St Ita's PS
Foyle	Broadbridge PS

Constituency	School Name
Fermanagh & South Tyrone	Kesh PS
	Enniskillen Model PS
	Lisbellaw PS
	St Patrick's PS, Mullanaskea
	St Mary's PS, Mullymesker
	Enniskillen Integrated PS
	Roan St Patrick's PS
	St John's PS, Moy
	St Mary's PS, Dungannon
	St Mary's PS, Aughnacloy
	St Patrick's PS, Dungannon
	Gaelscoil Aodha Rua
	Windmill Integrated PS
East Derry	Killowen PS
	St Patrick's & St Joseph's PS, Garvagh
	St Columba's PS, Kilrea
West Tyrone	Strabane Controlled PS
	St Patrick's PS, Castlederg
	St Conor's PS, Omagh
	St Dympna's PS, Dromore
	Omagh Integrated PS
	Holy Family PS, Omagh
South Antrim	Carmoney PS
	McKinney PS
North Antrim	Garryduff PS
	Lislagan PS
	Landhead PS
	Clough PS
	Leaney PS
	St Mary's PS, Portglenone
	Glenravel PS
	St Colmcille's PS, Ballymena
	St Brigid's PS, Ballymena
	Ballycastle Integrated PS

Constituency	School Name
East Antrim	Whiteabbey PS
Mid Ulster	New Row PS
	St Trea's PS
	St John's PS, Swatragh
	St Brigid's PS, Magherafelt
	Gaelscoil an tSeanchai
	St Mary's PS, Pomeroy
	Phoenix Integrated PS
Lagan Valley	Pond Park PS
	St Colman's PS, Lisburn
	Rowandale Integrated PS
	Fair Hill PS
North Down	St Comgall's PS
Strangford	Londonderry PS, Newtownards
	Kircubbin Integrated PS
	Drumlins Integrated PS
South Down	Glasswater PS
	St Patrick's PS, Saul
	St Francis PS, Castlewellan
	St Mary's PS, Ardglass
	St Brigid's PS, Downpatrick
	Bunscoil Bheanna Boirche
	Drumadonnell PS
	Ballyholland PS
	Holy Cross PS, Killeel
	St Patrick's PS, Mayobridge
	St Patrick's PS, Hilltown
	St Patrick's PS, Rathfriland

Constituency	School Name
Newry & Armagh	Orchard County PS
	Dromintee PS
	St Patrick's PS, Crossmaglen
	St Brigid's PS, Crossmaglen
	St Mary's PS, Tassagh
	St Peter's PS, Bessbrook
	St Mary's PS, Jerrettspass
	St Mary's PS, Mullaghbawn
	St Jarlath's PS, Blackwatertown
	Our Lady & St Mochua's PS
Upper Bann	Lurgan Model PS
	King's Park PS
	Birches PS
	Edenderry PS
	St Patrick's PS, Magheralin
	St Francis PS, Aghderg
	St Francis PS, Lurgan
	Seagoe PS

St Francis Primary School, Loughbrickland: Primary 1 Places

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education how many children applied (i) successfully; and (ii) unsuccessfully for a Primary 1 place in St Francis Primary School, Loughbrickland; and to detail the reasons why each child was successful or unsuccessful.

(AQW 22076/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) that by the closing date for receipt of applications for admission to Year 1 in 2013/14, St Francis' Primary School, Loughbrickland had received 34 applications for an approved admissions number of 21.

Each school is responsible for determining its own admissions criteria for admission to the school. When a school is oversubscribed with applications it must apply its published admissions criteria in order to select between applicants to the last available place. In this instance 13 children were unsuccessful in gaining admission as they did not meet the school's admissions criteria as well as other applicants.

If a school wishes to accept more applicants than it has places available, it can seek additional places from the Department, known as a temporary variation (TV). In considering any TV request the Department, in order to maintain a viable schools estate, must be mindful of the availability of empty places in schools in the same sector (in this instance maintained) in the area. If the Department approves an additional place it must be offered to the child next-in-line following application of the school's published admissions criteria.

St Francis' Primary School sought a TV for 12 of the 13 unsuccessful children. In line with policy the Department was able to approve one additional place for the child ranked 22nd by the school. The TV

request in respect of the remaining 11 was refused as the applicants live within travelling distance of other maintained primary schools with places available.

The SELB has advised that 9 of the 11 children not admitted to St Francis' Primary School have now been placed in alternative schools in line with parental preference. The Transfer Officer in the SELB will work with the parents of the two children currently unplaced in order to ensure that they are placed in a primary school by September 2013.

Children with Speech and Language Difficulties

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Education what advice his Department provides to schools on supporting children with speech and language difficulties.

(AQW 22087/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Provision of speech and language therapy as an allied health service, is the responsibility of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and is routinely delivered across both educational and health settings.

The type, level and frequency of therapy is recommended by the relevant Education and Library Board (ELB), usually in consultation with the relevant Health Trust, based upon the individual learning needs of the child.

The Chief Executives of the ELBs have advised that an extensive range of advice and support is available to schools to assist them in meeting the needs of children with speech and language difficulties including:

- advice regarding the educational implications of pupils' speech and language difficulties and use of appropriate teaching strategies and resources to address these issues;
- advice regarding Individual Education Plans and setting clear targets to meet the needs of the individual child;
- contributing to the delivery of intervention for pupils who require more specific support;
- ongoing monitoring, assessment and review of pupil progress and the appropriateness of support being delivered.

Additional training is available for school staff to promote their capacity to support pupils with speech and language difficulties and advice is offered to parents regarding effective strategies and resources which can be utilised to support the child in the home setting to reinforce work being carried out in school.

My Department has also been supporting a project in all ELBs to train teachers and classroom assistants to identify children with speech and language difficulties at an early stage and is being implemented by collaboration between the ELBs and the relevant Health Trusts. Approximately £11.6m has been allocated to the ELBs since the project's inception in 2001.

Evaluation to date has shown marked improvement not only in the skills of the teachers, but also in the understanding of the needs of these teachers by speech and language therapists.

In 2011 my Department issued a Resource File to all schools in the north of Ireland to support children with special educational needs. Included within this file is a chapter on speech and language and communication difficulties.

Pre-School Places in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister of Education how many pre-school places are available in Bangor; and to list the location of each playgroup in Bangor.

(AQW 22091/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: For the 2013/14 school year there are a total of 746 funded pre-school places available in Bangor, of which 416 are in the statutory nursery sector and 330 are in the voluntary/private sector. The names and addresses of voluntary and private settings in Bangor are listed below:-

- Ballycrochan Playgroup
Ballycrochan Presbyterian Church
36a Silverbirch Road
Bangor BT19 6EU
- Ballyholme Presbyterian Church Playgroup
Ballyholme Presbyterian Church
Ashley Drive
Bangor BT20 5RD
- Bangor Abbey Pre-School Centre
Rooms 18/19 Clandeboye Primary School
111 Clandeboye Road
Bangor BT20 3JW
- Bangor West Nursery Playgroup
West Church Halls
91 Crawfordsburn Road
Bangor BT19 1BG
- Big Red Balloon Day Nursery
64 Broadway
Bangor BT20 4RG
- Bo-Peep Corner Pre-School Playgroup
171 Crawfordsburn Road
Bangor BT19 1 BT
- Bright Sparks Pre-School
C/o Crawfordsburn Primary School
4 Cootehall Road
Bangor BT19 1JA
- Crawfordsburn Playgroup
Ballygilbert Presbyterian Church
376 Belfast Road
Bangor BT19 1UH
- Early Days Playgroup
Ballymagee Primary School
77 Ashbury Avenue
Bangor BT19 6ZG
- Little Acorns Pre-School Playgroup
Clandeboye Primary School
111 Clandeboye Road
Bangor BT20 3JW
- Little Bear's Day Nursery
Unit 2a Ashbury Shopping Centre
Ashbury Avenue
Bangor BT19 6TH
- St Comgall's Pre-School Education Centre
St Comgall's Parish Centre
Brunswick Road
Bangor BT20 3DS

- Stepping Stones Day Nursery
1A Church Avenue
Bangor
BT20 3EQ
- Tiddli-winks Playgroup
St Columbanus Parish Hall
68 Groomsport Road
Bangor BT20 5 NE

Oversubscribed Pre-Schools

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Education to list the pre-schools that are oversubscribed for the 2013/14 academic year; and by how many places each pre-school is oversubscribed.

(AQW 22094/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I will arrange for a list of those pre-school settings which had filled all of their allocation of funded pre-school places by the end of Stage 1 of the 2013/14 pre-school admissions process, to be placed in the Assembly library.

It is not possible to determine a specific number of places by which each setting was oversubscribed as the pre-school admissions process is a preference based system with parents stating, in some cases, 6 or more preferences on their application form. If a setting receives fewer applications than it has places available all those who apply will be facilitated. Where a setting receives more applications than it has places, these will be considered against the setting's published admissions criteria with those applications which cannot be facilitated being passed onto the next setting listed as a preference. A child may therefore be considered by a number of settings before being placed or may remain unplaced at the end of their list of preferences.

By the end of Stage 1 of the 2013/14 pre-school admissions process over 95% of children had been offered a place in a setting listed as a preference on their application form.

Education and Library Board: Maintenance Backlog

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education what was the cost of the maintenance backlog in each Education and Library Board, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 22095/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The information in the table below has been taken from the Manhattan Estate Management system and includes schools from all education sectors. Manhattan is a live system and hence does not hold historic information. Collation of maintenance backlog figures has only been carried out since June 2010.

Board	June 2010 £k	March 2011 £k	March 2012 £k	March 2013* £k
BELB	88,274	97,628	87,942	86,251
NEELB	55,505	59,655	64,553	65,939
SEELB	36,642	37,557	36,830	26,889
SELB	60,072	61,729	72,639	75,249
WELB	46,411	42,749	48,749	50,495
Total	286,904	299,318	310,713	304,823

* The March 2013 figure excludes the backlog as a result of schools that are closed. The backlog for closed schools amounts to some £4million across all Education and Library Board areas

Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21556/11-15, what role the Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team played in the approval process.

(AQW 22096/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team (ESAIT) do not have a role in the approval process for redundancy proposals made by the Education and Library Boards for school based staff.

DE: Voluntary Severance

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of cases submitted for voluntary severance which have been (i) approved and (ii) not approved by his Department, in each of the last four years, broken down by arm's-length body.

(AQW 22097/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Department has made funding available for voluntary severance for non-school based staff in ALBs from 1 April 2010. Figures for the numbers of cases, therefore, as presented in the table below relate to the three years since.

The Department had an approval role in respect of ALB access to funding. The approval role per case was within the ALB concerned

	2010-2011		2011-12		2012-2013	
	Volunteers submitted, approved and released	Volunteers submitted, and not approved	Volunteers submitted, approved and released	Volunteers submitted, and not approved	Volunteers submitted, approved and released	Volunteers submitted, and not approved
BELB	31	1	10	1	6	0
NEELB	29	1	29	0	11	0
SEELB	26	2	25	7	1	0
SELB	40	1	36	0	10	0
WELB	51	5	47	0	8	0
SCELB	1	0	0	0	1	0
CCEA	15	0	12	0	0	0
YCNi	1	0	0	0	0	0
CCMS	10	0	7	0	0	0
Total	204	10	166	8	37	0

Education and Library Boards: Redundancy Proposals

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21556/11-15, how he ensured that the quality and effectiveness of the service provided was not diminished in the event of a voluntary severance proposal being approved.

(AQW 22098/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Board of Governors are responsible for their budget and staffing management. In meeting this responsibility, a Board of Governors should take into account the requirement to maintain the effectiveness and efficiency of the service through the retention of suitably qualified and skilled

staff. In bringing forward proposals for redundancies, a Board of Governors must take into account the curricular needs of the school, including the statutory requirement of curriculum delivery.

The quality and effectiveness of teaching is monitored on an ongoing basis by the principal of an individual school. The more formal arrangements are implemented by the governors, in conjunction with the principal, through the individual school's arrangements for Professional Review and Staff Development (PRSD). Employing and Managing Authorities are required by the Department of Education to provide both support and challenge to the schools for which they have responsibility. The Education and Training Inspectorate, on behalf of the Department of Education monitors and evaluates the quality and effectiveness of provision in individual schools at the point of inspection and the Chief Inspector publishes the collated outcomes, at system level, in her biennial report

Colleges and Higher Education Institutions

Mr Storey asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21501/11-15, on what date he expects to notify the Higher Education Institutions.

(AQW 22099/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: As I explained in my answer to AQW 21501/11-15, I am giving careful consideration to the intake numbers for initial education courses for the 2013/14 year. You will appreciate that in order to reach the right decision I need to take account of a number of options and wider considerations.

I am conscious that the Higher Education Institutions need to know their allocations in order to offer places to students for next year and will ensure they are notified as soon as practicable but this will not be until I have given full consideration to all the relevant issues.

Advancing Shared Education Report

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education for a breakdown of the cost of the Advancing Shared Education Report, including the amounts paid to each panel member.

(AQW 22114/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: In order to produce their advice, funding of £35,000 was available to the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education. The bulk of the funding was for research work (£15k); interviews and focus groups, including obtaining the views of parents and young people (£9k); and the balance to cover the offices expenses, hire of venues for meetings, travel, translation costs, etc. A staff officer from within the Department of Education was also made available to the Ministerial Advisory Group to provide secretariat functions.

I understand the actual costs of the Ministerial Advisory Group are likely to be less than the funding that was available to them. They have yet to submit their final claim.

The Panel members of the Ministerial Advisory Group carried out their duties on a voluntary basis and only received out-of-pocket expenses (such as travel expenses and the cost of telephone calls).

Back Pay for Nursery Assistants

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Education when the issue of back pay for nursery assistants will be resolved.

(AQW 22152/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There has been a considerable delay experienced in obtaining agreement with the trade unions on the composition of the job description for the post of Nursery Assistant.

Management Side first issued a draft generic job description to Trade Union Side (TUS) on 6 February 2008. In November 2009, TUS responded setting out comments on outstanding areas of disagreement. Management responded in March 2010 and ongoing discussions continued. A formal response from TUS was not received until May 2012 which requested further discussion on a number of issues.

On 22 April 2013, Management wrote to TUS outlining their substantive response to issues of concern. A further meeting has been requested and every effort is being made to reach an agreement.

Until the evaluation of the Nursery Assistant post is completed it is not possible to say if the issue of back pay will arise.

Primary 1 Places in North Down

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Education what action he is taking to assist parents who are unable to find a primary school of their choice for their children in North Down.

(AQW 22156/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) that, as at 23 April 2013, there were 18 children in the North Down area who remain unplaced in the primary schools admissions process.

The SEELB are responsible for administering the admissions process and Transfer Officers from the Boards will continue to work with parents to ensure all children are placed for September 2013.

Catholic Certificate of Religious Education

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education what is the status of substitute teachers who wish to access employment opportunities in maintained primary schools but do not hold the Certificate of Religious Education.

(AQW 22168/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Schools may only engage substitute teachers from those who have completed the registration process for the NI Substitutes Teachers Register.

When registering on the Substitute Teachers Register teachers may, as part of the registration process, include details on whether they hold a Teachers' Certificate in Religious Education. It is not, however, a mandatory requirement that teachers hold this certificate in order to take up the offer of substitute employment in a Catholic Maintained school. In practice schools engage a wide range of teachers many of whom will not have obtained the certificate.

Number of Children in Schools

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education how many children are taught in schools where English is not the first language.

(AQW 22183/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Figures reported in the 2012/13 census record that 3,261 children were enrolled in grant-aided Irish-medium schools, where the first language of instruction is Irish. In all other grant-aided schools, the primary language of instruction is English.

In addition to these pupils, there were 898 pupils enrolled in Irish-medium units attached to grant-aided English-medium primary and post-primary schools. A further 6 pupils were recorded as attending an Irish-medium independent school.

Teaching Staff with Long-Term Absence

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what was average time taken within the South Eastern Education and Library Board to (i) phase return to work; or (ii) dismiss teaching staff with long-term absence, in each of the last five years.

(AQW 22185/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The SEELB has informed the Department that the Board does not have the resources to determine the average time taken regarding (i) start phased return to work and (ii) dismiss teaching staff with long term absence, within a reasonable timescale.

However, in accordance with the Board's Managing Attendance in Schools Procedure, the SEELB has advised that:

- in circumstances where a recommendation is made by the Occupational Health Physician that a phased return to work would assist an employee, this should, where possible, be facilitated by the Principal, in line with the needs of the school. The time span of the phased return to work should normally be based on advice from an independent Accredited Specialist in Occupational Medicine. In accordance with agreed guidelines such arrangements should normally last for not more than four weeks.
- if all the available medical evidence indicates that the employee is no longer fit to carry out the duties of the post or is unlikely to be fit to return to work within a reasonable period, the Board of Governors, following consultation with the Employing Authority, may determine that an employee's contract should be terminated on grounds of capability due to ill health and/or on the grounds that they are unable to provide regular, reliable and sustained service. There is no set timeframe for any termination on the grounds of ill health/capability and each case is assessed and managed on its own merits, in accordance with agreed guidelines.

Education and Library Board Areas: Teaching Staff

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what is the average age of teaching staff in each Education and Library Board area.

(AQW 22187/11-15)

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

AVERAGE AGE OF TEACHERS BY EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARD AREA, 2011/12

Education and Library Board Area	Average age
Belfast Education and Library Board Area	41
Western Education and Library Board Area	42
North Eastern Education and Library Board Area	41
South Eastern Education and Library Board Area	41
Southern Education and Library Board Area	41

Source: Teachers' Payroll and Pensions Administration System

Ministerial Advisory Group on the Advancement of Shared Education

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Education whether he was aware, prior to the appointment of Professor Paul Connolly of Queen's University to his Ministerial Advisory Group on the Advancement of Shared Education, that Professor Connolly's research practice had been the subject of criticism in an 1998 Ofsted survey of published educational research by J Tooley and D Darby.

(AQW 22190/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I was unaware of this criticism from 15 years ago which I understand was challenged at the time by other academics who were supportive of Professor Connolly's research practice.

Professor Connolly was appointed on the basis of his expertise in the field of education and his acknowledged work in relation to community relations.

Paul Connolly BSocSc (Hons), MA, MSc, PhD is Professor of Education and Head of the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast. He also holds the position of Donald Dewar Visiting Chair in Social Justice and Public Policy at the University of Glasgow.

Professor Connolly is Founding Editor of the international, peer-reviewed journal Effective Education and Founding Director of the Centre for Effective Education at Queen's. In addition he is Co-Chair of the

Campbell Collaboration Education Coordinating Group, which is an international network of scholars, policy makers, practitioners, funders, students, and others, who are interested in evidence-based practice and systematic reviews.

Professor Connolly is due our appreciation for taking-on the additional workload of Chairing the Ministerial Advisory Group on Advancing Shared Education and receiving no financial gain for doing so.

Primary 1 Places in North Down

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Education how many Primary 1 places exist in schools in the North Down constituency; and how many remain available for September 2013.

(AQW 22225/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The number of P1 places available is defined by a primary school's admissions number. Across the North Down constituency there were 1,119 places available at the start of the 2013/14 primary admissions process. Details of individual school admissions numbers are available in booklets published by Education and Library Boards on their websites. For schools in North Down these can be viewed at:

http://www.seelb.org.uk/schools/Procedures_12_13/PDFs/Primary/2012/ArdsN.Down.pdf

The South-Eastern Education and Library Board have advised that as at 26 April 2013, there are 115 places still available at the following schools:

Clandeboyne PS	29 places
Millisle PS	4 places
Kilcooley PS	57 places
St Patrick's PS, Holywood	19 places
St Anne's PS, Donaghadee	6 places

New School Capital Build Priorities

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Education what weighting is applied to social deprivation when determining new school capital build priorities.

(AQW 22262/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Education's strategy for capital investment in new school builds is shaped by the outworking of the Area Planning process with the focus on supporting the development and delivery of a network of viable and sustainable schools in the years ahead.

In delivering its capital investment programme the Department's priorities are weighted on effecting rationalisation; addressing serious accommodation inadequacies and schools operating on split sites; and undue reliance on temporary accommodation.

Social deprivation is addressed within the Economic Appraisal for a new school build project as part of the needs analysis in making the case for funding. Deprivation statistics are drawn from NISRA's Neighbourhood Information database

Legal Highs and Illegal Substances

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education what provision exists in the Northern Education and Library Board area for pupils who are preparing for post-primary transfer to receive professional guidance on the dangers of experimenting with legal highs and illegal substances.

(AQW 22270/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There are no programmes or specific training being provided by the North Eastern Education and Library board in relation to drugs education. However, information and advice regarding Drugs Policies for schools is provided on the Board's website at: <http://www.neelb.org.uk/teachers/cass/pcpd/drugs/>.

Drugs education is included in the revised curriculum and schools have access to a wide range of resources appropriate for pupils at each key stage. Opportunities to cover drugs education would mainly fall under the Personal Health element of the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) area of learning at primary school.

The revised curriculum provides the flexibility for teachers to choose the resources they require to deliver the curriculum and which they feel best meet the needs of their pupils. It is very much a matter for schools to decide whether they wish to use the services of external bodies and professionals to assist with curriculum delivery.

The Department does not hold information on the external services brought into schools.

Integrated Primary and Post-Primary Schools

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of (i) integrated primary schools; and (ii) integrated post-primary schools, broken down by council area.[R]

(AQW 22283/11-15)

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

INTEGRATED PRIMARY AND POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS BY COUNCIL AREA – 2012/13

District Council	Primary	Post-primary	Total
Antrim	4	2	6
Ards	2	1	3
Armagh	1	0	1
Ballymena	1	1	2
Ballymoney	1	0	1
Banbridge	1	1	2
Belfast	4	2	6
Carrickfergus	1	1	2
Castlereagh	2	1	3
Coleraine	2	1	3
Cookstown	1	0	1
Craigavon	1	1	2
Derry	2	1	3
Down	4	2	6
Dungannon	1	1	2
Fermanagh	1	1	2
Larne	2	0	2
Limavady	1	0	1

District Council	Primary	Post-primary	Total
Lisburn	3	1	4
Magherafelt	1	1	2
Moyle	1	0	1
Newry And Mourne	1	0	1
Newtownabbey	1	0	1
North Down	2	1	3
Omagh	1	1	2
Strabane	0	0	0
Total	42	20	62

Source: School census

Note:

- 1 Figures include Controlled Integrated and Grant Maintained Integrated (GMI) schools.

St Joseph's Primary School, Galbally

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education who granted permission for St Joseph's Primary School, Galbally to exceed its stated admissions limit.

(AQW 22321/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Only the Department has the power to permit a school to exceed its approved admissions number. For the 2013/14 school year the Department approved eight additional places at St Joseph's Primary School, Galbally.

Towerview Primary School

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Education why the South Eastern Education and Library Board did not approve an increase in the enrolment numbers in Towerview Primary School.

(AQW 22325/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is the responsibility of the Department of Education to determine the maximum enrolment and admissions numbers for each school. In determining the enrolment number for a school, the Department is required to have regard to the teaching accommodation available for use by pupils.

I have been advised by the South Eastern Education and Library Board that it has no plans to progress a Development Proposal to increase the capacity of Towerview Primary School or to re-designate the classroom provided at the school to accommodate a Key Stage 1 Medium Learning Difficulties Unit, for teaching purposes.

The school did submit a request for a temporary variation to allow it to admit three additional pupils above its admissions number for the 2013/14 year. However, in line with existing temporary variation policy, this was refused as there are sufficient places available in the controlled sector in the Bangor area within reasonable travelling distance.

Pupils with Type 1 Diabetes

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Education what training is available for teachers or school staff in supporting pupils with Type 1 Diabetes.

(AQW 22327/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have been advised by the Education and Library Boards that Boards undertake a needs analysis, on an annual basis, of the training required by schools for the forthcoming academic year.

School principals are responsible for determining the training needs of their teachers and school staff and they can avail of the wide range of courses on all aspects of special educational needs, including diabetes, offered by Boards.

Training with regard to health conditions, including diabetes, would be provided by the relevant Health and Social Care Trust and will be in line with the pupil's individual healthcare plan and be subject to on-going review.

Buddy Bear Trust in Dungannon

Ms McGahan asked the Minister of Education how many referrals the Education and Library Boards have made to the Buddy Bear Trust in Dungannon.

(AQW 22330/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Chief Executives of the Education and Library Boards have advised that the number of children who were referred to the Buddy Bear Trust, in the calendar years 2008 – 2012, is as follows:-

BELB	0
NEELB	1
SEELB	0
SELB	0
WELB	0

Human Rights Commission Report

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21936/11-15, given that the Human Rights Commission Report referenced the absence of sexual orientation from the whole curriculum as well as Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE), whether he will consider bringing RSE within the statutory curriculum; or establishing a mandatory minimum content for schools to follow.

(AQW 22336/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Revised Curriculum, including the areas of learning (AOL), is set out at a high level in the Education (NI) Order 2006. The detailed requirements of what schools must teach under each AOL at each key stage are contained in the Education (Curriculum Content) Order (NI) 2007 and this constitutes the minimum content of the curriculum for schools to follow. There is no statutory requirement at any Key Stage for schools to teach about sexual orientation.

Whilst the term Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) does not appear in the 2007 Order, the terms relationships and sexuality do appear separately.

However, schools do have Guidance from the Department specifically requiring them to have in place a written policy on Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), which has been subject to consultation with parents and endorsed by the Board of Governors. The Guidance states that RSE must be delivered in schools within a moral framework and taught in a sensitive manner that is in keeping with the ethos of the school and which is appropriate to the needs and maturity of their pupils. The Department's Guidance for Post-primary Schools on Relationships and Sexuality Education states that the issue of sexual orientation should be handled by schools in a sensitive, non-confrontational and reassuring way.

In developing or reviewing their RSE policy, schools have been advised to take account of guidance produced by the Equality Commission on eliminating sexual orientation discrimination. This guidance relates to the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006, which gives all pupils the right to learn in a safe environment, to be treated with respect and dignity and not be treated any less favourably on the grounds of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

A key strength of the Revised Curriculum is the flexibility it provides to teachers to introduce topics in ways that best meet the needs and interests of their pupils.

I have no plans at this time to introduce any further statutory requirements within the curriculum.

Shared Education System: Limavady

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education whether any individuals or groups have expressed views regarding the shared education system in place in the Limavady area, over the last two years.

(AQW 22345/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: I have not had any specific views expressed about the shared education system in place in the Limavady area. This work is jointly funded through the International Fund for Ireland and the Atlantic Philanthropies

Last year, I had the pleasure of visiting St Mary's High School, Limavady, which acts as the lead school for the Sharing Education programme in the Roe Valley area and saw the work at first hand.

Efficient Discharge of Teachers

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Education whether his Department will have the mechanism for the efficient discharge of teachers in place by 2015.

(AQW 22368/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: It is important to note that the Efficient Discharge Scheme and its application have not been free from criticism in the past. My Department is currently engaged in discussions with teacher unions and employers about the reintroduction of an Efficient Discharge Scheme which would allow the early release of a limited number of teachers in the interests of the efficient discharge of the employer's function. It is important that any scheme is capable of demonstrating value for money and quantifiable outcomes; there are also a range of formal approval processes involved in taking forward schemes of this nature. Work is being taken forward on a without prejudice basis to ensure practical steps are taken to make the criteria for evaluating ED cases more robust and processes are put in place to ensure the criteria are applied fairly and equitably to all applications.

Given the importance being placed on this issue by unions, employers and others I have instructed officials to intensify efforts to advance this piece of work. However, until the necessary approvals are in place it is difficult to determine whether or when a scheme might come into effect.

St Francis Primary School, Loughbrickland

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Education whether he will ask the Southern Education and Library Board to bring forward its development proposal for St Francis Primary School, Loughbrickland.

(AQW 22373/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: A Development Proposal (DP) seeking an increase in the capacity of St Francis Primary School, Loughbrickland was submitted by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools to the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) on 10 April 2013.

Prior to the publication of any DP the Board is required to undertake pre-consultation with those schools it considers may be affected by the proposal. The SELB has confirmed that the DP for St Francis PS was issued to the relevant schools for consultation on 15 April 2013.

Responses to this are due to be returned to the Board by 7 May 2013 and it is anticipated that the DP will be published in the relevant local papers during week commencing 13 May 2013 and in the national papers on Thursday 16 May 2013.

Online Safety Education

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Education what level of education is provided to primary school aged children on online safety; and at what age this begins.

(AQW 22400/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a central role in the revised curriculum and it is essential that pupils are protected and made aware of potential dangers. Using ICT is a cross-curricular skill, compulsory at all key stages of the curriculum and applies to pupils from compulsory school age onwards. As part of Using ICT, pupils learn how to keep safe and display acceptable online behaviour.

Schools are required to have in place policies on the safe and effective use of the Internet and other digital technology tools. The Department of Education has provided guidance to schools to help them in drawing up their policies.

C2k's Education Network service, the fully managed digital technology service provided to all grant-aided schools, has built in physical controls to protect users and operates a rigorous Internet filtering policy. E-Safety is actively promoted as part of the Education Network service.

Schools have access to a range of educational resources about keeping safe, including online safety, suitable for pupils at each key stage, including young children. The revised curriculum provides teachers with the flexibility to tailor their teaching and to use the resources and programmes they feel best meet the needs and level of understanding of their pupils. It would be matter for individual schools how they deliver online safety education and the Department would not hold information on the approaches used by schools.

East Londonderry Constituency Schools

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Education which schools in the East Londonderry constituency were in formal intervention in (i) 2011; and (ii) 2012.

(AQW 22443/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: There were no schools in the East Derry constituency in formal intervention in 2011 or 2012.

To date, no schools in the East Derry constituency have entered formal

intervention since the process was introduced at 30 April 2009.

Sperrinview Special School: Hydrotherapy Pool

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Education why an application to the Southern Education and Library Board from Sperrinview Special School, for a hydrotherapy pool, was turned down.

(AQW 22456/11-15)

Mr O'Dowd: The Southern Education and Library Board has advised that an Economic Appraisal, undertaken by the Southern Education and Library Board, determined that the proposal for a hydrotherapy pool at Sperrinview Special School was not feasible due to the recurrent costs involved.

The outcome of the Economic Appraisal, and the reasoning behind it, were conveyed to Sperrinview Special School in September 2012.

Department for Employment and Learning

Moving Up Project, Praxis

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 20545/11-15, to provide a breakdown of how this funding has been expended.

(AQW 21779/11-15)

Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning): The table overleaf is a breakdown of the funding allocated to the ESF Moving Up Project delivered by Praxis Care. Funding is provided by the European Social Fund (40%) and the Department for Employment and Learning (25%). Praxis Care provides 35% match funding.

	Staff Costs	Participant Costs	Running Costs	Total
2011/12				
ESF	£227,885	£32,582	£28,076	£288,543
DEL	£142,428	£20,364	£17,548	£180,340
2012/13				
ESF	£228,655	£32,726	£25,391	£286,772
DEL	£142,909	£20,454	£15,870	£179,233
2013/14				
ESF	£233,569	£33,429	£26,394	£293,392
DEL	£145,980	£20,893	£16,496	£183,369
2014/15				
ESF	£233,569	£31,905	£27,918	£293,392
DEL	£145,980	£19,941	£17,449	£183,370
Total Costs	£1,500,975	£212,294	£175,142	£1,888,411

Profoundly Deaf Students

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, pursuant to AQW 20973/11-15 and AQW 20974/11-15, if assistance for profoundly deaf people is adequate and not in decline and why the number of enrolled deaf students in Higher Education has fallen in the last five years.

(AQW 21804/11-15)

Dr Farry: When students with hearing disabilities apply for higher education courses they are encouraged to apply for Disabled Students Allowances to cover the extra costs of any support they may require throughout their course as a direct result of their condition. The assistance which my Department provides for students with disabilities has increased in the last five years from £2.1m in 2007/08 to £3m in 2012/13. For students who are profoundly deaf, support has also increased over this period.

The rates of Disabled Students' Allowances payable to full-time students who are deaf have increased as follows in the period 2007/08 to 2012/13:

- A specialist equipment allowance up from £4,905 to £5,266 for the whole course.
- A non-medical helper's allowance up from a maximum of £12,420 to a maximum of £20,938 each year.
- A general disabled students' allowance up from £1,640 to £1,759 each year.

When making comparisons of student enrolments from year to year it is important to bear in mind that information on disability is collected on the basis of a student's self-assessment. Students are not obliged to report a disability and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) therefore advises that the figures can vary.

It is also important to note that HESA's own disability coding framework changed in 2010/11. This involved a change to the wording of the disability categories and to the number of categories being recorded. The universities' data collection methodologies also changed significantly in 2008/09, with the introduction of online admission systems and the switch from a paper disability questionnaire to an online questionnaire. There were also small differences between the Northern Ireland HE Institutions in the way that the HESA disability coding frame was presented to students in these new admission systems. As a result the figures for the various disability categories are not directly comparable on a year by year basis.

West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Force Health Employment Project

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Force Health Employment Project.

(AQW 21919/11-15)

Dr Farry: The West Belfast & Greater Shankill (WB&GS) Health Employment Project (HEP) was originally funded by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) (under Tackling Health & Social Inequalities) and developed to help more people gain employment in the health and social care sector and create job progression opportunities for staff working within the Belfast Health and Social Services Trust. The 3 year project ended in March 2010.

After this, the DHSSPS was not in a position to fund HEP alone and the project would have needed cross-departmental financial support to continue. Due to financial constraints, this funding could not be secured from other government sources or the My Department did however give a firm commitment that, through the funding of the Local Employment Intermediary Service (LEMIS, known as the Job Assist Centres in West Belfast and Greater Shankill), it would continue to partner at a local level with any Department, or any initiative such as the HEP that aimed to deliver positive employment outcomes for people struggling in areas of deprivation.

LEMIS funding will continue at least for the next 2 years, and my Department remains committed to partnership working. Any further continuation or extension of the HEP is, however, a matter solely for the DHSSPS.

Review of Employment Law

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the proposed timescale for the review of employment law.

(AQW 21924/11-15)

Dr Farry: In my statement to the Assembly on 5 November 2012, I identified a significant number of employment law policy issues that merit further consideration, many of which will require legislation and Executive/Assembly approval.

Having carried out a more detailed appraisal of the main policy issues and taken the views of key stakeholders, it is now my intention to present a paper to the Executive in May 2013 seeking approval to a public consultation

Subject to Executive approval, I intend to launch a public consultation on a range of policy proposals in June 2013. Following the consultation process, the necessary primary and subordinate legislation will then be taken forward over the remainder of the current mandate. This mirrors the timescales for the UK Government's employment law reform programme.

Higher Level Apprenticeship Programme Pilot

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for his assessment of the performance of the Higher Level Apprenticeship programme pilot.

(AQW 21927/11-15)

Dr Farry: In its response to the areas for action identified in the Skills Strategy 'Transforming Futures', under the theme of 'Up-skilling the existing workforce', my Department made a commitment to introduce higher level apprenticeship pilots. The intention is to build upon the success of the ApprenticeshipsNI programme and establish clear work based progression routes, facilitating a better educated and more highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of the economy.

A higher level apprenticeship pilot in ICT was launched last November, with 11 apprentices currently undertaking training with the South West Regional College. The College continues to actively market the apprenticeship opportunity to employers and is confident that apprentice numbers will increase towards the target level of 25.

It is anticipated that a Professional Services higher level apprenticeship pilot will commence in May 2013. My officials are currently finalising contract details with the training supplier.

SEMTA, the Engineering Sector Skills Council, is completing a proposal for the delivery of a higher level apprenticeship pilot in engineering. It is anticipated the programme will be in place by autumn 2013.

The review of my Department's policy on apprenticeships will consider how to grow and accommodate higher skilled apprenticeships beyond level 4 and how apprenticeships can be expanded into the professions.

Foundation Degrees

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people are studying for a foundation degree.

(AQW 21928/11-15)

Dr Farry: In the 2011/12 academic year, the latest full-year for which data is available, there were 2,270 student enrolments on foundation degree courses in Northern Ireland.

Sources: Further Education Statistical Record and Higher Education Statistics Agency

World Host Training

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the uptake of World Host Training in each of the district councils.

(AQW 21955/11-15)

Dr Farry: Data on the number of participants in the World Host training programme by District Council area is not collected by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. It does however record participants by the tourist destination areas from which they come. These may embrace different district council areas. Please see below.

Armagh	64
Antrim	875
Belfast	1495
Fermanagh	98
Derry/Londonderry	2458
Causeway Coast	68
Newry and Mourne	782

Sperrins & Tyrone	210
Other	19
Total	6069

(Figures supplied by World Host/NITB)

Regional College: Business and ICT Lecturers

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many (i) part-time; and (ii) full-time (a) business; and (b) ICT lecturers were employed in each Regional College in each of the last five years.

(AQW 21986/11-15)

Dr Farry: Each Further Education college, in its capacity as an employing authority, is responsible for all employment-related matters. Consequently, my Department does not hold the information requested by the Member.

I have referred the questions to the directors of the six Further Education colleges, who will respond directly to the Member.

Ministerial Co-ordination Group on Suicide Prevention

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline the work that his Department has undertaken as part of the Ministerial Co-ordination Group on Suicide Prevention.

(AQW 22150/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department participates fully in the work of this Group and in the implementation of the “Protect Life” Strategy and Action Plan.

As employment can be a protective factor in reducing the risk of suicide, my Department’s activities can make a positive indirect contribution to the Strategy’s key aims, primarily by supporting people to develop their skills and assisting them into or towards work, which in turn helps to raise self esteem and contributes towards general well-being.

My Department’s contributes to 17 actions in the Strategy’s current Action Plan, which can be summarised as follows:

- support for awareness raising among young people;
- appropriate training for relevant frontline staff, e.g. Employment Service Advisers; and
- suitable pastoral care arrangements amongst DEL providers, such as the colleges and universities.

In addition, my Department is taking forward two new initiatives which aim to help some of the more vulnerable groups in our society. These are the:

- delivery of the Executive Strategy, “Pathways to Success“ which aims to reduce the number of young people not in employment, education or training; and
- the development of a joint DEL/DETI Reducing Economic Inactivity Strategy in order to increase economic participation by assisting individuals with family commitments, health conditions or disabilities to move into work.

Youth Unemployment in South Tyrone

Ms McGahan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to list the organisations that are funded to (i) tackle youth unemployment in South Tyrone; and (ii) deliver the Social Change Framework.

(AQW 22246/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department works in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver programmes to help tackle youth unemployment across Northern Ireland including the South Tyrone area.

Steps to Work is the Department's main return to work provision and is a flexible programme which tailors provision to the individual's need with the aim of assisting participants to find and sustain employment. In the South Tyrone area South West College is the Lead Contractor and is funded to deliver this programme on behalf of the Department. The Lead Contractor will involve other organisations in the delivery of the programme.

The Department's Pathways to Work programme assists people, including young people, with health conditions and disabilities move into employment and advisers based in the local Jobs and Benefits office work in partnership with organisations that can offer specialist help and support. Through this provision my Department funds the following organisations: Southern Health Trust (Condition Management Programme), USEL and Disability Action (Workable Programme), Parkanuar Training Centre (Specialist Training) and Supported Employment Solutions (Work Connect programme and Workable Programme). Staff also work in partnership with other organisations in the South Tyrone area such as The Women's Centre, Rowan Tree Centre Pomeroy, Breakthru (Alcohol and Drugs Advice), Lilac Centre Coalisland etc.

Youth unemployment continues to be a major area of concern for me and my Executive colleagues and together we agreed a range of interventions to help address this. The Youth Employment Scheme which I introduced in July 2012 offers a series of measures to help young people gain experience, acquire new skills and find employment. My Department does not fund organisations to deliver this scheme on our behalf as it is currently administered entirely by Employment Service staff based in Jobs and Benefits offices and JobCentres.

In relation to the social change programme my Department has recently introduced the Collaboration and Innovation Fund which is a new initiative funded under the Executive's 'Pathways to Success' strategy for young people who are not in education, employment or training. Eighteen organisations from the community, voluntary, health and educational sectors are contracted from February 2013 to March 2015 to assist more than 5,500 unemployed 16 to 24 year olds across Northern Ireland, improve their employability prospects through the acquisition of work related skills.

The South West College has been allocated Collaboration and Innovation funding to address youth unemployment in South Tyrone. In addition, Youth Action, Include Youth and the Training for Women Network will receive funding to focus on youth unemployment across Northern Ireland including in the South Tyrone area.

Network Personnel (branded as SOURCE) is contracted to deliver the Local Employment Intermediary Service (LEMIS) in the Cookstown District Council area and on an outreach basis to individuals living in South Tyrone. The initiative assists individuals with an employability barrier, for example those who are homeless, ex-offenders and ex-prisoners, or with a history of drug or alcohol misuse as well as looked after children or care leavers.

LEMIS has recently been refocused to assist with the delivery of the 'Pathways to Success' strategy. The new arrangements are designed to increase the number of 16 to 24 year olds using the service and build on the success that community providers have had in reaching and supporting those clients furthest from the labour market.

In addition, the Community Family Support programme is a 'Pathways to Success' initiative designed to focus on the needs of the most disadvantaged families in targeted areas of Northern Ireland including Strabane and Cookstown. The pilot programme is being delivered in the Cookstown District Council area by Network Personnel and by Jobs First in the Strabane District Council area in partnership with mainstream provision.

Additional resources have been secured to enable the pilot to be scaled up and rolled out to the areas of greatest need across Northern Ireland, including the South Tyrone area.

Students on Work Placement: Insurance Issues

Mr Girvan asked the Minister for Employment and Learning for an update on the insurance issue for students on work placement in schools.

(AQW 22285/11-15)

Dr Farry: My Department has contacted the universities and university colleges, regarding this issue, as it does not hold information on the insurance arrangements for students on work placement in schools. The responses received from Queen's University Belfast, University of Ulster, Stranmillis College and St Mary's University College indicate that none of these institutions have encountered any difficulties in placing students on work placements in schools due to issues with insurance cover.

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

Motorhome Tourism

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline any actions taken by her Department to publicise motorhome tourism within other tourism sectors, over the last three years.

(AQW 21639/11-15)

Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment): I would refer the member to the reply I gave to AQW 21638/11-15.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) currently provides visitor information on the location of all Motorhome service points and Aires de Service points in Northern Ireland on its consumer website discovernorthernireland.com.

Programme for Government: Security of Power Supply

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment why the Programme for Government does not address the issue of future security of power supply.

(AQW 21650/11-15)

Mrs Foster: Security of energy supply is an operational issue which my Department reviews on an ongoing basis with the electrical system operator SONI, the Utility Regulator, and the power generators.

Definition of Sustainable Energy

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what is the definition of sustainable energy that she received from the Department of Energy and Climate Change that she cited during the Assembly debate on 18 February 2013.

(AQW 21695/11-15)

Mrs Foster: In the Assembly debate on 18 February 2013 I referred to nuclear, gas and renewables being the three elements that make up sustainable energy. The intention in making this statement was that nuclear, gas and renewables are the three low carbon generation elements that 'underpin' sustainable energy.

A Programme of Job Creation

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what measures she has taken to initiate a programme of job creation in my constituency given the number of job losses occurring at Seagate and other industries.

(AQW 21747/11-15)

Mrs Foster: As with other parts of Northern Ireland, East Londonderry has been impacted by the adverse effects of the economic downturn, however, please be assured that my Department and

Invest NI continue to work with companies across the local business base to help them grow and develop. Between 2009 and 2012, Invest NI made over 400 offers of assistance worth £15.5 million to companies in East Londonderry generating total investment in the constituency of £28.5 million. In addition, during the same time period over 550 new business starts were supported.

In November 2011, I launched the Boosting Business campaign which provides a range of support both financial and advisory, to help businesses cope with the impact of the downturn. A key element of the campaign is the Jobs Fund which aims to help boost employment creation in the shorter-term. In the East Londonderry constituency there are currently 11 Jobs Fund business investment projects at various stages of development which should lead to the creation of a total of 71 new jobs, 23 of which have already been created.

Garvagh-based Annie's Traditional Food Ltd recently announced it will create 10 new jobs over the next two years as part of a £280,000 expansion. The Jobs Fund has also provided support to 10 young people (aged 16-24) not in education, employment or training (NEET) to set up their own business through the NEET Business Start grant, and to 4 individuals resident in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRA) to set up their own business through the NRA Business Start Grant.

You can be assured that Invest NI is working hard to identify new projects that will lead to further job creation in the constituency. The Jobs Fund remains ongoing and Invest NI is continuing to build a pipeline of projects that will lead to further new job creation and business growth in East Londonderry and across Northern Ireland.

Electricity Costs for Large Businesses in Northern Ireland

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, following the research by the Utility Regulator confirming that electricity costs for large businesses in Northern Ireland are among the highest in the EU, whether this is a consequence of competition not working in the Single Electricity Market, lack of investment in new efficient power stations and a lack of linkage between the Great Britain and Northern Ireland markets.

(AQW 21803/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The paper produced by the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation (NIAUR) is intended to provide transparency on electricity prices for interested parties and to begin a process of constructive debate amongst stakeholders on energy policy and regulation. At this stage it does not provide specific reasons for price patterns and further analysis will be required to better understand the matters introduced in the paper. I believe that further analysis must be prioritised and have written to the Chief Executive of NIAUR to make this point. I would encourage all parties with an interest in this Paper to provide their feedback to the Regulator on the matters raised.

InvestNI

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the financial assistance provided by InvestNI to companies during the 2012/13 financial year, broken down by constituency; and the amount each represents as a percentage of the total financial assistance provided by InvestNI during this period.

(AQW 21910/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information requested is not yet available due to an ongoing data verification exercise by Invest NI following its financial year end. I will make this information available to the member once this process has been completed, which should not be later than the end of May.

InvestNI

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of new jobs created through inward investment projects supported by InvestNI during the 2012/13 financial year,

broken down by constituency; and what each figure represents as a percentage of the total number of new jobs created by inward investment projects during that period.

(AQW 21911/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information requested is not yet available due to an ongoing data verification exercise by Invest NI following its financial year end. I will make this information available to the member once this process has been completed, which should not be later than the end of May.

InvestNI

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail the number of new jobs created through first time international investors that were supported by InvestNI during the 2012/13 financial year, broken down by constituency; and what each figure represents as a percentage of the total number of new jobs created by first time international investors during that period.

(AQW 21912/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information requested is not yet available due to an ongoing data verification exercise by Invest NI following its financial year end. I will make this information available to the member once this process has been completed, which should not be later than the end of May.

InvestNI

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many of the jobs created by InvestNI in each constituency during the 2012/13 financial year offer a salary which is (i) less than 25 percent above; and (ii) 25 percent or more than the average private sector wage, expressed as a number and a percentage of all the new jobs created by inward investment projects during this period.

(AQW 21913/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The information requested is not yet available due to an ongoing data verification exercise by Invest NI following its financial year end. I will make this information available to the member once this process has been completed, which should not be later than the end of May.

Trips Outside Northern Ireland

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail each trip outside Northern Ireland she has made since coming to office, including the number of officials who accompanied her on each trip and the cost of each trip.

(AQW 21976/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The costs of trips outside Northern Ireland were provided in June 2011 as per AQW 222/11-15.

To disaggregate the information for each trip during these years would only be available at disproportionate cost.

The information relating to trips during 2011/12 and 2012/13 (up to 30 September 2012), is detailed in the table attached.

Date:	Location:	No. in Party:	Cost (£):
7/4/11	Brussels	2	3,026
27/5/11	London	2	850.59
7/6/11	London	3	1674.64
15/6/11	Brussels	3	4411.38
20/6/11	London	3	1302.74

Date:	Location:	No. in Party:	Cost (£):
7/9/11	London	3	1776.65
19/9/11	Toronto / New York	3	10,635.64
4/10/11	London/Dublin	3	2539.30
9/10/11	Cologne	3	7025.06
11/10/11	London	2	971.74
21/10/11	Kurdistan	4	14,095.28
22/11/11	Glasgow	3	826.31
9/12/11	London	3	1406.24
18/1/12	London	3	1659.01
16/2/12	London	2	980.4
20/2/12	UAE	3	17,924.14
7/3/12	London	3	1230.79
17/3/12	London	1	560.93
15/4/12	UAE/India	3	13,926.9
27/4/12	London	3	1594.53
19/5/12	London	2	1260.27
22/5/12	London	2	896.24
3/7/12	London	3	2384.96
8/7/12	London	3	2219.37
18/7/12	Kurdistan	3	7052.13
26/7/12	London	2	754.24
13/9/12	Istanbul	2	3,698.37
23/9/12	USA, various cities	3	10,449.76

G8 Summit: Telecoms Companies

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail how telecoms companies are being incentivised to improve their infrastructure in Co. Fermanagh in time for the G8 summit, including any financial incentives.

(AQW 21990/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I wrote to the Chief Executive Officers of the main telecoms companies to encourage them to review their future investment plans or a reprioritisation of services/upgrades in order to leave a more permanent legacy in Fermanagh. My officials have been following up this letter with ongoing discussions with the companies. A number of telecoms companies have already been investing significantly to improve infrastructure without the need for public financial incentives.

Fare Increases on the Belfast to Birkenhead Route

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) what impact the fare increases on the Belfast to Birkenhead route will have on the competitiveness of local hauliers

compared to those operating from the Republic of Ireland, particularly as these costs can often not be passed on to consumers; (ii) whether local hauliers are having to compete with some hauliers who are using illegal fuel to cut their costs; and (iii) whether the Essential Users Fuel Rebate in the Republic of Ireland will further disadvantage hauliers whose fuel prices are already 16 pence per litre more than in the Republic of Ireland.

(AQW 22072/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I have requested a meeting with Stena Line to discuss the fluctuations in price for freight traffic on the Belfast to Birkenhead route. However, the development and operation of ferry links, and the fares the operators charge, are entirely matters for commercial decision by individual sea carriers and the Northern Ireland and Great Britain ports.

I am aware that the Irish Government are taking steps to introduce an Essential Users Fuel Rebate, part of the rationale for this scheme being a desire to incentivise drivers away from fuel duty avoidance. It is my understanding that the rebate will be available to qualifying road transport operators across all EU Member States. I have written to the Minister of Finance and Personnel about whether it might be feasible or appropriate for a similar scheme to be introduced in Northern Ireland. The introduction of such a scheme would require the agreement of HM Treasury and would be likely to result in a reduction in the Northern Ireland block grant.

Essential Users Fuel Rebate

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what plans she has to discuss the introduction of an Essential Users Fuel Rebate for hauliers with the UK Government; and how many departmental officials have been working on such a measure.

(AQW 22073/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I have written to the Minister of Finance and Personnel about the proposed introduction of an Essential Users Fuel Rebate in the Republic of Ireland, and if whether it might be feasible or appropriate for a similar scheme to be introduced in Northern Ireland. The introduction of such a scheme would require the agreement of HM Treasury and would be likely to result in a reduction in the Northern Ireland block grant.

G8 Summit: Telecoms Companies

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (i) how telecommunications companies are being incentivised to improve the telecommunications infrastructure in Fermanagh in time for the G8 summit; (ii) whether any financial incentives are being offered; and (iii) to detail any such incentives.

(AQW 22230/11-15)

Mrs Foster: I would refer the Member to the reply I gave to AQW 21990/11-15.

A5 Road Construction

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for an estimate of the impact on the economy of the North West region, the construction industry and on job opportunities in the region resulting from the recent Court decision on the A5 road construction.

(AQW 22260/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The recent legal ruling and resulting delay to the A5 project is clearly disappointing, as this will impact on a key trading route between the North West and other parts of Northern Ireland and the ROI. The Regional Development Minister has previously quoted construction industry estimates that this project would create employment for over 800 workers at the peak of the construction phase. However, my Department does not have access to the detailed economic analysis that will undoubtedly have taken place within DRD on a project of this scale.

In any event, until it is clear whether this project is simply delayed or does not happen at all, it is difficult for my Department to be conclusive on the overall economic impact.

Investment Conference, Autumn 2013

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to outline all discussions she has had with the Prime Minister, and the Secretary of State, on the investment conference planned for Autumn 2013.

(AQW 22468/11-15)

Mrs Foster: The First Minister, deputy First Minister and I have had a range of discussions with the Secretary of State in recent weeks about strengthening the Northern Ireland economy.

Department of the Environment

TV, Radio and Newspaper Advertising Campaigns

Mr McNarry asked the Minister of the Environment to detail his Department's TV, radio and newspaper advertising campaigns, in each of the last three years; and the spend on each campaign.

(AQW 21033/11-15)

Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment): The tables below outline the details and costs of DOE advertising campaigns for the years 2009/10 to 2011/12.

Year	Campaign	Costs £
2009/10	Road Safety	1,012,433
	NIEA – European Heritage Open Days	15,535
	NIEA – Events, Sites and Properties	71,942
Total		1,099,910

2010/11	Road Safety	1,006,892
	NIEA – European Heritage Open Days	18,401
	Re-Think Waste	98,273
Total		1,123,566

2011/12	Road Safety	1,149,100
	Re-Think Waste	127,253
Total		1,276,353

Overall Total		3,499,829
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Northern Ireland Office: Existing Councils

Mr Weir asked the Minister of the Environment what progress has been made in the discussions with the Northern Ireland Office on co-options to existing councils extending into 2014.

(AQW 21851/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The current consultation on severance arrangements for councillors seeks views on asking the Secretary of State to amend the electoral law to allow a vacancy in any of the existing councils to be filled by co-option after 1 January 2014. Any future discussions with the Secretary of State will be informed by the responses to that consultation. I believe strongly in the ability to co-opt to existing councils in the rundown to the new councils in 2015.

Supplier Invoices Paid by Councils

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of the Environment to detail the total number of supplier invoices paid by councils (i) within 30 days; and (ii) after 30 days between 1 April 2012 and 1 March 2013.

(AQW 21870/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The relevant information held by my Department relating to prompt payment relates to the full financial year from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 and the question is, therefore, answered on that basis. The total number of invoices paid and the total paid within (i) 30 calendar days of receipt of the supplier's invoice and (ii) after 30 calendar days, by each council, for the period 1 April to 31 March 2013, is detailed in the table below.

Council	(i) Total invoices paid within 30 days (1 Apr 2012- 31 Mar 2013)	%	(ii) Total invoices paid outside 30 days (1 Apr 2012- 31 Mar 2013)	%
Antrim	5,490	54	4,700	46
Ards	10,457	87	1,577	13
Armagh	9,859	95	548	5
Ballymena	10,385	89	1,315	11
Ballymoney	4,712	81	1,099	19
Banbridge	4,268	66	2,234	34
Belfast	42,416	80	10,926	20
Carrickfergus	3,350	64	1,861	36
Castlereagh	9,389	96	331	4
Coleraine	3,955	80	998	20
Cookstown	6,101	98	130	2
Craigavon	8,404	69	3,862	31
Derry	16,170	75	5,519	25
Down	10,525	80	2,569	20
Dungannon & S Tyrone	5,825	94	380	6
Fermanagh	7,983	77	2,321	23
Larne	3,377	71	1,389	29
Limavady	7,375	92	652	8
Lisburn	11,681	87	1,690	13
Magherafelt	5,911	97	217	3
Moyle	2,554	75	847	25

Council	(i) Total invoices paid within 30 days (1 Apr 2012- 31 Mar 2013)	%	(ii) Total invoices paid outside 30 days (1 Apr 2012- 31 Mar 2013)	%
Newry & Mourne	9,179	71	3,770	29
Newtownabbey	15,137	87	2,195	13
North Down	8,951	85	1,620	15
Omagh	4,408	82	949	18
Strabane	3,659	84	674	16
Total	231,521	81	54,373	19

These figures suggest an improving picture, significant in parts, with more work to do. I, for example, wrote to councils in March to ascertain limitations on new software packages to record this type of statistics and explore how to standardise processing.

Staff Training and Test Routes for the B+E Car and Trailer Test

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of the Environment when staff training and test routes for the B+E Car and Trailer test will be completed; and when the facility will be introduced in Coleraine.

(AQW 21874/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Agency regularly reviews the delivery of all types of driving tests and is currently developing options to extend the Category B+E driving test to other suitable test centres. No firm date has been confirmed to extend Category B+E tests to Coleraine but we are aiming to have the requirements in place by the autumn of 2013. Any changes to services offered will be communicated to customers and the industry through the normal channels.

Driving Licences in Irish

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of the Environment how people can have their personal details on their driving licence displayed in Irish.

(AQW 21900/11-15)

Mr Attwood: First time applicants can have their personal details displayed in Irish on a driving licence upon receipt of a completed DL1 driving licence application form and accompanied by the required identity documents.

To change details on a current driving licence a customer can make an application to amend their name free of charge.

Where name details have been provided in Irish, the Agency must be satisfied that the details match those on any supporting identity document(s) submitted with the application, as in the case with English.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages – Guidance on Meeting UK Government Commitments in Respect of Irish and Ulster Scots, indicates that adopted street names may be used without reference to the English equivalent. Where a licence holder requests the display of an address in Irish, the request will be facilitated only where the Irish road or street name has been officially adopted.

To take advantage of very significant cost benefits, Northern Ireland driving licences are printed and issued by the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea. DVLA do not have the capacity to print fadas on driving licences. Therefore while the Irish name may be displayed, associated fadas cannot be printed on Northern Ireland driving licences.

DVA are currently examining options for the provision of a new Driver Licensing IT system and printing options for licences may be considered as part of that project.

Prehistoric Monuments

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of the Environment what assistance his Department offers people who want to preserve and protect a prehistoric monument on their land.

(AQW 21971/11-15)

Mr Attwood: The Northern Ireland Environment Agency: Built Heritage Directorate works to protect prehistoric and all other historic monuments on farmland. This is done either by scheduling under Article 3 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995 or by policy which is agreed between the NIEA and the Department of Agriculture. If a site is scheduled the owner will be contacted by a Field Monument Warden from time to time to discuss its condition. If the site requires remedial action, for instance, repair of an earthwork or fencing to restrict grazing, an owner may be offered a management agreement under Article 19 of the above Order. This is offered up to the value of any necessary expenditure or loss of landuse for a particular period. Fencing of a site to mitigate farm animal trampling or the hand- clearance of invasive scrub are typical situations for management agreements which can cost from several hundred to a couple of thousand pounds and are subject to competitive quotes. If a site is not scheduled an owner who has a concern about the condition of a monument could contact NIEA: Built Heritage directly for advice as there is no regular inspection of monuments which are not statutorily protected.

The NIEA also responds to consultations from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) about the protection of prehistoric and other sites on land which is subject to agreement under an agri-environment scheme. In such cases NIEA: Built Heritage inspects those sites and makes recommendations to DARD about their treatment which are passed to the landowner for action. As NIEA is concerned to protect all monuments from harm, an inspection to any site, whether scheduled or not, can be carried out on request and advice and direction is provided by the Inspectorate free of charge.

Strategic Development in Carrickfergus

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister of the Environment what plans there are for strategic development in Carrickfergus under the 2015 plan, in particular the Marshallstown Road.

(AQW 21982/11-15)

Mr Attwood: I would refer you to the details for Carrickfergus contained within Volume 7 of the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) and the subsequent Planning Appeals Commission (PAC) Reports into objections to the draft Plan.

Amongst other objections received for Carrickfergus, an objection, reference BMAP/1356, seeking the inclusion of land bordered to the north by the Marshallstown Road, has been considered by the PAC and it has recommended no change to the Plan.

In the statement issued on 6 June 2012 to accompany the publication of the Planning Appeals Commissions Reports on BMAP I highlighted that in instances where the PAC state that they 'recommend no change to the draft plan as a result of the objections', it is more likely - although I cannot guarantee it - that these recommendations will be accepted by my Department.

The Department in the course of preparing BMAP for adoption has assessed all the PAC recommendations before reaching final decisions, and these decisions will be known when the Plan is adopted.

The public cannot make any assumptions as to the development status of sites until such times as the final report is issued and the Plan adopted.

Driver and Vehicle Agency Jobs in Coleraine

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister of the Environment what progress has been made regarding the Driver and Vehicle Agency jobs in Coleraine since his discussions with the Secretary of State on 11 April 2013.

(AQW 21983/11-15)

Mr Attwood: Vehicle licensing is delivered in Northern Ireland by the Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA), under an agreement between the Department and the Department for Transport. DVLA, the Agency in Swansea responsible for vehicle licensing services across the UK, is nearing completion of a project to integrate the separate NI and GB computer systems, to produce an integrated system capable of meeting the vehicle licensing needs of customers across the UK. DVLA has proposed using the integrated computer system to transfer all the work not done online or in Post Offices to Swansea and to terminate the agreement with this Department.

At my meeting with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, I emphasised the need for meaningful consultation with customers and other stakeholders here before any decisions are made about the future delivery of vehicle licensing services. I also emphasised the disproportionate impact that the loss of 320 jobs would have on the Northern Ireland economy and particularly on Coleraine and that the issue must be assessed in the context of the wider economic and social context of the Executive's effort to stimulate and re-balance the economy here – and the London Government's proposals for a new package of measures to support the local economy

The Secretary of State agreed to consider the points I raised and to discuss the situation with the Transport Secretary. I am meeting Stephen Hammond, the Transport Minister responsible for vehicle licensing, on 7 May 2013 and at that meeting we will review the process for consultation and decision-making and consider the proposals for vehicle licensing in the light of my most recent representations.

Department of Finance and Personnel

Domestic Rates

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the percentage increase in domestic rates in each of the last ten years, broken down by district council.

(AQW 21574/11-15)

Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel): The information requested is provided in the attached Tables with increases in the Regional Rate shown in Table 1 and Table 2 detailing increases in the District Rate. Information on the District Rate has been provided by the Department of the Environment.

Unfortunately information in relation to increases in domestic district rates for the rate year 2007-08 is not readily available. A revaluation of domestic property for rating purposes came into effect on 1st April of that year and arising from the different basis of valuation it was not possible for the Department of the Environment to calculate a like-for-like comparison with the previous year's figures. The domestic regional rate set by central government was uplifted by an agreed 6% for the 2007-08 rate year.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN REGIONAL DOMESTIC RATE

| Inc. in |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 | |
| 8.80% | 9.00% | 19.00% | 6.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 2.49% | 2.22% | 2.70% | |

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN DOMESTIC DISTRICT RATES

District Council	2003/2004 to 2004/2005	2004/2005 to 2005/2006	2005/2006 to 2006/2007	2006/2007 to 2007/2008	2007/2008 to 2008/2009	2008/2009 to 2009/2010	2009/2010 to 2010/2011	2010/2011 to 2011/2012	2011/2012 to 2012/2013	2012/2013 to 2013/2014
Antrim	7.82%	7.70%	3.83%	N/A	9.88%	7.76%	5.32%	1.45%	0.96%	0.49%
Ards	5.95%	4.99%	3.80%		3.49%	4.97%	2.98%	0.96%	0.92%	0.91%
Armagh	5.90%	4.50%	7.50%		6.90%	6.93%	6.89%	2.50%	1.94%	1.70%
Ballymena	8.57%	7.27%	9.99%		9.85%	5.96%	6.91%	2.74%	2.29%	1.65%
Ballymoney	9.63%	2.12%	4.23%		3.97%	7.61%	7.46%	2.79%	3.04%	0.00%
Banbridge	7.94%	6.94%	5.90%		3.93%	3.94%	4.96%	3.49%	2.89%	2.21%
Belfast	5.95%	7.30%	5.59%		4.83%	6.97%	7.80%	2.97%	2.59%	0.00%
Carrickfergus	8.23%	3.98%	1.94%		7.00%	7.98%	5.65%	2.28%	2.20%	1.86%
Castlereagh	6.35%	3.48%	3.96%		1.66%	0.00%	3.47%	2.49%	5.90%	2.90%
Coleraine	6.52%	4.90%	7.00%		5.91%	5.95%	4.98%	3.59%	2.88%	1.91%
Cookstown	6.93%	5.90%	6.89%		4.91%	3.86%	2.52%	1.03%	1.41%	2.00%
Craigavon	7.46%	6.62%	6.86%		2.33%	2.94%	1.99%	3.40%	1.99%	1.59%

District Council	2003/2004 to 2004/2005	2004/2005 to 2005/2006	2005/2006 to 2006/2007	2006/2007 to 2007/2008	2007/2008 to 2008/2009	2008/2009 to 2009/2010	2009/2010 to 2010/2011	2010/2011 to 2011/2012	2011/2012 to 2012/2013	2012/2013 to 2013/2014
Derry	7.98%	5.95%	5.80%		4.99%	5.58%	4.99%	2.25%	2.20%	1.98%
Down	8.81%	4.99%	7.99%		6.68%	2.54%	6.78%	0.00%	2.00%	2.63%
Dungannon	6.75%	6.21%	6.98%		6.57%	4.44%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Fermanagh	4.32%	4.98%	6.21%		6.89%	8.52%	3.86%	1.19%	0.97%	1.68%
Larne	8.28%	5.52%	5.53%		2.53%	0.00%	3.92%	2.99%	4.03%	2.84%
Limavady	5.82%	4.75%	8.24%		6.60%	5.49%	7.57%	-0.72%	1.12%	1.83%
Lisburn	6.93%	0.89%	1.99%		1.71%	2.59%	1.98%	2.97%	3.97%	1.97%
Magherafelt	5.95%	4.84%	3.49%		2.89%	2.90%	8.40%	1.93%	1.97%	1.97%
Moyle	8.59%	7.51%	6.55%		9.40%	5.61%	0.00%	0.00%	2.21%	1.83%
Newry & Mourne	3.50%	4.90%	4.95%		4.90%	6.74%	6.85%	0.00%	2.00%	1.29%
Newtownabbey	4.57%	3.32%	3.89%		5.90%	1.93%	4.91%	2.46%	2.83%	1.30%
North Down	3.49%	3.95%	5.32%		7.47%	8.16%	3.00%	2.99%	3.48%	0.98%
Omagh	6.09%	6.50%	4.93%		4.84%	4.50%	2.98%	1.37%	1.70%	0.98%
Strabane	6.50%	4.69%	5.24%		6.47%	7.48%	4.37%	-1.80%	3.92%	3.77%

As 2007/2008 domestic rates were determined on the basis of capital valuations, a like for like comparison with the previous year's figures is not possible.

Cost of Hotel Accommodation for Civil Servants

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the cost of hotel accommodation for civil servants, in each the last five years.

(AQW 21621/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The information requested is presented on the attached table and covers the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012.

Year	Cost
2012	£752,946
2011	£529,743
2010	£308,557
2009	£435,367
2008	£428,776

Blom UK and GSM Data

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the procurement process that led to the appointment of Blom UK and GSM data; and (ii) the value of the contracts.

(AQW 21715/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Blom Aerofilms Ltd and DSM Geodata, were appointed as the result of an open tender process carried out by the Department of Finance and Personnel's Central Procurement Division following NICS policies and regulations.

The value of each contract is as follows:

Blom Aerofilms Ltd	£1.30million
DSM Geodata	£1.30million

Rate Relief: Caring for Sick Relatives

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether there is a policy in place to allow people who are caring for sick relatives to apply for rate relief.

(AQW 21898/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Extra allowances are available, mainly through the rates element of Housing Benefit, but there are also small supplements provided under the low income rate relief scheme.

Entitlement to that support depends on individual circumstances and on the level of income and/or capital, which includes savings.

Anyone who believes they may be entitled to rates support should contact Land and Property Services if they own their house, or alternatively the Northern Ireland Housing Executive if they rent their property.

Estimated Revenue and the Local Fiscal Position

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the relationship between estimated revenue and the local fiscal position.

(AQW 21950/11-15)

Mr Wilson: As stated in the Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report 2009-10 and 2010-11, the net fiscal balance for NI is estimated as aggregate public sector revenue less aggregate public sector expenditure.

Net Fiscal Balance Report

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether the data available to apportion revenue is sufficient to provide calculations of reasonable accuracy which can be quantified within statistical confidence limits.

(AQW 21951/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The purpose of the Net Fiscal Balance Report 2009-10 and 2010-11 is to provide an overview of public sector finances in Northern Ireland. It is not intended to provide an exact figure of individual revenue items.

Net Fiscal Balance Report: Absence of Key Revenue Data Sources

Mr McKay asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what mechanisms are being developed to address the absence of key revenue data sources within the net fiscal balance report.

(AQW 21953/11-15)

Mr Wilson: I refer the Member to my written response to AQO 3681/11-15.

Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission Staff

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel (i) what action he is taking to ensure that staff of the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) are placed on pay scales which mirror the Northern Ireland Civil Service; and (ii) what barriers exist to placing staff of the NILSC on pay scales which mirror the Northern Ireland Civil Service; and (iii) when a decision on the NILSC pay scales will be made.
(AQW 22002/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) is an executive Non Departmental Body (NDPB) of the Department of Justice (DOJ), and as such is subject to the HM Treasury (HMT) Pay Remit Approval and Process guidance. The Executive has previously agreed that the HMT guidance be adopted by the Executive as the framework for the management of the public sector pay position in Northern Ireland

This guidance states that responsibility for value for money and regularity issues associated with pay remits sits with the relevant departmental Accounting Officer, in this case the DOJ. This is evidenced by all proposed remits (and supporting evidence) being approved by the Departmental (DOJ) Finance Directorate before being formally submitted to the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) Supply.

It is DFP's responsibility to provide advice on pay policy and information requirements as well as to challenge departments when there is a belief that the policy has not been implemented properly.

DFP will also provide a technical quality assurance on a submitted pay remit, and will consider whether the pay remit raises any associated issues in relation to the control of public expenditure, affordability, departmental delegations and the need for wider Supply approvals.

Once content, DFP Supply will seek the approval of the DFP Minister. If the case raises significant or contentious issues the DFP Minister may decide to refer the matter to the Executive for discussion.

As yet, DOJ has not formally submitted any pay proposal to put the NILSC staff on to pay scales that mirror those of the Northern Ireland Civil Services (NICS), however when such a pay remit is received it will be given due consideration in line with the process described above

Catering Services in Civil Service Buildings

Mr Cree asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the closures over the past twelve months, or planned closures, of catering services in Civil Service buildings; (ii) the rationale for the closure of these services; and (iii) any subsidies currently provided to catering services.

(AQW 22005/11-15)

Mr Wilson: No catering services have been closed in the past twelve months.

Provision of catering services will cease after 30 June 2013 in the locations identified in the table overleaf.

The Contract for these services commenced in April 2012 on the basis that no subsidy would be provided. The Terms and Conditions of contract allow for partial termination of the NICS Cleaning, Catering and Support Services contract if it is not viable to provide catering without a subsidy in a specific building. The Contractor has given notice to cease the provision of catering services in the above locations from 30 June 2013. In taking this action the contractor has complied with its contractual obligations.

Subsidies are currently provided for catering services in James House, Lighthouse Building and Andersonstown Jobs and Benefits Office. Catering services at these buildings are delivered under contracts awarded in 2010 and 2011.

Location	Department
Craigantlet Buildings	DFP
Hydebank	DRD
Marlborough House	DRD
Omagh County Hall	DOE
Hollywood Road Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Newry Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Falls Road Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Foyle Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Enniskillen Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Coleraine Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Armagh Jobs and Benefits Office	DSD
Lisahally	DSD
Newforge	AFBI /DARD
Northern Ireland Tourist Board HQ	Northern Ireland Tourist Board

Contracts

Mr Flanagan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the (i) nature; (ii) value; and (iii) provider of each contract to provide a service to the public sector in each of the last four years.

(AQW 22079/11-15)

Mr Wilson: Details of services contracts valued at over £30k awarded by the Central Procurement Directorate over the past four years have been placed in the Assembly Library. In accordance with normal practice details of those providing services on security related contracts in general and to the Department of Justice in particular are not published.

Cancer Deaths

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the changes in the five most common cancer deaths per 10,000 of the population between 2002 and 2012.

(AQW 22082/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The tables overleaf detail the most common cancer deaths registered in Northern Ireland for males and females, with associated rates, where cancer¹ has been recorded as the primary cause of death.

Figures are presented for 2001 to 2011. Provisional figures for 2012 will be available in May 2013.

¹ International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes C00-C97

TABLE 1: MOST COMMON CANCER1 DEATHS IN MALES, REGISTERED IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND RATES PER 10,000 MALE POPULATION², 2001-2011

ICD10	Name of Cancer	Registration Year										
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
C33-C34	Trachea, bronchus & lung	6.1	5.9	5.8	6.1	6.0	6.1	6.0	6.5	5.9	6.1	6.3
C61	Prostate	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.9	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.8	2.6
C18	Colon	1.7	1.8	2.1	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.6	1.6
C15	Oesophagus	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.0	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.1
C80	Primary site unknown	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.1
C25	Pancreas	1.1	1.3	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.0

TABLE 2: MOST COMMON CANCER1 DEATHS IN FEMALES REGISTERED IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND RATES PER 10,000 FEMALE POPULATION², 2001-2011

ICD10	Name of Cancer	Registration Year										
		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
C33-C34	Trachea, bronchus & lung	3.2	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.9	4.0	4.2	4.0	3.9
C50	Breast	3.6	3.2	3.3	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	2.9	3.7
C18	Colon	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.2
C80	Primary site unknown	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.5	1.1	1.3	1.5	1.3
C56	Ovary	1.3	1.3	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.2
C25	Pancreas	1.0	1.0	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2

1 Cancer deaths were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).

2 Rates have been calculated using the Northern Ireland Mid Year Estimates

Deaths by Suicide

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many people died by suicide in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) constituency; and (ii) age.

(AQW 22122/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The tables overleaf detail the number of deaths registered as a suicide¹ in Northern Ireland, for 2009 to 2011, broken down by (i) constituency; and (ii) age.

(I) TABLE 1: NUMBER OF DEATHS REGISTERED AS SUICIDE¹ IN NORTHERN IRELAND BY PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY AREA², 2009-2011

Parliamentary Constituency Area Name	Registration Year		
	2009	2010	2011
Belfast East	17	23	14
Belfast North	26	25	31
Belfast South	13	20	21
Belfast West	27	20	29
East Antrim	9	9	12
East Londonderry	16	19	12
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	19	13	16
Foyle	17	25	15
Lagan Valley	6	23	15
Mid Ulster	14	9	14
Newry and Armagh	18	16	19
North Antrim	11	20	13
North Down	9	13	8
South Antrim	12	13	14
South Down	6	20	9
Strangford	6	16	10
Upper Bann	16	17	26
West Tyrone	17	12	11
Unknown	1	-	-
Northern Ireland	260	313	289

- 1 In the UK, in considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'Undetermined injury'. Since 2001, the ICD10 codes used for 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' are X60-X84 and Y87.0 and the ICD10 codes used for 'Undetermined injury' are Y10-Y34 and Y87.
- 2 Based on the 2008 Parliamentary Constituencies Boundaries.

(II) TABLE 2: NUMBER OF DEATHS REGISTERED AS SUICIDE¹ IN NORTHERN IRELAND BY AGE, 2009-2011

Age	Registration Year		
	2009	2010	2011
Under 15	1	1	3
15-19	14	20	22
20-24	27	50	31
25-29	33	29	37
30-34	26	28	39
35-39	29	26	25
40-44	34	39	28
45-49	32	41	21
50-54	20	26	20
55-59	16	13	22
60-64	8	14	15
65-69	10	7	12
70-74	3	7	4
75-79	4	6	3
80-84	3	2	4
85+	0	4	3
All Ages	260	313	289

- 1 In the UK, in considering suicide events it is conventional to include cases where the cause of death is classified as either 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' or 'Undetermined injury'. Since 2001, the ICD10 codes used for 'Suicide and self-inflicted injury' are X60-X84 and Y87.0 and the ICD10 codes used for 'Undetermined injury' are Y10-Y34 and Y87.

Deaths as a Result of Asthma

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many deaths as a result of asthma have been recorded in each of the last two years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust area.

(AQW 22197/11-15)

Mr Wilson: The table overleaf details the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland, by Health and Social Care Trust, where asthma¹ has been recorded as the primary cause of death in 2010 and 2011.

Provisional figures for 2012 will be available in May 2013.

¹ International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10).

TABLE 1: ASTHMA1 DEATHS REGISTERED IN NORTHERN IRELAND, 2010-2011

Health and Social Care Trust	2010	2011
Belfast	5	3
Northern	11	10
South Eastern	5	6
Southern	7	6
Western	6	8
Total	34	33

- 1 Asthma deaths were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10), code J45.

Cavity Wall Insulation

Mr Durkan asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether there is a statutory obligation on developers of residential areas to install cavity wall insulation before residential buildings become inhabited.

(AQW 22211/11-15)

Mr Wilson: There is no statutory obligation to install cavity wall insulation in residential buildings.

Rates Burden on Town Centre Businesses

Mr McElduff asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether his Department will consider the introduction of a scheme aimed at reducing the rates burden on town centre businesses.

(AQW 22261/11-15)

Mr Wilson: My Department has no current plans for special relief for town centres. Any such provision would present major difficulties in terms of choosing exactly where to designate relief and the impact it is likely to have, in terms of the unfair competitive disadvantage it may create for those outside the chosen areas and the likelihood of causing displacement. Furthermore, even if I wanted to intervene in this way, the risk of someone successfully challenging such a policy is unacceptably high. I would rather direct resources to the business community as a whole rather than waste them on defending well meaning schemes which are vulnerable to challenge through the courts.

I prefer a broader approach. There are already several rate relief schemes currently in place to help town centre businesses 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.

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 town centre businesses at this time.

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Freedom of Information Request

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 21299/11-15, how this answer is compatible with the response to a Freedom of Information request that the revision in 2009 was “solely to reflect the name change of the organisation.”

(AQW 21706/11-15)

Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety): The third point within the answer to AQW 21299/11-15 stated that the purpose of the review in 2009 was to ensure that the standard conditions of contract did not contain anything that was contrary to the new health and social care arrangements following RPA. The change of name from Central Services Agency to Business Services Organisation, as part of RPA, required the standard conditions of contract to be revised.

Brooklands Antrim Health Centre: Intermediate Care Beds

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many contracts the Conway Group has been awarded since November 2011 to provide intermediate care beds at Brooklands Antrim Health Centre; and what was the value of each contract.

(AQW 21716/11-15)

Mr Poots: I understand that since November 2011 the Northern Trust has had two contracts with the Conway Group for Brooklands, Antrim. The first was for 6 months with a phased number of intermediate beds, up to a maximum of 15, from 21 March 2012. The value of this contract was £203,000. The second contract is for the period October 2012 to September 2013 for 15 intermediate beds. The value of this current contract is estimated to be £429,000.

The contract is paid on a block contract basis at £550 per week (regional nursing tariff). This is a temporary arrangement pending a review and reform of intermediate care services across the Trust.

A competitive tendering process was undertaken in the procurement of the intermediate care beds that are in use at the Brooklands care facility.

Northern Health and Social Care Trust

Mr McDevitt asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) why the Northern Health and Social Care Trust is using a private health care centres for intermediate inpatient beds; (ii) what capacity issues within the Trust were identified that led to these beds being commissioned; (iii) whether the Mid Ulster Hospital or Whiteabbey Hospital sites were considered in the business plan for these contracts; and (iv) to provide a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment on the provision of intermediate inpatient beds at Brooklands Health Centre Antrim.

(AQW 21718/11-15)

Mr Poots: I understand that the position is as follows:-

- (i) The Northern HSC Trust is currently developing a strategy on the future of intermediate care services. The NHSCT currently uses a variety of care settings for inpatient intermediate care which currently includes community hospitals, a number of independent sector nursing and residential care homes, and statutory residential homes;
- (ii) Sustained going pressures within acute service facilities meant there was a need to enhance patient flow out of acute facilities by the use of intermediate care beds;
- (iii) The Mid Ulster and Whiteabbey Hospital sites are currently utilised for Consultant Led Rehabilitation and so were not available for this purpose;
- (iv) An EQIA was not required. This is an interim arrangement to deal with the pressures on acute services and meet the needs of patients.

Cancelled Surgical Appointments

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of surgical appointments cancelled, through no fault of the patients, in each month of the last three years, broken down by Health and Social Care Trust.

(AQW 21799/11-15)

Mr Poots: Information is not available on the number of surgical appointments cancelled, through no fault of the patients, in each month of the last three years. However, my Department's 'Integrated Elective Access Protocol', issued in 2008, provides guidance to Health and Social Care Trusts on effective and responsive booking processes. For example, clinicians are required to give 6 weeks notice of annual or study leave. This helps ensure a reduction in the likelihood of hospital cancellations as Trust's can be confident that clinics will be held.

Nursing Home Residents

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how nursing home residents can access counselling services for mental health issues, such as depression.

(AQW 21807/11-15)

Mr Poots: "Talking therapies" can be commissioned and delivered in a range of settings and vary in type and intensity. Access to a specific service is dependent on an assessment of the clinical need of the individual.

Within the statutory sector, such services can be accessed through primary care, mental health and/or older people's services.

The Health and Social Care Board has recently established a Mental Health Older Peoples Group which is reviewing care arrangements for older people with mental health needs. It is anticipated that this work will support improved access to psychological care services for older people.

Fire Stations in South Down and Strangford

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many times (i) fire stations in the (a) South Down; and (b) Strangford constituencies have been unable to respond to calls in the required time, in the last twelve months; and (ii) the (a) first; or (b) second appliance has been unable to respond because there has been no crew available.

(AQW 21808/11-15)

Mr Poots: The table below outlines the number of times during 2012/13

- (i) fire appliances did not respond in the required time,
- (ii) the first appliance was unable to respond due to no crew available; and,
- (iii) the second appliance was unable to attend due to no crew available.

Constituency	Failure to meet response target *	1st Appliance Failure to Respond	2nd Appliance Failure to respond
South Down	19	16	36
Strangford	29	9	5

* this column refers to the Emergency Response Standards (ERS) which apply to dwelling fires only.

Fire Stations in South Down and Strangford

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the occasions in the last twelve months when fire stations in the (i) South Down; and (ii) Strangford constituencies have required back-up from neighbouring stations.

(AQW 21809/11-15)

Mr Poots: The table below outlines the number of occasions in 2012/13 when fire stations in South Down and Strangford constituencies have required back up from neighbouring stations.

Constituency	Number of back-ups
South Down	55
Strangford	79

Standard Crewing Level for a Fire Appliance

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the standard crewing level for a fire appliance; and how many times, in the last twelve months, appliances have responded whilst below this level.

(AQW 21810/11-15)

Mr Poots: The standard crewing levels are five for the first appliance and four for the second appliance.

The following table outlines the number, during 2012/13, of measurable incidents under the Emergency Response Standards when NIFRS responded below the standard crewing levels.

Number of occasions 1st appliance responded with less than 5 riders	Number of occasions when 2nd appliance responded with less than 4 riders
206	78

Fire Service: Reserve Members

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what actions the Fire Service takes in relation to reserve members who do not respond to call-outs.

(AQW 21811/11-15)

Mr Poots: The NIFRS' Retained Crews have agreed performance criteria and if performance falls below expected levels individuals are interviewed by their line manager. If necessary, action is taken in line with the guidance set out in the policies relating to the Retained service.

Fire Service in South Down and Strangford

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the performance against targets of the Fire Service in the (i) South Down; and (ii) Strangford constituencies; and what action and support is being initiated to improve performance.

(AQW 21812/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) The table below details the performance of fire stations in the South Down and Strangford constituencies against the required performance.

Constituency	Number of Measurable Incidents under the Emergency Response Standard	Number of times 1st and 2nd appliance met the response standard
South Down	95	76
Strangford	76	47

- (ii) In order to improve performance NIFRS Area Commanders (ACs) are held to account at Monthly Operational Accountability Meetings for their performance against agreed standards. Issues that cannot be addressed at area level are escalated through internal performance management vehicles including the Board, as appropriate.

Stroke Lysis Treatment

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what clinical arrangements are in place in the (i) Causeway Hospital; and (ii) Antrim Area Hospital to ensure that patients requiring stroke lysis treatment receive the appropriate intervention.

(AQW 21823/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Northern Health and Social Care Trust is responsible for the provision of appropriate clinical interventions and care for patients requiring stroke lysis treatment in the Causeway and Antrim Area Hospitals.

The Trust's Management of Acute Stroke Protocol June 2012 is the policy which directs the medical, pharmacy and nursing response to adult patients presenting with stroke like symptoms in both a hospital and community setting. The aims of the protocol are to ensure that patients with a diagnosis of stroke are referred to stroke specialists as soon as possible and to ensure that patients with acute stroke are commenced on a stroke care pathway so that no omissions occur in any aspect of their assessment or treatment. The protocol recognises that in order to minimise the effects of stroke illness, it is imperative that patients presenting with an acute stroke receive a comprehensive assessment of their condition. Patients should then be given the optimum level of treatment to ensure they have as high a chance as possible of surviving their illness and making the maximum functional recovery.

Development, Shaping and Monitoring of Services

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline his Department's plans to involve people with a learning disability and family carers in the development, shaping and monitoring of services.

(AQW 21843/11-15)

Mr Poots: Involving people with a learning disability and their families/carers in the development, shaping and monitoring of services is a key principle of Delivering the Bamford Vision (2009) and the Bamford Action Plan 2012-2015.

It falls to the Bamford Taskforce, which was established to co-ordinate and lead in the various areas of HSC work that are identified in the Bamford Vision and its accompanying Action Plans, to ensure that this principle is adhered to.

A representative of the Bamford Taskforce regularly attends the Bamford Monitoring Group, which captures the views and experiences of people with learning disabilities and their families and carers in relation to changes being made to services in Northern Ireland resulting from the Bamford Review. The Taskforce listen to the views of those people who regularly use learning disability services and these views may then be used to inform future service provision.

In addition, during 2013 the HSC Board and Public Health Agency, in partnership with the Guidelines and Audit Implementation Network, intend carrying out an audit of people with a learning disability and their experiences of service provision, in line with the Learning Disability Service Framework's requirement to establish a performance baseline for each of the Framework's 34 Standards.

Muckamore Abbey

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients are being treated in Muckamore Abbey; and how many have been there for more than one year.

(AQW 21858/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is assumed that this question refers to the number of patients in Muckamore Abbey. On 17th February 2012 (latest information available), 212 patients were in Muckamore Abbey, 185 (87.3%) of whom had been resident for more than one year.

Muckamore Abbey

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much money the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has spent on maintenance of Muckamore Abbey in 2011/12; and for a breakdown of this spend.

(AQW 21862/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust spent £976k on maintenance for Muckamore Abbey Hospital in 2011/12. A breakdown is not available.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, since December 2012, what funding has been made available to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to (i) improve performance and; (ii) increase inpatient capacity at Antrim Area Hospital.

(AQW 21866/11-15)

Mr Poots: The allocation of funding for hospital services is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board as service commissioner. I am advised by the Board that additional funding has been allocated to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust from 2011/12 onwards with the express aim of improving performance. Some additional inpatient capacity was also provided with a view to it contributing to an overall improvement in the unscheduled care pathway in Antrim Area Hospital.

The Board has advised that there are three investments where funding was made on or after December 2012:

- £22,000 non-recurrent funding for community in-reach coordinators, two Band 2 nurses to promote safe, effective and timely discharge of patients to community services;
- £800,000 non-recurrent for reablement;
- £400,000 non-recurrent for emergency care services, part of the £1.8 million investment mentioned below.

The Northern Trust has also received funding for a number of other projects which commenced before December 2012 but continues to be funded after December 2012:

- £973,000 recurrent for additional medical and nursing staff from October 2011 to deliver more hours of senior decision making cover in the emergency department, enhance the medical assessment unit, facilitate direct GP access and bolster nursing ratios;
- £1.8 million non-recurrent in 2012/13 to maintain 14 additional beds, provide emergency theatre capacity and continue to implement an Emergency Department Action Plan. £400,000 of this was allocated in December 2012;
- £408,000 non-recurrent winter pressures funding allocated in November 2012;
- £99,570 non-recurrent funding from September 2012 to January 2013 for a primary care stream in the emergency department;
- £40,000 non-recurrent from September 2011 to March 2013 for nursing home outreach clinics;

- £3.19 million recurrent funding in 2012/13 for older people's services, which aims to strengthen community services and support older people at home, which in turn can help reduce the need for hospital attendance and admission and reduce length of stay in hospital.

Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Department

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the claim by the senior consultants in the Antrim Area Hospital that the Accident and Emergency department is ineffective and unsafe.

(AQW 21867/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust that it is confident that it provides a safe service. I visited Antrim Area Hospital on Monday 22 April 2013 to hear at first hand the consultants' concerns. The Trust has advised that it is working with the consultants to mitigate the potential risks within the emergency department. The Trust has put in place a range of measures to ensure patient safety at the emergency department including: expanding the Medical Assessment Unit which allows GPs direct access to specialist assessment beds; increasing support for triage and reviewing and strengthening the escalation process; making further investment in nursing staff and increasing paediatric support. The Trust is also looking at improvements in other areas of the hospital to help improve patient flows in and through the emergency department.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why funding has been made available to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust since the dismissal of its Chairman to make improvements to the Accident and Emergency department in Antrim Area Hospital; and how much funding has been provided.

(AQW 21868/11-15)

Mr Poots: The allocation of funding for hospital services is a matter for the Health and Social Care Board as service commissioner. I am advised by the Board that additional funding has been allocated to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust from 2011/12 onwards with the express aim of improving performance. Some additional inpatient capacity was also provided with a view to it contributing to an overall improvement in the unscheduled care pathway in Antrim Area Hospital.

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- £40,000 non-recurrent from September 2011 to March 2013 for nursing home outreach clinics;
- £3.19 million recurrent funding in 2012/13 for older people's services, which aims to strengthen community services and support older people at home, which in turn can help reduce the need for hospital attendance and admission and reduce length of stay in hospital.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr McClarty asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) what is the cost of the turn-around team in Antrim Area Hospital; (ii) for an update on any changes produced by the turn-around team and; (iii) for a summary of any interim reports made by the turn-around team.

(AQW 21869/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Turnaround and Support Team continues to work alongside the support already being provided by the Health and Social Care Board and the Public Health Agency through the emergency department Improvement Action Group and I expect the Team's report to be provided to me shortly.

The cost of the Turnaround and Support Team to the middle of May 2013 is estimated to be £40,000. For the period January to March 2013 the services of two of the team members were provided free of charge.

Accident and Emergency Services

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of Accident and Emergency Services at the (i) Antrim Area Hospital; and (ii) Causeway Hospital; and what action he will take following the negative report from hospital consultants at the Antrim-based Accident and Emergency Department.

(AQW 21875/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Emergency Departments at Antrim Area and Causeway Hospitals receive annually approximately 72,000 and 43,000 patients respectively. Both departments are experiencing difficulty in meeting the emergency care targets which I have set for Health and Social Care, with Antrim Area Hospital having particular difficulties.

On 10 December 2012 I announced the appointment of a Turn Around and Support Team to the Northern Health and Social Care Trust to carry out a strategic overview to establish what changes and support might be required to accelerate progress at the Trust. There will be a focus in particular on the challenges in relation to the Trust's ability to deliver on the services commissioned, including reducing waiting times in relation to unscheduled care. The Team has been working alongside the support already being provided to the Trust by the Health and Social Care Board and Public Health Agency. The team's report is expected shortly.

I visited Antrim Area Hospital on Monday 22 April 2013 to hear at first hand the consultants' concerns about the Emergency Department. I am advised by the Northern Trust that it is working with the consultants to mitigate the potential risks within the department. The Trust has put in place a range of measures to ensure patient safety which include: expanding the Medical Assessment Unit which allows GPs direct access to specialist assessment beds; increasing support for triage and reviewing and strengthening the escalation process; and, making further investment in nursing staff and increasing paediatric support. The Trust is also looking at improvements in other areas of the hospital to help improve patient flows in and through the Emergency Department.

West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Force, Health Employment Scheme

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Force, Health Employment scheme.

(AQW 21886/11-15)

Mr Poots: The West Belfast and Greater Shankill (WBGS) Task Force, Health Employment scheme finished in March 2010. The project was focused upon two core areas of work; Pre-employment -

targeted at the unemployed and economically inactive in the , West Belfast and Greater Shankill areas providing training and job support services to enable them to compete for advertised entry level jobs within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Outcomes - records show that a total of 310 people received support under the Pre-employment strand of which 145 have secured a job, 143 of which have moved into employment with the Trust. This equates to a 47% job conversion rate which is an excellent achievement when benchmarked against other Programmes such as New Deal. Of the 145 who secured a job, 85 were JAC (Job Assist Centre) clients. The remaining 60 were people who made direct contact with the WBGS Health Employment Partnership through a community outreach event in the Millennium Outreach Centre.

Job progression – targeted at those staff in entry level jobs within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, providing training to help staff to progress along a career path within the Trust.

Outcomes - project records show that a total of 316 Trust staff received training through the HEP project and 36 staff progressed up the Trust's employment scale as a direct result of the intervention of the HEP project.

Prisoner Health Care

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 20630/11-15, to provide the figures for 2013 to date.

(AQW 21896/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information is set out in the table below.

	2013 to date
No of prisoners treated in prison health facilities for the effects of taking illegal drugs	5
No of prisoners who required treatment in an outside hospital for the effects of taking illegal drugs	1
No of prisoners who have suffered long term health damage as a result of taking illegal drugs	0
No of prisoners who did not recover from the effects of taking illegal drugs	0

Carers of Sick Relatives

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department has a policy in place to help people who care for sick relatives with the payment of their rates.

(AQW 21899/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department does not have a policy in place to help carers with the payment of their rates; such a policy would be outside the remit of my Department.

The Department of Finance and Personnel currently holds responsibility for policies around Rate Relief.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on what date did the escalation of the Antrim Area Hospital begin; and what assurances he can give that fire safety in the hospital has not been compromised by the extra non-medical beds in inpatient wards.

(AQW 21906/11-15)

Mr Poots: My office has been informed that this question refers to the escalation invoked to deal with winter pressures.

The escalation process began on 28 December 2012 in response to overcrowding in the Emergency Department, to respond to the number of patients waiting to be admitted to wards and the expected level of inpatient admissions to the hospital in the following days.

A review of the ward areas was carried out by the Trust Fire Safety officer, Director of Acute Services and a Trust Estates Officer to determine where in each ward extra beds could be safely placed. A subsequent external inspection carried out by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service concluded that they were satisfied with the arrangements. These risk reviews form part of the established escalation plan.

Antrim Area Hospital: Serious Adverse Incidents

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs) that have been recorded at Antrim Area Hospital in (a) 2009; (b) 2010; (c) 2011; (d) 2012; and (e) 2013 to date; (ii) the reasons the SAIs were initiated; and (iii) the number of these SAIs that related to service delivery at the Accident and Emergency department of Antrim Area Hospital.

(AQW 21908/11-15)

Mr Poots: Since 1 May 2010, Health and Social Care (HSC) organisations have been required to report to the HSC Board any Serious Adverse Incident relating to the services they provide. Prior to that date, incidents were reported to the Department.

The information on the number of Serious Adverse Incidents reported to the Department and the Health and Social Care Board by Antrim Area Hospital in (a) 2009; (b) 2010; (c) 2011; (d) 2012; and (e) 2013 to date; (ii) the reasons the SAIs were initiated; and (iii) the number of these SAIs that related to Service Delivery at the Accident and Emergency Department of Antrim Area Hospital is outlined in the tables below.

(I) NUMBER OF SERIOUS ADVERSE INCIDENTS (SAIS) THAT HAVE BEEN RECORDED AT ANTRIM AREA HOSPITAL IN (A) 2009; (B) 2010; (C) 2011; (D) 2012; AND (E) 2013 TO DATE.

Year SAI notified to Department/HSCB	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013 (Jan- 30 Apr)	Total
No	8	8	5	10	3	34

(II) THE REASONS THE SAIS WERE INITIATED;

SAI Criteria	No of SAI Notifications
Serious injury to or the unexpected/unexplained death (including suspected suicides or serious self harm) of a service user.	15
Unexpected serious risk to a service user and/or staff member and member of the public.	12
Unexpected or significant threat to provide service and/or maintain business continuity.	3
Serious assault (including homicide and sexual assaults) by a service user on other service users or on staff or on members of the public.	2
Serious incidents of public interest or concern involving theft, fraud, information breaches and data losses.	2
Total	34

(III) THE NUMBER OF THESE SAIS THAT RELATED TO SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT OF ANTRIM AREA HOSPITAL

SAIs that related to service delivery at the A& E department of Antrim Hospital	6
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Supported Living Accommodation

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many patients have been discharged to supported living accommodation in accordance with the principles of the Bamford Review since 2007.

(AQW 21931/11-15)

Mr Poots: The information was requested from the chief executives of the five HSC Trusts, who indicated that the information was not readily available and could only be provided by manually trawling through patient records, which would incur disproportionate cost.

Neurophysiotherapist

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of neurophysiotherapists in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area; (ii) the number of people diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis in the Northern Trust area; and (iii) the current waiting time from referral to appointment for accessing a neurophysiotherapist.

(AQW 21943/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) The numbers (headcount and whole-time equivalent [WTE]) of neurophysiotherapists employed by the Northern HSC Trust at April 2013 are shown in the table below.

Agenda for Change Band	Headcount	WTE
Band 8a	2	1.0
Band 7	6	5.0
Band 6	11	7.5
Band 5	1	1.0

Source: Northern HSC Trust

Note: These staff treat a wide range of neurological conditions, with 2.4 WTE dedicated to patients with progressive neurological conditions. In addition, patients with neurological conditions may also be treated by general rehabilitation physiotherapists.

- (ii) Information on the number of people currently diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis is not available. It is however well established that Northern Ireland has one of the highest incidences of MS in the world.

There were 2,101 admissions to HSC hospitals in Northern Ireland during 2011/12 where a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis was recorded. In 344 of these admissions, Multiple Sclerosis was recorded as the main/primary diagnosis.

- (iii) The Northern HSC Trust has stated that the current average waiting time from referral to an appointment with a neurophysiologist is between 4 to 6 weeks. They have advised that patients are prioritized according to clinical need and will be seen sooner than this if necessary.

Neurophysiotherapist

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the review process for patients who have had appointments with a neurophysiotherapist.

(AQW 21944/11-15)

Mr Poots: Following initial assessment, a treatment plan will be developed and treatment sessions allocated. Neuro-physiotherapy patients are reviewed in line with their clinical need and the frequency of their reviews will vary according to an individual's requirements. On discharge, patients are given advice about accessing the service should their condition change. Furthermore, a patient may be re-referred to the service by a Consultant, MS Specialist Nurse, GP or an Allied Health Professional.

Patient Complaints

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of patient complaints received by (i) each Health and Social Care Trust; (ii) each hospital; and (iii) his Department, in each of the last twelve months.

(AQW 21956/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- i Information on the number of patient complaints received by Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts is published annually by the Department, and is available to view or download from:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospitalstats/patient_safety/complaints.htm

Table 11 of this publication details the number of complaints received by HSC Trusts during each of the last three years up to 31 March 2012.

- ii. Information on the number of complaints received by each hospital is not currently collected. Complaints to specific hospitals are referred to the relevant HSC Trust, and are included within the HSC Trusts complaints figures detailed in the statistical report above.
- iii. Information on the number of patient complaints received by the Department is not currently collected. Patient complaints are re-referred to the relevant HSC Trust, and are included within the HSC Trusts complaints figures detailed in the statistical report above.

BSc Nursing (Adult), Queen's University

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail (i) the number of student places funded by his Department for the BSc Nursing (Adult) at Queen's University in each of the past three years; (ii) the number of students who have failed to progress to the subsequent year of the course; and (iii) the cost to his Department of providing additional places in years 2 and 3 of the course for nursing students who may wish to transfer from other academic institutions.

(AQW 21972/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- (i) The table below shows the BSc Nursing (Adult) commissioned numbers funded by the Department at Queens University for the three years 2011-12 to 2013-14.

PRE-REGISTRATION NURSING STUDENT COMMISSIONS FOR QUEENS UNIVERSITY

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
BSc Nursing (Adult)	284	266	266

The answer to parts (ii) and (iii) of this AQW have been provided by Queens University Belfast.

- (ii) The table below shows the cumulative % dropout by entry session.

PERCENTAGE NOT RETURNING IN 2ND, 3RD, 4TH OR 5TH YEAR FOLLOWING ENTRY SESSION

Year 2				Year 3			Year 4		Year 5
08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	08-09	09-10	10-11	08-09	09-10	08-09
6.9%	5.1%	5.7%	7.0%	9.0%	8.2%	9.4%	11.0%	7.9%	9.5%

A student is allowed a maximum of 5 years from the date of first entry onto the course, to complete their nursing degree. A small number leave for one or more years and return to complete the qualification. The table above shows the attrition rate from a start date in 08/09, across this maximum 5 year window.

- (iii) There are no additional places offered for transferring students in years 2 or 3, and hence no additional cost to the Department. Should a student permanently withdraw from a funded pre-reg Nursing course during year 1 of their studies, the School will advertise that it is open to applications for UK transfers into year 2 to take up any commissioned places that have been vacated. There are no transfers taken into Year 3.

Water Fluoridation

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on proposals to fluoridate the water supply.

(AQW 21987/11-15)

Mr Poots: I indicated on 25 April 2012 that it was appropriate that I should give consideration to fluoridation of the water supplies in Northern Ireland. I continue to consult with my Executive colleagues on the matter before coming to a decision.

If a proposal to fluoridate the water supplies is made, the appropriate evidence from reputable scientific and medical sources will be considered, and we are required under, The Water and Sewerage Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 to consult, and ascertain, public opinion. Should such a consultation proceed, we would welcome the views of all interested parties, at that time.

1980s Water Fluoridation Pilot in Holywood, County Down

Mr Agnew asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has access to the data from the 1980s water fluoridation pilot in Holywood, County Down.

(AQW 21988/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department does not hold any data from the 1980s water fluoridation pilot in Holywood, County Down.

Following previous similar requests my officials have 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.

Project Bank Accounts

Mr Elliott asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 18944/11-15, what plans his Department has to introduce Project Bank Accounts for all building contracts to help protect sub-contractors.

(AQW 22013/11-15)

Mr Poots: I confirm that my Department intends to introduce the use of Project Bank Accounts on construction works contracts in line with the protocol to be developed by Central Procurement Directorate.

Antrim Area Hospital: Permanent Medical Inpatient Beds

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the capacity at Antrim Area Hospital for permanent medical inpatient beds on 31 March in each of the last five years. **(AQW 22046/11-15)**

Mr Poots: The Northern HSC Trust have advised that the capacity at Antrim Area Hospital for permanent medical inpatient beds on 31 March in each of the last five years is as follows;

Year	Beds Capacity
March 2009	218
March 2010	196
March 2011	213
March 2012	248
March 2013	232

Assistance for Sports Clubs

Mr Hazzard asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assistance his Department offers sports clubs that wish to install aids in their premises, such as lifts for people with disabilities.

(AQW 22048/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department does not offer such assistance to sports clubs. Section 21 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places a duty on the service provider to ensure that their services can be accessed by people with disabilities. I would refer the Honourable Member to Sport Northern Ireland, the leading public body for the development of sport in Northern Ireland. Sport Northern Ireland has produced guidelines entitled, "Access To Sports Facilities For People With Disabilities: Design and Management Guidelines" (2010 Edition)". The guidelines can be accessed on the Sport Northern Ireland website at www.sportni.net.

Severe and Enduring Mental Illnesses

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust provides in the West Belfast constituency for people diagnosed with a severe and enduring mental illness.

(AQW 22051/11-15)

Mr Poots: The West Belfast Recovery Team is an integrated/multidisciplinary Community Mental Health team comprising of social workers, Community Psychiatric Nurses, an Occupational Therapist, a Psychologist and a Psychiatrist. An employment specialist will be joining the team soon.

The team provides a range of services such as a comprehensive mental health assessment, support, Health and Wellbeing clinics along with a wide range of psychological and treatment interventions. The team also provides support, carer assessment and advice to carers and relatives.

In addition to the above, service users within West Belfast also have access to the full range of mental health services provided across the Belfast Trust area.

Whiterock and Ballyowen Health Centres

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services are provided at (i) Whiterock; and (ii) Ballyowen health centres for people diagnosed with a severe and enduring mental illness; and what is the duration of this service provision.

(AQW 22052/11-15)

Mr Poots: The main service offered at Whiterock Health Centre for people diagnosed with a severe and enduring mental illness is Day Services.

Mental Health Day Services deliver a time limited Day Service at Whiterock Day Centre, two days per week. This provides therapeutic, practical and creative support to meet the needs of adults living with and managing severe and enduring mental illness. Duration of this service is determined by individual need.

Mental Health Day Services work in partnership with other community and voluntary organisations to offer opportunities that can help improve the service.

In addition, the following clinics are run at Whiterock Health Centre:

Primary Mental Health Team	1 clinic
CBT	2 clinics
Trauma	1 full day clinic
Addictions	1 clinic

There are no Mental Health Services based in Ballyowen Health Centre however appointments are offered to service users in both Ballyowen and Whiterock Health Centres as and when required.

Mental Health Recovery Team Services

Ms S Ramsey asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust plans to move mental health recovery team services from west Belfast to south Belfast.

(AQW 22053/11-15)

Mr Poots: Mental health services will continue to be offered in the West Belfast locality. There are no changes planned to the current service provision profile.

Tamiflu

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much of the Tamiflu that was not used during the swine flu outbreak can still be used.

(AQW 22055/11-15)

Mr Poots: During the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, antivirals were procured to cover 80% of the UK population. The current policy in line with the 2011 UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy is to maintain antivirals for 50% population coverage. Antivirals are retained until they are no longer able to be used in a clinical setting.

Tamiflu

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how much Tamiflu was procured during the most recent swine flu outbreak; and how much was unused.

(AQW 22056/11-15)

Mr Poots: During the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, antivirals were procured to cover 80% of the UK population. The current policy in line with the 2011 UK Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Strategy is to maintain antivirals for 50% population coverage. Antivirals are retained until they are no longer able to be used in a clinical setting.

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust: Early Retirement Scheme

Mrs D Kelly asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number; and (ii) nature of posts in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust that are held by nurses who availed of an early retirement scheme.

(AQW 22078/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised by the Belfast HSC Trust that there are two nurse-qualified staff who have availed of Voluntary Early Retirement between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2013 that have subsequently registered with the Trust Nursing Bank to perform frontline nursing roles on an “as and when required basis”. Both of these individuals were previously employed in nursing managerial roles and in registering with the Trust Nurse Bank have made themselves available to augment the frontline workforce in the event of any short-term need that may arise.

Autism

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what medical care is available for adults diagnosed with high-functioning autism.

(AQW 22081/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Health and Social Care Board commission a range of services to provide care for adults who are diagnosed with Autism and have been assessed as needing care.

A regional adult autism care pathway was agreed in 2012. Implementation of this pathway was highlighted as a key element of the draft Autism Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2015.

It is recognised that services for adults living with ASD are multi-agency in nature; however, the HSC intends to invest an additional £500k to further support adult autism-specific service provision. This will include additional practitioners from the second half of 2013/14.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the uptake of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine in each of the last five years.

(AQW 22100/11-15)

Mr Poots: The measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine is given as two doses, with uptake measured by the number of children who have received the first dose by their second birthday and with both doses by their fifth birthday.

The table below shows the number of children who have received the first dose at age 2 for the past five years.

Year	Total Children	Children Vaccinated with 1st MMR dose	% Uptake
2008	23423	21112	90.1
2009	24324	22267	91.5
2010	25222	23259	92.2
2011	24771	23029	93.0
2012	25397	24158	95.1

The table below shows the number of children who have received both doses at age 5 for the past five years.

Year	Total Children	1st & 2nd MMR dose	% uptake
2008	22247	19745	88.8
2009	22847	20531	89.9
2010	22780	20727	91.0
2011	23698	21642	91.3
2012	24730	22459	90.8

Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what steps his Department has taken to increase the uptake of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine since the outbreak in Swansea.

(AQW 22101/11-15)

Mr Poots: Increasing the uptake rate of MMR vaccine has been given priority for many years in Northern Ireland and by doing so we have consistently achieved uptake rates above the UK average. In 2012 NI became the first UK country to achieve 95% uptake by 2 years of age for the first dose.

Measures that have contributed to these high rates include:

- providing high quality information and training to those health professionals who are dealing directly with parents so that they can educate them and answer their concerns;
- providing information for parents, ranging from leaflets to detailed question-and-answer briefings so that parents can choose the level of information they require;
- issuing press statements to counter misinformation, reassure parents and provide information about the vaccine and about measles, mumps and rubella;
- giving GPs, health visitors and other nurses feedback on their uptake rates, in order to help those who encounter lower rates to find ways to raise them including visiting practices with comparatively low rates and discussing ways of improving; and
- running workshops for areas with comparatively low rates.

It is measures such as these consistently applied over a long period of time which have led to the present high uptake rates which should prevent large outbreaks .

The high uptake rate means that although there are some unimmunised or incompletely immunised children dotted throughout the community, the numbers are considered insufficient to allow outbreaks to spread. The Public Health Agency continues to closely monitor the number of cases of measles in Northern Ireland and will take all appropriate action where necessary.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella Vaccine

Mr Ross asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what measures have been put in place to prevent an outbreak of measles similar to that experienced in South Wales.

(AQW 22102/11-15)

Mr Poots: Increasing the uptake rate of MMR vaccine has been given priority for many years in Northern Ireland and by doing so we have consistently achieved uptake rates above the UK average. In 2012 NI became the first UK country to achieve 95% uptake by 2 years of age for the first dose.

Measures that have contributed to these high rates include:

- providing high quality information and training to those health professionals who are dealing directly with parents so that they can educate them and answer their concerns;
- providing information for parents, ranging from leaflets to detailed question-and-answer briefings so that parents can choose the level of information they require;
- issuing press statements to counter misinformation, reassure parents and provide information about the vaccine and about measles, mumps and rubella;
- giving GPs, health visitors and other nurses feedback on their uptake rates, in order to help those who encounter lower rates to find ways to raise them including visiting practices with comparatively low rates and discussing ways of improving; and
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Bereavement Midwives

Ms Lo asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety who commissions the hiring of bereavement midwives.

(AQW 22105/11-15)

Mr Poots: The recruitment of bereavement midwives is a matter for each Health and Social Care Trust based on service needs and available resources. All midwives undergo bereavement training on how to support and care for grieving parents.

Approval for Dental Cases

Mr Rogers asked Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, with the number of applications for prior approval dental cases set to increase, what plans are in place to combat the increased waiting times and paperwork.

(AQW 22123/11-15)

Mr Poots: In order to address the anticipated pressures on the General Dental Services budget, my Department has consulted on a number of proposed changes to General Dental Services which were chosen because they would help reduce the pressures on General Dental Services whilst minimising the impact on patient's oral health, and on the ability of practices to provide ongoing care and treatment in the Health Service.

These proposals included using internationally-recognised criteria to determine eligibility for Health Service-funded orthodontic care. If introduced, orthodontists would no longer have to submit a prior approval application for those patients who met the criteria for treatment. This would lead to a significant reduction on the overall number of prior approval applications which are currently processed. The proposed introduction of a core service of treatments would mean that more treatments could only be provided following an application for prior approval. The Department's assessment is that overall there should be little to no increase in the time taken to process prior approval applications. In tandem, the Health and Social Care Board and Business Services Organisation have been considering how the prior approval process could be streamlined to take account of the proposed changes and ensure that approvals are provided in a timely manner.

Dental practitioners will remain able to proceed with treatments that would normally require an application for prior approval in emergency situations, such as when it is necessary for the relief of pain.

Dental Fees

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given that costs continue to rise while dental fees increase at less than the rate of inflation, to outline the rationale for the proposed cuts in the dental contract that will lead to a reduction in the income of dental practice owners, associates and assistants.

(AQW 22124/11-15)

Mr Poots: Since 2007, the budget for the provision of General Dental Services has increased by around £30m and the investment is planned to continue to increase this year and next. In spite of this the expenditure on Health Service dentistry during 2012/13 was £11m greater than the initial allocated budget. The proposed changes to General Dental Services which were recently the subject of consultation do not include cuts in the dental contract but instead include a number of proposals to help mitigate the pressures on the budget and so help ensure the best use of the available resources across the Health and Social Care sector. I am aware that members of the dental profession have raised concerns over increases in their expenses and these will be considered as part of the consultation analysis.

Dental Services and Oral Health

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans are in place to address the impact that the proposed reduction in resources will have on dental services and oral health, particularly amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society.

(AQW 22126/11-15)

Mr Poots: The resources allocated to General Dental Services have increased over recent years and are planned to continue to increase this year. The proposed changes to General Dental Services were chosen because they would help reduce the pressures on the General Dental Services budget whilst minimising the impact on patient's oral health, and on the ability of practices to provide ongoing care and treatment in the Health Service. While some change is necessary, my Department is taking steps to ensure that all treatments will remain available, where clinically necessary.

Improving oral health is largely achieved through using evidence based fluoride schemes (currently fluoride toothpaste or fluoride varnishes), fissures sealants (protective coating on newly erupted adult molar teeth) and reducing the amount of sugar in patients' diets. My Department will continue to fund evidence-based schemes, developed and provided by appropriate healthcare professionals, to improve oral health. The most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society are already entitled to free dental care through the "Help with Health Costs" scheme and this safeguard will remain.

Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency Department

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current staffing levels in the Antrim Area Hospital Accident and Emergency department over a 24 hour period; and the projected staffing levels in the new Accident and Emergency department over a 24 hour period.

(AQW 22134/11-15)

Mr Poots:

- i) Current and ii) Projected staffing levels in Antrim Area Hospital's Emergency Department are shown below.

(I)

Grade	Headcount	Shift Pattern
Admin & Clerical	5-7	8am – 10pm
Admin & Clerical	2-3	10pm – 8am

Grade	Headcount	Shift Pattern
Nursing Trained	6-9	8am – 9pm
Emergency Nurse Practitioner	1-2	8.30am – 9pm
Nursing Support	2	8am – 9pm
Nursing Trained	6-10	9pm - 8am
Nursing Support	2	9pm – 8am
Consultant	1-2	8am – 10pm
Middle Grade Doctor	1-2	8am – 10pm
Junior Doctor	1-2	8am – 10pm
Consultant	On call	10pm – 8am
Middle Grade Doctor	1-2	10pm – 8am
Junior Doctor	1-2	10pm – 8am

(II)

Grade	Headcount	Shift Pattern
Admin & Clerical	6-8	8am – 10pm
Admin & Clerical	2-3	10pm – 8am
Nursing Trained	7-11	8am – 9pm
Emergency Nurse Practitioner	1-2	8.30am – 9pm
Nursing Support	3	8am – 9pm
Nursing Trained	7-12	9pm – 8am
Nursing Support	2	9pm – 8am
Consultant	1-2	8am – 10pm
Middle Grade Doctor	1-2	8am – 10pm
Junior Doctor	1-2	8am – 10pm
Consultant	On call	10pm – 8am
Middle Grade Doctor	1-2	10pm – 8am
Junior Doctor	1-2	10pm – 8am

This information has been obtained directly from the Northern Health & Social Care Trust, and has not been validated by the Department.

NI Chest, Heart and Stroke Nurses

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will offer additional publicity to the visit to Parliament Buildings by NI Chest, Heart and Stroke nurses on Tuesday 7 May 2013 to further inform the wider public on health issues.

(AQW 22135/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am very supportive of the important work done by Northern Ireland Chest Heart and Stroke (NICHs) through their health promotion work and raising awareness of risk factors for cardiovascular

and respiratory illness. I plan to attend for a cardiac risk factor assessment on 7 May when NICHs nurses visit Parliament Buildings.

Dalriada Doctor Services

Mr Clarke asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (i) how much funding is used to supply motor vehicles to Dalriada Doctor Services; (ii) whether these cars are bought or leased; (iii) who carries out the maintenance; (iv) how the maintenance contract is awarded; and (v) what is the annual maintenance cost.

(AQW 22139/11-15)

Mr Poots: I am advised that the position is as follows:-

- (i) Dalriada Urgent Care spends £53,700 per annum on lease payments for 9 vehicles;
- (ii) The vehicles are leased on full maintenance operating leases which incorporates the cost of maintenance, tyre replacement and road tax;
- (iii) The cars are supplied by Agnew Corporate which organises the maintenance and servicing of the vehicles through nominated partners;
- (iv) There is no separate maintenance contract; and
- (v) The element of the above quoted cost at (i) which relates to maintenance is £5,500 per annum.

Antrim Area Hospital

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact the current consultation on the reconfiguration of emergency services in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust will have on Antrim Area Hospital; and whether any risk assessments have been carried out.

(AQW 22146/11-15)

Mr Poots: The preferred option identified in the consultation document is that there should be two emergency departments within Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, in the Royal Victoria and Mater Hospitals, supported by direct access, via GPs, to a range of specialist services at the Belfast City Hospital. This reflects the configuration of services which has been in place since the temporary closure of the Belfast City Hospital emergency department in November 2011. While a risk assessment has not been carried out on the consultation, the impact of the preferred option is discussed in the consultation document (pages 48-50). In addition, the impact of the temporary closure of the Belfast City Hospital emergency department has been monitored and it appears to have had no significant impact on Antrim Area Hospital.

No final decisions have been made on the future configuration of emergency department services in Belfast.

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service: Director of Performance Planning and Corporate Affairs

Mr Copeland asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the cost to date of the process to recruit a Director of Performance Planning and Corporate Affairs to the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service; and whether the post has been filled.

(AQW 22170/11-15)

Mr Poots: The total cost, to date, of the process to recruit a Director of Planning, Performance and Corporate Affairs is £10,786.58. This figure does not include internal staff costs.

Following the recruitment exercise no appointment was made and the post remains vacant.

Preventive Dental Treatment

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given the increased need for preventive dental treatment, what efforts are being made to provide more comprehensive preventive dental treatment on the Health Service.

(AQW 22206/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department and the Health and Social Care Board are continuing to develop a new contract for General Dental Services. The proposed new contract is intended to reward dentists for providing preventative care and advice to patients and payments will acknowledge the greater oral health needs of patients from socially deprived areas.

My Department recognises the benefits of preventative treatments in improving and maintaining oral health and over recent years has introduced the following measures:

- Fluoride toothpaste schemes for young children in the most deprived areas.
- Preventive fissure sealant scheme delivered through the General Dental Services for young people.
- Enhanced capitation payments for dentists providing care to children from certain deprived areas.
- Enhanced continuing care payments to incentivise dental care for adults in deprived areas with the highest decay rates.
- Focussing the work of the Community Dental Service (CDS) across the whole of Northern Ireland, to improving the oral health of those with special care needs such as children from socially disadvantaged areas, the learning disabled, the housebound and residents in nursing and residential homes. In addition, the service delivers evidence-based oral health improvement programmes.
- Across Northern Ireland, the Public Health Agency run a number of healthy eating initiatives, smoking cessation and alcohol reduction programmes to improve both general and dental health.

New Build for Oakridge Social Education Centre, Dungannon

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 21354/11-15, whether this is high or low priority.

(AQW 22234/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Oakridge project is a high priority for the Trust. The Southern Trust plans to submit the business case for the project to the Department in May.

Children's Cardiac Surgery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether a Safe and Sustainable assessment of children's cardiac surgery was carried out at Our Ladies Hospital Crumlin, Dublin, as was carried out in Royal Victoria Hospital for Sick Children in Belfast.

(AQW 22280/11-15)

Mr Poots: The Safe and Sustainable review, led by Sir Kennedy, was an NHS review of congenital heart services provided for children in England and Wales. An Independent Expert Group, also led by Sir Ian Kennedy, was invited to assess the paediatric congenital cardiac services at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.

Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin (OLCHC) is in another jurisdiction and a Safe and Sustainable assessment has not therefore been undertaken. However, all centres undertaking cardiac surgery on children from Northern Ireland, including OLCHC, submit outcome data to the centrally held register, the Congenital Cardiac Audit Database (CCAD), which publishes information on mortality rates for surgical and cardiological interventional procedures. Among the information provided by CCAD are profiles of every congenital heart disease centre in the UK, including the number and range of procedures they carry out and survival rates for the most common types of treatment.

Paediatric Cardiac Surgery

Mr Swann asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the recommendation within the Preferred Option Document by the Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Services Working Group of a Dublin-only service for the future commissioning of regional Paediatric Cardiac Surgery.

(AQW 22351/11-15)

Mr Poots: I recently received the Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Surgical (PCCS) services Working Group's recommendation, endorsed by the Health and Social Care Board, on the future commissioning of this service. The recommended option involves building on the existing service provided by the Dublin paediatric cardiac surgery centre for the Belfast Trust. I have said that before I make my decision I want to take the opportunity to hold further discussions with our counterparts in the Republic of Ireland and explore the scope for flexibility in the location for the future delivery of this service without compromising any aspect of patient safety.

My key priority in all of this is to ensure the delivery of a safe and sustainable service for these vulnerable children. In so doing, I want to ensure that we have fully explored every possibility for addressing the concerns which have been raised with me by parents and by cardiology consultants. I will now take time to consider the report and its recommendations in full and I will make my decision shortly.

Statutory Residential Care Homes

Mr Beggs asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of recent proposals from Health and Social Care Trusts to close all statutory residential care homes within five years.

(AQW 22352/11-15)

Mr Poots: I want to ensure that older people receive the best care possible, within available resources, and in an environment that meets their care needs. Planning for change is essential, if independent living is to be promoted and people are to be treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

The majority of people want to be supported so that they can stay at home, for as long as possible. The HSC is working on developing flexible and responsive models of care in the community. As part of this, some Trusts have issued proposals for consultation which includes the closure of statutory residential care homes.

I would urge older people, and other members of society who have an interest in how the HSC delivers services, to get actively involved in their local consultation processes. It is important that there is an informed debate and that local people can express their views.

Child Abuse

Mr Rogers asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what assurances he can provide that child abuse, such as that which happened in Donagh, cannot happen again.

(AQO 3879/11-15)

Mr Poots: It is not possible to provide the Member with the assurance he is seeking. However, I can assure him that my Department is working alongside other departments and organisations to ensure we maximise the protection offered to children. The Member should not underestimate neither the challenge faced day and daily by front-line staff to keep children safe and free from abuse, nor their commitment to the task. Safeguarding children is a priority for me as Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety and for the Executive as a whole. It is a Programme for Government commitment. There are a number of very significant policy and practice developments in recent years, which have the collective aim of improving and strengthening safeguards for children and reducing the likelihood of a recurrence of the dreadful events in Donagh.

We have a new children's Safeguarding Board in Northern Ireland, which was set up in September last year. Work is ongoing to revise existing child safeguarding policy, which will be supported by revised

operational policies and procedures. We are continuing to implement new disclosure and barring arrangements and providing improved supports to children and families in need. For example, we will have a Family Support Hub network in place across all of Northern Ireland within the next few years.

In relation to the Donagh case, I can assure the Member that all of the recommendations made by the Independent Review of the case, which are within the remit of my Department, have either been actioned or are in the process of being actioned.

Cystic Fibrosis

Mr Newton asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action he is taking to assist people with cystic fibrosis.

(AQO 3888/11-15)

Mr Poots: Adult cystic fibrosis patients attend Belfast City Hospital's Cystic Fibrosis Centre and children attend the Unit at the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. Both the adult and paediatric centres have a multi-disciplinary team of medical, nursing and allied health professionals to meet the needs of the patients.

I announced on 12 March 2013 that ivacaftor, otherwise known as Kalydeco, would be made available to suitable cystic fibrosis patients in Northern Ireland. Ivacaftor is the first in a new class of medicines that target the underlying cause of cystic fibrosis rather than simply treating the symptoms. Research into this type of treatment continues with the hope for further good news for cystic fibrosis patients.

I can also advise that newborn screening for cystic fibrosis is part of the newborn blood spot screening programme, which is offered to all babies at 5 days of age.

Health Inequalities: Committee Report

Ms Ruane asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the action taken on the recommendations made by the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety in its recent Review of Health Inequalities Report.

(AQO 3889/11-15)

Mr Poots: I welcomed the Health Committee's Report of its Review of Health Inequalities, forwarded to my department on 17 January, and debated in the Assembly on 18th February. It contains 9 recommendations some of which are beyond the sole remit of my Department and require consideration with other departments and Executive colleagues.

Informed by the outcome of last year's consultation exercise on the draft cross-cutting public health framework "Fit and Well – Changing Lives" and the recommendations of the Health Committee's Review of Health Inequalities, my officials have held two cross-sectoral workshops in February and March to engage with key stakeholders and to provide a steer for the general shape of changes to be made to the framework.

Representation at the workshops included from across government departments.

Feedback from this process has since been assimilated and further liaison is now taking place directly with other departments to finalise the themes and actions for the framework.

I have undertaken to provide the Committee with a detailed response in due course, and prior to finally publishing the framework.

Healthcare: Electronic Records

Mr Irwin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how electronic health records can assist in improving care.

(AQO 3890/11-15)

Mr Poots: Electronic Health Records allow our staff to provide patients with faster, safer, better care based on more complete information about the patient being available when and where it's needed.

The Northern Ireland Electronic Care Record Proof of Concept has been running successfully in the Belfast City and Ulster Hospital since 2010, and some local GP Practices, with around 800 clinicians using it. It is due to roll out across Northern Ireland from next month, bringing information together securely, so clinical staff have the key facts and can make the right decisions, more quickly. This improves the patient experience, and will increase the efficiency, productivity and quality of services.

Embracing technological advances such as the NIECR is critical to the delivery of the new healthcare model envisaged in Transforming Your Care.

Causeway Hospital

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the timescale for resolving the difficulties reported in the Local Commissioning Group's Population Plan in relation to the Causeway Hospital.

(AQO 3891/11-15)

Mr Poots: I made a Statement to the House on 9th October 2012 on the start of a public consultation on the response to the proposals set out in Transforming Your Care. The draft Population Plan for the Northern Health and Social Care Local Commissioning Group area was published at that time. The draft Plan highlighted difficulties in recruiting permanent skilled medical staff, and the risk to continued delivery of safe and sustainable services at the Causeway Hospital.

My Statement on the 19th March 2013 updated the House on the outcome of the public consultation on the proposals contained in the document Transforming Your Care: Vision to Action. I indicated that in light of the responses received I had asked officials to begin work to take forward a detailed options appraisal for the Causeway Hospital, as outlined in the consultation document. The appraisal will consider future management arrangements and will also include consideration of community services. The appraisal should be completed within six months. Decisions on the way forward will be informed by the conclusions of the appraisal. The aim is to ensure that we have effective delivery of safe, sustainable and resilient services for patients and clients in the area.

Dentists

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the contract for dentists.

(AQO 3892/11-15)

Mr Poots: My Department and the Health and Social Care Board are continuing to develop the new contracts for General Dental Services, Oral Surgery and Orthodontics. The Health and Social Care Board has just launched the pilot of the new Oral Surgery contract across a number of primary care oral surgery practices in Northern Ireland. The experience from this exercise will inform the forthcoming pilots of the new Orthodontic and General Dental Services contracts.

These pilots will have a significant role in informing the successful roll out of the new contracts across Northern Ireland.

Healthcare: Vulnerable People

Mr Campbell asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in relation to taking strategic health related decisions which affect vulnerable people, how does he explain the decisions to those affected and their next of kin.

(AQO 3893/11-15)

Mr Poots: Health and social care bodies are expected to communicate with patients and services users, to involve them in decisions which affect them and to keep them fully informed as appropriate.

Department of Justice

Welfare Reform Bill: Increase in Benefit Appeals

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, given the increase in benefit appeals due to welfare reform, many of which are now relying on points of law, whether he will make Legal Aid available to allow appellants to access legal opinion and appropriate representation in the interests of parity, access to justice and human rights legislation.

(AQW 21714/11-15)

Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice): Legal Advice and Assistance is available to pay for the legal opinion of a solicitor on any point of Northern Ireland law, including welfare issues, providing the applicant meets the relevant financial eligibility criteria.

Legal aid is not currently available for representation before the Appeals Tribunal. The Access to Justice Review Report, published by my Department in September 2011, did not recommend making publicly funded legal representation available in social security appeal cases.

I currently have no plans to introduce any further access to legal aid for representations at benefit appeals.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21219/11-15, how many Northern Ireland Prison Service staff were offered reinstatement, following dismissal, which was subsequently overturned by the Northern Ireland Civil Service Appeal Board, in each year since 2004.

(AQW 21720/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since 2004 the Northern Ireland Prison Service has not offered reinstatement, following dismissal, to any member of staff which was subsequently overturned by the Civil Service Appeal Board.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20873/11-15, to detail (i) the number of (a) suspended; and (b) operational prison staff that have availed of the services of Carecall since 2008; (ii) whether staff can avail of counselling in addition to the six sessions provided; (iii) what other counselling services are available; and (iv) whether the Northern Ireland Prison Service employs a Clinical Psychologist.

(AQW 21766/11-15)

Mr Ford: Between 1 January 2008 and 31 March 2013, a total of 498 operational staff availed of the services of Carecall. During this period 53 staff were suspended with 18 of these staff using the services of Carecall. A limited number of additional counselling sessions may be approved in exceptional circumstances.

The Prison Service does not provide any other staff counselling services or employ a Clinical Psychologist but an out-of-hours Carecall helpline is available which gives staff the opportunity to speak to a counsellor on the telephone.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice whether a member of Northern Ireland Prison Service staff employed under the new intake was found to have a criminal record and subsequently dismissed, and to detail (i) the checks carried out on the person's application and references; (ii) how the criminal record was discovered; (iii) for how long the person was employed before the criminal record was discovered; and (iv) whether the person has been reported to the PSNI.

(AQW 21768/11-15)

Mr Ford: No member of the Northern Ireland Prison Service staff, employed under the new intake, has been found to have a criminal record and been subsequently dismissed.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Professional Standards Unit

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, given that in October 2011 Dame Anne Owers recommended that a Northern Ireland Prison Service Professional Standards Unit should oversee all disciplinary matters, to detail (i) whether this is the case, as the answer to AQW 18758/11-15 confirmed that the Head of the Unit was appointed on 16 January 2012 and the answer to AQW 20578/11-15 confirmed that no other staff had been recruited; and (ii) whether he will provide an overview of how all disciplinary cases have been managed since January 2012.

(AQW 21771/11-15)

Mr Ford: I refer the member to the response I gave to AQW/20578/11-15. The new Professional Standards Unit is expected to be established by June 2013, following which it will oversee all disciplinary matters. Until then all disciplinary cases will be managed under the current disciplinary system.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: General and Gross Misconduct

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, in terms of Northern Ireland Prison Service operational staff charged with general and gross misconduct, to detail (i) the number charged since 2008; and (ii) the number of cases that met the timescale as laid down in the Code of Conduct and Discipline.

(AQW 21780/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since 2008 there have been 199 operational staff charged with general and gross misconduct.

Information regarding the number of cases meeting the timescales as laid down in the Code of Conduct and Discipline is not held and the attainment of this information could only be provided at disproportionate cost. I would, however, refer the Member to my response to AQW/21392/11-15 and confirm that individual disciplinary cases are dealt with as expediently as possible, taking into account any relevant mitigating issues.

Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Fund

Mr Givan asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) how much money was left from the Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Fund provided by HM Treasury; and (ii) how has it been allocated.

(AQW 21832/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is approximately £392,000 remaining of the £20m funding provided by Treasury for the Part-Time Reserve Gratuity Scheme. This residue is held within the Department awaiting a final decision. My officials have drafted an options appraisal for consideration and a decision is expected within weeks.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 18261/11-15, to detail (i) why the Northern Ireland Prison Service is not seeking to recruit retired senior police officers for the Professional Standards Unit; (ii) whether his Department will recruit staff from all Departments within the Northern Ireland Civil Service for the Unit; (iii) how he will ensure that the unit will be operated independently of undue influence from the Northern Ireland Prison Service; (iv) whether all prison staff under disciplinary investigation will be dealt with on a strictly confidential basis at all times and; (v) if the Northern Ireland Prison Service intends to continue to use Governors as investigating officers.

(AQW 21834/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) External recruitment is not on this occasion considered to be necessary.

- (ii) I refer the member to the answer I gave to AQW 20578/11-15. The investigators in the Professional Standards Unit will be a mixture of operational and general service grade staff.
- (iii) The new disciplinary system will be fair and transparent and there is no reason to suggest otherwise.
- (iv) I can confirm that all disciplinary cases will be dealt with confidentially.

NI Legal Services Commission

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the current position of the NI Legal Services Commission since it received £10m additional funding and requested further funding for the 2012/13 financial year; (ii) whether further funding was granted and if so how much and when; and (iii) the measures that are in place to ensure this situation does not occur in the 2013/14 financial year.
(AQW 21836/11-15)

Mr Ford: Since the NI Legal Services Commission (NILSC) received £10m additional funding and requested further funding for the 2012/13 financial year, the Department allocated a further £6m as part of the January Monitoring Round process. This provided the Commission with additional funding of £16m in 2012/13.

During 2013/14 the Department of Justice will continue to work with the NILSC to address funding pressures and these will be considered as part of the monitoring round process. In addition, the Department continues to take forward a series of reforms aimed at further reducing legal aid expenditure.

Injury on Duty Reviews

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21227/11-15, why the figures for the total number of reviews do not correlate with the number of results.
(AQW 21856/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Policing Board has confirmed the information was provided as part of the response to AQW/21227/11-15.

The number of reviews does not tally with the number of results due to the overlapping from one financial year to another.

Guidance Booklet on Medical Pensions and Injury on Duty Awards

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 17706/11-15, to detail (i) if the Draft Guidance on Injury on Duty Reviews was presented to the National Attendance Management Forum; and (ii) if they have been considered by the Policing Board.
(AQW 21889/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Policing Board has confirmed (i) Draft Guidance provided by the National Attendance Management Forum relating to Injury on Duty awards was circulated to its members in March 2013; (ii) the Guidance has not yet been considered by the Board but has been shared with the sub-group set up to consider the administration of percentage disablement reviews.

Community Safety College at Desertcreat

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20844/11-15, what facilities or elements of the original scheme have been omitted to date in any revised scheme.
(AQW 21909/11-15)

Mr Ford: Substantial progress has been made in reducing the cost overrun, although the detail of the cost reductions have not been finalised. The Programme Board intends to submit a business case addendum to the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Services within days,

appraising options which deliver cost reductions without significantly reducing the functionality of the college. It is therefore not possible to specify what reductions are planned, at this time.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 18977/11-15, since 2004 how many Northern Ireland Prison Service staff have been dismissed but subsequently had the decision overturned by the Northern Ireland Civil Service Appeal Board and are awaiting, or in discussions for, compensation.

(AQW 21915/11-15)

Mr Ford: This information has been withheld as disclosure would be contrary to the Data Protection Act 1998.

Northern Ireland Prison Service: Code of Conduct and Discipline

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20453/11-15, whether the Code of Conduct and Discipline referred to is currently under review; and how many reviews were carried out during the periods of suspension.

(AQW 21916/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Member will be aware from earlier responses that the current Code of Conduct and Discipline (COCD) has been reviewed as part of a review of the overall Disciplinary Process in the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

No reviews of the COCD were carried out during the periods of suspension.

Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

Mr Weir asked the Minister of Justice to outline the oversight mechanisms that are in place, and those that are planned, for the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland.

(AQW 21923/11-15)

Mr Ford: There is in place an agreed Management Statement and Financial Memorandum between the Police Ombudsman's Office and my Department. This document sets out the broad framework within which the Office operates and the conditions under which any public funds are paid to the Office, together with how the Office is held to account for its performance.

Specifically, I formally approve the Office's corporate and business plans on the basis that the work of the Office supports my Department's aims and objectives. Also, my officials attend the Office's Audit Committee meetings in an observer capacity and hold quarterly governance meetings with the Chief Executive to review performance.

Additionally, and in light of the recent Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland follow-up report to their report in September 2011 and the decision of the Ombudsman to recommence history investigations, Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland will conduct a further review once three substantial history investigations have been completed. This will provide further assurance on progress and that this aspect of OPONI's new strategic plan is operating effectively.

I am confident that, as this progress continues, the enhanced professionalism in how the Office operates with a particular focus on higher quality work in its investigations will all add to rebuild public confidence in the Office.

Community Safety College at Desertcreat

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20844/11-15, to detail the areas of projected savings within the scheme.

(AQW 21957/11-15)

Mr Ford: Substantial progress has been made in reducing the cost overrun, although the detail of the cost reductions have not been finalised. The Project Board are expecting to submit a business case addendum to the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Social Services within days, appraising options which deliver cost reductions without significantly reducing the functionality of the college. It is therefore not possible to specify the areas of projected savings at this time.

Community Safety College at Desertcreat

Mr McGlone asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 20844/11-15, what level of consultation has taken place; and what consultation is proposed with the bidding contractors on any changes, to ensure that the most economically advantageous price is achieved for the public purse and that the original specification is not compromised.

(AQW 21958/11-15)

Mr Ford: During the bidding stage it was agreed with all five bidding consortia that in the event of the tendered costs exceeding the available budget, the client would liaise with, and use the rates of, the preferred bidder to reduce costs via a Bill of Reductions exercise. For legal and procurement reasons, it is not appropriate or recommended to re-open the competition.

The proposed cost reductions have been found on the basis of omissions and replacements using schedules of tendered rates provided by the preferred bidder. The most economically advantageous tender to the public purse was achieved through the detailed breakdown of costs presented by bidders through the competitive process.

The Programme Board is taking great care to ensure that the cost reductions exercise does not significantly impact the functionality of the college. This point is being fully addressed in the business case addendum.

The preferred bidder has not been engaged in negotiations, as the business case addendum has yet to be approved.

Prince's Trust Programmes for Young Offenders

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) for his assessment of the Prince's Trust programmes for young offenders; (ii) whether his Department, or its arm's-length bodies or agencies such as the Probation Board and Youth Justice, make referrals to the Prince's Trust; (iii) what is the uptake rate; (iv) how much funding his Department has given the Prince's Trust in each of the last three years; and (v) what are the re-offender rates after completing a programme with the Prince's Trust.

(AQW 21959/11-15)

Mr Ford:

- (i) The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), Youth Justice Agency (YJA) and the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI), all have well established links with the Prince's Trust. I recognise the value of Prince's Trust programmes to young offenders, in supporting their transition from custody to community, and their wider contribution to our efforts to reduce re-offending.
- (ii) PBNI and the YJA both make referrals to the Prince's Trust.
- (iii) The uptake rates are not available.
- (iv) No funding has been allocated to the Prince's Trust by the Department of Justice since justice was devolved.
- (v) Re-offender rates cannot be determined as the number of participants in Prince's Trust programmes is relatively small and it is impossible to differentiate between the impact of such programmes and other inputs or interventions that offenders may be receiving in parallel.

Northern Ireland Prison Service Staff

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice (i) how many prison staff at each prison facility are on sick leave; (ii) what is the cost of their sick absence; (iii) what steps the Prison Service has taken to address the issues of conformity in Sickness Absence Procedures in terms of the number of warnings issued to staff and the need for return to work interviews; and (iv) what assurances he can give that prison staff on sick absence receive equitable treatment.

(AQW 21960/11-15)

Mr Ford: The number of prison staff who have taken a period of sick absence at each prison facility during the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 is shown in the table below:

Establishment	No. of staff who had instances of absence during the period	Number of staff currently on sick absence
Maghaberry	381	39
Magilligan	154	21
Hydebank Wood	150	23

The cost of sickness absence in terms of Occupational Sick Pay for all prison staff during the same period of time is £3,143,884.07. It is not possible to provide a breakdown of the cost per prison establishment.

In the Northern Ireland Prison Service sickness absence is managed under the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) policies on Sickness Absence and Inefficiency Sickness Absence. The aim of these policies is to promote regular attendance at work, minimise absence across the service and to provide a framework within which sickness absence can be effectively managed. The policies are set out for all staff and managers in the NICS HR Handbook.

All staff, irrespective of grade, are managed under these policies. Each case is managed taking account of individual circumstances in accordance with the policies which include appeal arrangements.

Prisoners Suffering Trauma of Abuse, Rape or Domestic Violence

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice to detail the nature of the services available to prisoners suffering the trauma of abuse, rape or domestic violence.

(AQW 21963/11-15)

Mr Ford: Services available to all prisoners, including those suffering the trauma of abuse, rape or domestic violence are governed by a multi agency resettlement framework that has been developed by the Northern Ireland Prison Service in partnership with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and other partner agencies.

Pathway 8 of the framework – ‘Supporting offenders who have been abused, raped or who have experienced domestic violence’ aims to scope the extent and prevalence of this issue amongst offenders, assess the needs of those who have been affected and seek to provide a range of supportive interventions. But it does not deliver services in isolation – rather, a range of support services, including access to the 24 hour Domestic Violence Helpline, a Regional Directory of Services for victims of sexual violence and abuse, Lifeline, Victim Support and NEXUS counselling, are available under the joint DOJ/DHSSPS Strategy.

The South Eastern Trust will also provide support on sexually transmitted diseases and mental health support to those who are suffering specific trauma.

Counsel Travel Payments

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice whether counsel, who normally practise outside Northern Ireland, are entitled to payment from public funds for travel and hotel expenses when they travel here to appear in a case; and whether any such payments have been made, and to what extent.

(AQW 21977/11-15)

Mr Ford: In respect of legal aid, counsel wishing to appear before the courts in Northern Ireland must first be called to the Bar here. Once called to the Bar, that barrister would be treated, by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC), as a member of the Bar of Northern Ireland and accordingly the NILSC would not reimburse any travel or hotel expenses.

The NILSC's case management system does not differentiate between counsel and the jurisdiction in which they normally practice and it is therefore unable to quantify how many cases involved counsel from outside Northern Ireland.

Payments to counsel engaged by the Departmental Solicitor's Office in respect of Northern Ireland Departments fall within the responsibility of the Finance Minister, Mr Sammy Wilson MLA.

HMP Maghaberry

Mr Allister asked the Minister of Justice (i) what subversive devices or components have been found within HMP Maghaberry in the last year; (ii) when these devices were found; and (iii) whether any were deemed viable.

(AQW 21980/11-15)

Mr Ford: A suspicious/suspect device was found within Maghaberry Prison on each of the following occasions in the last year: 11 February 2013 and 17 April 2013. None were deemed viable.

Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Justice what consideration he has given to the business case prepared by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission on a new pay strategy for the organisation; and when he will be in a position to make a recommendation on the proposal.

(AQW 22003/11-15)

Mr Ford: The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) submitted a Pay Strategy Business Case to the Department of Justice on 22 January 2013 for consideration. At that time a number of queries were raised with the NILSC, some of which have yet to be resolved between the NILSC and my Department.

My officials will continue to work with the NILSC to address the outstanding issues and to ensure that, when completed, any agreed Pay Strategy is passed to DFP for financial approval.

Prison Service Trust Outreach Workers

Mr Nesbitt asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with (i) the Board of Directors of the Prison Service Trust; and (ii) other relevant bodies on the effectiveness and importance of Prison Service Trust outreach workers; and whether any concerns have been raised about these outreach workers.

(AQW 22218/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have not had any discussions with either the Prison Service Trust or other relevant bodies regarding the effectiveness and importance of Prison Service Trust outreach workers. Responsibility for these employees rests with the Board of Directors of the Prison Service Trust and no concerns have been raised with me.

Ionizing Radiation Regulations: Scanners in Prison Estates

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice (i) whether his Department has submitted an application under the Ionizing Radiation Regulations for the use of scanners in the prison estate; (ii) on what date was it submitted; and (ii) whether his Department has received an estimated time for processing the application.

(AQW 22384/11-15)

Mr Ford: I have recently received and agreed the Northern Ireland Prison Service Justification Application for the initial trialling and possible future use of transmission x-ray body scanners.

This application has been submitted for consideration to the Department of Energy and Climate Change on 2 May 2013.

This is a complicated process that has never been undertaken by any Prison Service or Devolved Administration within the United Kingdom; therefore it is not possible to provide a timescale for completion of the process.

Bail Law

Mrs Overend asked the Minister of Justice what action he is taking to reform bail law in criminal proceedings.

(AQO 3903/11-15)

Mr Ford: As part of its first Programme of Law Reform the Northern Ireland Law Commission has reviewed the law on bail in criminal proceedings and in the Autumn of last year the Commission presented me with their report and draft Bill. It is my intention to consult on the Commission's proposals with a view to new legislation.

I presented my proposed consultation to the Justice Committee on Thursday of last week which I now intend to publish. Subject to the outcome, new bail legislation would be brought forward early in the next Assembly mandate.

Prison Review

Mrs Dobson asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Prison Review Team.

(AQO 3905/11-15)

Mr Ford: Work is continuing towards the implementation of the recommendations from the Prison Review Team and I am encouraged by the progress that is being made.

Four update reports from the Prison Review Oversight Group have now been provided to the Justice Committee. A copy of each has been deposited in the Assembly Library and published on the Northern Ireland Prison Service website.

The Oversight Group is also preparing its first annual report, to be presented to the Justice Committee on 9 May. Following this it will also be available in the Library and on the Prison Service website.

An event will take place in June to provide an overview of achievements to date and build upon the ongoing engagement with key stakeholders.

Youth Justice Services Directorate

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the functioning of the Youth Justice Services directorate.

(AQO 3906/11-15)

Mr Ford: Youth Justice Services was created following a period of radical restructuring within the Youth Justice Agency (Agency) 18 months ago. The new arrangements are now well established, and

the responses received to a stakeholder survey undertaken by the Agency have been positive and encouraging.

Through the implementation of many of the recommendations in the Youth Justice Review, Youth Justice Services has contributed to faster, fairer justice and to making communities safer.

For example, during the last year Parent Support groups have been established in all eight Youth Justice Services operational teams, supporting parents working with their children's troublesome behaviours. I recently attended a Parents Support Group event where I heard first hand accounts from parents about the positive work they are undertaking.

Youth Justice Services is currently working with around 1000 young people and their families across Northern Ireland. It facilitates many of these young people to meet face to face with their victims in order to try and repair the harm that has been caused. Ninety five percent of victims have expressed satisfaction with this process.

The Agency is committed to continuous improvement and is planning to undertake an evaluation of the restructuring in the Autumn.

Prison: Drugs

Lord Morrow asked the Minister of Justice what steps he proposes to take to tackle the increasing drugs problem in prisons.

(AQO 3907/11-15)

Mr Ford: While there is no evidence that the misuse of drugs is on the rise in prisons, I am not complacent about the task faced by NIPS in tackling drugs.

Within prisons the abuse of both illicit and prescription drugs is being challenged by effective searching, testing, education and treatment.

In respect of prescription drugs, the South Eastern Trust recently changed arrangements around the issue of several drugs. Those drugs classed as 'highly tradable' are now only given by 'supervised swallow' in Hydebank and Magilligan. This practice will roll out to Maghaberry shortly.

A new drugs strategy has been drafted by NIPS and the South Eastern Trust. This will give an effective multi-agency approach to the problem of drugs in prisons.

Rural Crime

Mr Milne asked the Minister of Justice to outline what his Department is doing to tackle rural crime.
(AQO 3908/11-15)

Mr Ford: Reducing opportunities to commit crime and make rural communities safer is a key strand of the Community Safety Strategy.

Action Plans, including one focused on Business and Rural Crime, have been developed in conjunction with statutory and non-statutory partners to deliver the commitments made in the Community Safety Strategy. Copies of these Action Plans, which have been approved by the Justice Committee, are available on my Department's website.

A key mechanism for ensuring delivery of the strategic actions outlined in the Business and Rural Crime Action Plan is the Business Crime Partnership, which brings together representatives from my Department, the PSNI, the Ulster Farmers' Union, NFU Mutual, the Rural Community Network and private sector business organisations.

A recent example of the benefits of this strategic partnership approach was demonstrated when the Agriculture and Rural Development Minister and I jointly launched the Rural Crimestoppers campaign. This initiative was specifically designed to raise awareness of rural crime and its impact on the rural community, and aims to contribute to a reduction in thefts from farms.

The Business Crime Partnership is also developing a joint initiative aimed at identifying key trends in rural crime and targeting resources to tackle this type of crime. This initiative will be formally launched in the coming weeks.

At a local level, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (PCSPs) have developed Action Plans to address local community concerns, which include the development of tailored solutions to address rural crime where appropriate.

Initiatives being delivered in the Mid Ulster area include:

- crime prevention initiatives, such as trailer marking days, CESAR marking and Farm Watch schemes;
- public meetings to raise awareness around the prevention of rural crime;
- provision of home security equipment to older and vulnerable people and victims of rural crime; and
- provision of Good Morning Services by Agewell, which provides reassurance to older and vulnerable residents to reduce the fear of crime.

In addition, my Department is also represented on the Interdepartmental Group on the Rural White Paper Action Plan and provides updates on progress on the delivery of our commitments to ensure that the needs of the rural community are reflected in the Community Safety Strategy Action Plans and in Policing and Community Safety Partnership Action Plans.

Criminal Justice: Female Offenders

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister of Justice for his assessment of the reasons for the increase in the number of women in custody and under community supervision.

(AQO 3900/11-15)

Mr Ford: There are no obvious reasons to explain the increase. Offending behaviour among women is often linked to drug or alcohol misuse, mental ill-health, abuse or relationship difficulties. Increased confidence in the police and the justice system becoming more effective in securing convictions could also be having an effect.

I expect that the increase is the product of a complex interaction of factors and while I could commission some research into this area, my concern would be that the relatively small numbers involved would make such research inconclusive.

I am committed to working with partners across the Executive and the voluntary and community sector to address the issues associated with offending behaviour among women. I particularly want to build on the success of the Inspire model and, through the refresh of the Women Offenders Strategy, promote actions to prevent and divert women from coming into the justice system.

Northern Ireland Community Safety College

Mr Dallat asked the Minister of Justice for an update on the Northern Ireland Community Safety College at Desertcreat.

(AQO 3904/11-15)

Mr Ford: I previously informed the Assembly on 8 April that the construction tender cost was £30m higher than budget; and that the Project Board had established a working group which sought measures to deliver cost reductions whilst not affecting the overall operational functionality of the college.

A business case addendum with options based on this work was presented to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Department of Justice, for approval on Friday past. It contains various cost saving measures which do not significantly reduce the functionality of the college.

Whilst it is not yet possible to give a new final cost for the build, I can report that substantial progress has been made in reducing the cost overrun, although it remains likely that the final cost will exceed the original budget.

Should this addendum demonstrate that an integrated college in Desertcreat represents value for money and is affordable, it will be submitted to DFP for approval.

Department for Regional Development

Parking Tickets in Aughnacloy, Fivemiletown, Coalisland and Donaghmore

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 21277/11-15, to provide the same information in respect of Aughnacloy, Fivemiletown, Coalisland and Donaghmore.

(AQW 21613/11-15)

Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development): Details of the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in Aughnacloy, Fivemiletown, Coalisland and Donaghmore during the 12 months, to end February 2013, are shown in the table below:

Town	PCNs Issued
Aughnacloy	7
Fivemiletown	58
Coalisland	Nil
Donaghmore	Nil

A20 Newtownards to Portaferry Road

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development whether Roads Service has any plans for further resurfacing and road safety measures on the A20 Newtownards to Portaferry road.

(AQW 21724/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has carried out a number of resurfacing schemes on the A20 Newtownards to Portaferry Road, in the past few years and is committed to carrying out further resurfacing on a number of sections of the road.

However, as the budget allocations for structural maintenance for 2013/14 have not yet been finalised, I am unable to provide the Member with a definite timescale for when any works might be programmed.

Roads Service has completed a number of Road Safety schemes on this route, the most recent being the completion of a junction improvement scheme at Rowreagh Road/ Gransha Road, on the main A20, outside Kircubbin in 2011. A further improvement scheme has been prioritised within the Minor Improvements programme for the Ards Council Area, and a sightline improvement scheme is proposed for Rowreagh Road/Rubane Road junction, along the A20 route. This Road Safety scheme is programmed to commence during this 2013/14 financial year, subject to the successful acquisition of the necessary lands.

I can advise the Member that my 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.

If the Member has specific concerns regarding individual locations, along this 19 mile route, he should contact officials at Roads Service Southern Division at Rathkeltair House, Downpatrick.

Yellow Road Lines

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the criteria for deciding whether and where yellow lines are located close to a junction.

(AQW 21760/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member may be aware it is an offence to park within 15 metres of any junction whether the corner is marked with double yellow lines or not. Double yellow line road markings are installed at corners, to emphasise the restriction, where it is evident there are traffic progression or road safety issues.

My Department generally introduces waiting restrictions for traffic progression or road safety reasons. Double yellow lines are introduced where the restriction is to apply at all times and single yellow lines are used, when the restriction is to cover a shorter time period.

These restrictions may be introduced where parking has caused an obstruction to other traffic, impeding traffic progression, which manifests itself in the form of regular queues, tailbacks, or turning movement difficulties, or it may be necessary to maximise the full width of the carriageway for traffic capacity reasons. Waiting restrictions may also be introduced where there is a measurable road safety issue caused by parked vehicles, this could be at junctions, brows of hills, or locations with restricted forward sight distances.

Residents' Parking Schemes

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the plans for residents' parking schemes.

(AQW 21770/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department currently has a number of Residents' Parking Schemes at various stages of development. Roads Service is continuing to progress these schemes and the legislation required, as quickly as possible, with schemes likely to be delivered early 2014. Among the first schemes to be delivered will be schemes at the Bogside, Londonderry and at Clarke Court and Massereene Street in Antrim.

A consultation exercise was carried out in the Lower Malone area in November 2012, which received sufficient level of community support to allow Roads Service officials to begin preparations to proceed to the more formal legislative stage, which they anticipate will take place later this year. Discussions with residents and business associations in the Stranmillis area continue with the aim of implementing a scheme. Officials are also working with residents and local representatives in the Rugby Road/ College Park Avenue area and the Donegall Pass and Sandy Row areas of Belfast. Officials still have to agree details of local consultation but hope to be in a position, to consult with each of the communities later this year.

A5 Road Scheme

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development whether his Department intends to reallocate the resources designated for the A5 road scheme to the A6 project.

(AQW 21775/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department has received funding for the A5 dual carriageway project as a result of an Executive decision.

However, I do recognise it is important that other schemes, in a position to be progressed ahead of the A5, are given full consideration by the Executive. Therefore, my officials are continuing to engage with their counterparts in the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) to bring a paper forward to the Executive, detailing other options, such as moving forward with procurement on other possible schemes.

In the meantime, Roads Service is continuing to develop the A6 schemes to a procurement ready position, should additional funding become available.

A5 Road Project

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the scope of Mouchel's involvement in the A5 road project.

(AQW 21782/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service commissioned Mouchel in 2007, under a Consultancy Framework Contract, to advise on the following elements of work relating to the A5 project:

- **Business Case and Corridor Constraints Assessment Phase** – this critical phase defined the scheme delivery criteria;
- **Health and Safety** – to ensure that all Health and Safety requirements for the scheme are executed in accordance with relevant legislation;
- **Public Consultation Phase** – to obtain feedback from key stakeholders at various stages to inform the design;
- **Options Development Phase** – to examine the constraints and scheme delivery criteria to develop a route corridor options report;
- **Selection of Preferred Route Phase** – to refine the route corridor options report to deliver a 'Preferred Route';
- **Procurement Phase** – to prepare scheme-specific tender documentation for the procurement of the Integrated Delivery Teams (IDTs);
- **Preliminary Design and Draft Orders** – to develop a 'specimen design' and ensure that all the appropriate statutory requirements are followed to allow the implementation of the scheme;
- **Public Inquiry Phase** – to take the proposed scheme through the Public Inquiry process;
- **Detailed Design Phase** – to ensure the delivery of a robust design for implementation; and
- **Construction Phase** – this phase, which has not been awarded, would relate to the construction of the project.

A5 Road Project

Mr Eastwood asked the Minister for Regional Development, in relation to the proposed A5 road project, to detail (i) the organisation responsible for carrying out an appropriate assessment of the Rivers Foyle and Finn Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive; and (ii) what action he intends to take against this organisation for failing in its responsibility.

(AQW 21802/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: As I advised the Member in my answer to his previous Assembly Question, AQW 21541/11-15, my Department is responsible for carrying out an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive.

As with any such project the issues will be the subject of a thorough review.

Adopted Roads

Mr Dickson asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the roads that have been adopted; broken down by District Council area, in the last two years.

(AQW 21831/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I would advise the Member that a list of the roads that have been adopted in the last two years is available in the Assembly Library.

Door-2-Door Transport Scheme

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are adequate procedures in place to ensure that the recent changes to the delivery of the Door-2-Door Transport scheme will result in a service that is delivered to an equal or better standard than the previous scheme in rural areas; and what processes are in place monitor the short and long term outcomes.

(AQW 21847/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Disability Action have operational and governance responsibility for the interim service which commenced on 01 April 2013. They are satisfied that their scheme will provide members who use it across all areas with a better standard of overall service. My Department will continue to ensure that the grant funding given to Disability Action to provide this interim service is used for the purposes it is intended and in accordance with the terms and conditions of grant as set out in our letter of offer to Disability Action. The previous Door-2-Door service contract operated only in urban areas.

Northern Division of the Roads Service: Snow Removal

Mr Ó hÓisín asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the (i) number; and (ii) type of machinery used to remove snow in the Northern Division of the Roads Service.

(AQW 21848/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service has the following snow clearance machinery assigned to its Northern Division:

- 5 snow blowers;
- 64 lorry mounted snow ploughs; and
- 35 tractor mounted snow ploughs.

During periods of increased demand, additional snow clearance machinery may be redeployed from other areas where they are not required and Divisions may call upon additional resources from external contractors. During the recent snow clearance operations, Northern Division made use of the following external items of plant:

- 64 100hp+ tractors with ploughs;
- 54 tracked excavators (from 3 to 21tonne);
- 19 rubber tyred excavators;
- 15 telescopic handlers;
- 13 quarry loading shovels;
- 6 lorries with grabs;
- 2 landrovers (4wd) to tow fuel bowsers;
- 2 unimogs (4wd) one to tow fuel bowser; and
- 3 fuel bowsers.

Disability Action Transport Scheme

Mr Clarke asked the Minister for Regional Development how the interim Disability Action Transport Scheme will ensure a better service than the Door-2-Door Transport scheme.

(AQW 21880/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Disability Action aims to ensure that the interim service will provide a better service than the previous Door-2-Door scheme by offering a high standard of customer care, by using accessible vehicles where requested, by working with service delivery partners in the operational areas to ensure a prompt efficient service and by using their experience in providing transport services for disabled people to ensure that the highest standards of customer safety are consistently met.

Money Raised through Penalty Charge Notices and Parking Meters

Mr McQuillan asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail for the most recent available financial year (i) how much money has been raised through (a) Penalty Charge Notices; and (b) parking meters; (ii) how much money was paid to private firms to manage the services; (iii) the cost to his Department to administer the system; (iv) the total income against total expenditure; and (v) how much of the money raised was spent.

(AQW 21881/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I am not able to provide the Member with details of income received from Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and parking meters during the financial year 2012/13, as these are still being finalised and cannot be released until the Department's accounts are laid before the Assembly. However, details for the 2011/12 financial year are shown in the table below:

	Income Received
Penalty Charge Notices	£4.63million
Off Street and On Street parking	£11.36million

My Department paid private firms £10.22million for the management and processing of parking enforcement and car park management during the same period, whilst the cost to my Department of administering the system was just over £2million

Total income for the 2011/12 financial year was almost £16million, against total costs of just over £23million. These costs included contract costs, direct administration costs, rent, rates, maintenance and accountancy costs, including depreciation and interest on capital employed.

All revenue generated from car parking charges, along with income from parking penalty charge notices, is used to supplement the overall financing of Roads Service by Central Government. I would point out that the cost of managing our off-street car parks and enforcing the on-street parking restrictions exceeds the total revenue received.

Public Grit Boxes

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of public grit boxes, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 21920/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Details of the number of salt bins provided by my Department's Roads Service, in each winter since 2011, are provided in the table below:

Year	Number of Salt Bins provided
2011	4,281
2012	4,759
2013	4,763

Public Grit Boxes

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the annual maintenance cost of public grit boxes, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 21921/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I assume the Member's question relates to public salt bins. Details of the average annual cost of maintaining these bins, in each of the last three years since 2011, are provided in the table below:

Year	Annual Maintenance Cost of Salt Bins
2011	£315,000
2012	£350,000
2013	£350,000

These figures are based on average replenishment rates.

Public Grit Boxes

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the location of public grit boxes in (i) North Down; and (ii) Ards Borough Council areas.

(AQW 21922/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Firstly for the purposes of clarification, I would advise the Member that my Department provides salt bins and grit piles, but not grit boxes.

Roads Service currently provides 183 salt bins within the North Down Borough Council area and 148 within the Ards Borough Council area. The locations are as follows:

Hollywood

- Cultra Slip Road Belfast bound to Folk Museum
- East Link S/L 2
- West Link S/L 8
- Abbey Ring S/L 34
- Abbey Ring S/L 12
- Abbots Wood near junction Demesne Road
- Strathearn Court at S/L No. 1
- Cedar Grove opposite S/L No.4
- Firmount Crescent @ No.15
- Firmount Crescent @ No.81
- The Green at S/L No.1
- Inver Park opposite S/L No.4
- Demense Park at No.15 at wall
- Demense Avenue at No.15
- Spencer Street opp No.55 @ jct with Hillview Place
- Elizabeth Road opp S/L No.3
- Croft Park @ S/L 9
- Ardmore Road at S/L No.6
- Ardmore Heights opposite No.9 at S/L No.6
- Ardmore Road No.39 (past No. 39) near radius
- Glenview Road No.7
- Glenview Avenue opposite S/L No.3
- Ardmore Park at No.3
- Brook Street at Clinic
- Windsor Avenue at No.12
- Victoria Road at end of grass verge
- The Esplanade, RHS to rear of bridge
- Tudor Oaks No 3 at wall
- Old Quay Court No.4
- Kintyre Avenue at S/L No.5
- Princess Gardens at S/L No.16
- Princess Park opposite No.9 on corner
- Princess Gardens jct of Lochinver Ave opp 109 @ green box
- Torgrange at No.10 near S/L
- Invergourie Road at Stathleven Park name plate
- Entrance to The Coaches, Brown's Brae
- The Spires at S/L No 3
- Woodcroft Park outside No 3
- Seafront Road jct with Circular Rd @ S/L No.6
- Station Road, Craigavad No.4
- Carlston Avenue No.1/Whinney Hill
- Old Seahill Road jct Seahill Drive at white wall
- Martello Park No.10
- Martello Park No 28
- Rhanbuoy Park S/L10

- Larch Hill No.1 (half way up hill)
- Larch Hill Ave No.5 junction with Larch Hill Drive
- Ballygrainey Road No.3 (at wall near A2)
- Dalchoolin at No 19
- Cultra Avenue opposite No.41
- Tarawood at S/L No.1
- Carney Hill near junction A2

Helen's Bay

- Quarry Court past S/L No.3
- Grey Point at S/L No.3

Crawfordsburn

- Ballymullen Road opposite No.40
- Ballymullen Road at No.6
- Meadow Way (junction near Ballymullen Road)
- Burnside Park at No.2 (at wall/Meadow Way)
- Meadow Park North No 11 at mini pillar
- Carolsteen Park at No.1A junction Bridge Road

Bangor

- Killaire Avenue opposite S/L No.8 (at fence)
- Ailsa Park at S/L No.3
- Ravelstone Avenue junction Killaire Park (at wall)
- Killaire Avenue at No 5
- Station Rd opposite S/L No.15 (on grass) below No.68 on waste ground
- Station View at S/L No.1
- Wandsworth Park junction Wandsworth Road
- Lyndhurst Avenue opposite No.2
- Sharman Rise opp no.10
- Kiliieen Avenue near S/L No.9
- Jubilee Drive near S/L No.15
- Viceroy's Wood at entrance 1/2 way up hill
- Springhill Heights No.10
- Farm Grove junction Springhill Avenue
- Bryansford Meadow opp S/L No.3
- Ballyquinton Gardens side of No.18 at BT pole
- Kilclief Gardens at S/L No.474
- Craigboy Mews at telegraph pole
- Balligan Gardens at S/L No.403
- Birch Park junction Birch Drive
- Clandeboye Way at S/L No.1
- Monea Way at S/L No.11 at wall
- Rostrevor Way at No.12
- Clandeboye Way near SL No 10
- Rostrevor Drive opposite name plate
- Enterprise Road opp S/L No.2
- Moyne Road, Conlig, junction Vermont Avenue at S/L No.5
- Bangor Road, Conlig, at top of Green Road
- Meadowvale opposite No.15
- Meadowvale Park at S/L No.2
- Beechfield junction Main Street, Conlig
- Beechfield Avenue @ S/L No.18
- Tower Road/Main Street, Conlig
- Forrest Hill/Main Street, Conlig
- Forrest Hill, Conlig at S/L 10 at side of No. 74
- Westmorland Crescent side of No.2 (on grass)
- Westmorland Crescent at S/L No.8
- Harehills Drive junction Westmorland Crescent
- Silverstream Crescent at No.61 (in laneway)
- Silverstream Road at S/L 9
- Silverstream Drive at No.18 (at wall)
- Silverstream Avenue at No 31
- Manor Park/Manor Avenue
- Hillcrest Walk outside No 9
- Bangor Police Station/Castle Park Avenue
- King Street at sign no. 4
- Tennyson Avenue at S/L No.1

- Princetown Road at Junction of Seacourt Lane
- Lorelei opp S/L 1 @ garage
- Ranfurly Avenue S/L 15
- Princetown Road opp S/L 9
- Knockmore Park S/L 12
- Manse Road @ Ent to No.12
- Railwayview Street No.54
- Windsor Gardens at No.2-4
- Rugby Avenue at no.44
- Donard Avenue No.44 (upper side of BT pole)
- Donard Avenue No.25
- Maryville Park opposite No.22
- Bryansglen Park @ s/l 31
- Bryansglen West No.7 (lower side of S/L)
- Bryansglen Avenue No.21
- Grange Avenue No.5
- Bryansburn Gardens @ No.10 in corner
- Downshire Road upper side of Maxwell Road at S/L No.14
- Downshire Road lower side of Maxwell Road at S/L 15
- Clelland Park South at No.12
- Alexandra Gardens SL 6
- Church Avenue junction Church Drive at wall
- Abbey Park No.49/51
- Balloo Crescent opp Howells
- Ballyree Gardens opp No 9 near steps
- Willowbrook Rise at side of No 1 @ wall
- Willowbrook Park @ No.62
- Cranley Road opposite No.4
- Cranley Grove S/L No. 4
- Cranley Grove SL No 9
- Cranley Hill No.2
- Cranley Ave opp S/L No.1
- Irvine Park outside No 38
- Hanover Chase at wide footpath beside No 7 Hanover Court
- Regency Square @ s/l 2
- Beaumont Drive outside No.26
- Ashbury Avenue @ s/l 29
- Ravenswood opp No 10
- Kinwood Road @ No.2 Jct with Albany Road
- Marlo Cres @ S/L No.2
- Fernbank Park opp S/L 3
- Knightsbridge Court at entrance to NIE substation
- Fairfield Road at wall of No.60
- Fairfield Road opposite No.103 on verge
- Dellmont Drive at S/L 4 outside No 10
- Sunningdale Park No.7
- Glenanne Park opp Sunningdale Court between hedges
- Stanley Road opposite No.9
- Seaforth Road opposite S/L No.3
- Grove Park junction Bellevue
- Baylands Fourth Avenue at No.4
- Beverly Hills junction Beverly Drive at white wall
- Beverly Gardens junction Beverly Drive opposite No.34
- Conniston Drive beside S/L No.2
- Ambleside Road opp S/L at No.10
- Chippendale Vale junction Chippendale Park
- Ardmillan Park S/L 4
- Thornleigh Gardens S/L 6
- Windmill Lane at S/L No.1
- Portview/Ballymacconnell Road
- Towerview at S/L No.4
- Ivyhill Crescent at S/L No. 2
- Ballymacormick Park at name plate
- Ballymacormick Cres at S/L1
- Towerview Crescent opposite No.101 @ S/L No.20
- Towerview Crescent at side wall of No 125
- Towerview Avenue outside No 14
- Sherwood Road opp No.22 at green box

Groomsport

- The Hill opp No.5
- The Brae junction Ard-Na-Ree
- Springwell Drive beside S/L No.3
- Springwell Drive junction The Brae opposite No.7 P/C 4643
- Springwell Crescent No.58 at BT pole
- Springwell Crescent opposite S/L 4 at rose bed
- The Brae (at wall opposite Hillfoot)
- Glenganagh Park at S/L 3
- North West Ards
- Marcella Pk, Ho No 17
- Marcella Pk, Old B'fast Rd Jct (10M Below SI 16)
- Aldergrange Avenue, S/L 8
- Glenford Road, No 47
- Old B'fast Rd, On Verge At Ho No 29
- Westmount Pk, 20M From Bradshaw Brae
- Pascali Dr, Ho No 17
- Valencia Way Sth, Jct Saratoga Ave (At Nameplate)
- Valencia Way Nrth, At House No 1 (At Nameplate)
- Galla Way, Corner Above SI No.2
- Glenmount Dr, Footway 23/30
- Glenmount Pk, 9-11 Waste Ground
- Saratoga Ave, C'burn Jct (At Nameplate)
- Mountain Road, SI 4
- Glenview Park, Mountain Rd Jct (At Stone Wall)
- Whiteways, Mountain Rd Jct (Beside Post Box)
- Hillside, Ho No 11 On Grass Verge
- Falcon Heights, At Top At No 16
- Falcon Ave, House No 43
- Falcon Ave, Corner House 17/19
- Falcon Pk, Wide F'way Near SI No 4
- Abbey Mews, Side Of No 1 At Movilla Rd
- Penryhn Pk, Gable No 64 Brentwood Way
- Chesterbrook Cres, Jct Penryhn Pk (At Nameplate)
- Chesterbrook Cres, Opp No 11 (On Island)
- Abbeydale Drive, Abbeydale Ave Jct
- Abbeydale Pk, Opp Ho No 3
- Abbeydale Pk, Opp Ho No 59 At Wall
- Old Forge Crescent, No 2
- Stratheden Heights, Ho No 1
- Heron Pk, SI No.1
- Thornleigh Ave, Stratheden Hts Jct Opp No 2
- Edenvale Crescent, No 1 On Grass Mandaville Ave
- Mandeville Avenue, No 54
- Cooleen Ave, SI 4
- Cloverhill Pk, House No 6
- Parkland Cres, Ingledene Park Jct (Opp Nameplate)
- Ballyharry Pk, SI 4
- Wyndell Heights, SI No 2 (At Fence)
- Newtown Cres, House 1
- Cronstown Road, Jct With D'dee Road
- Regency Gardens, On F'way Opp SI No.3
- Tara Crescent, No 16 At Fence
- Boretree Island Park, No 1
- Rosevale Ave, SI No 2 (At Fence)
- Rosevale Ave, SI No 17 (Ho No 50)
- Beverley Walk, No 31
- Beverley Heights, Lhs Post Box At End Of F/ Way
- Beverley Ave, Beverly Hts Jct (Opp SI No.7)
- Orchard Lane, SI 3
- Victoria Cresc, House No 1A
- Belverdere Rd, Bangor Rd Jct (At Stone Wall)
- Bladon Ave, No 4
- Alpine Road, Belverdere Rd Jct (At Plastered Wall)
- Dorrandale Rd, Belverdere Rd Jct (At Nameplate)
- Belverdere Rd, L'derry Rd Jct (At Nameplate)
- Hillcrest Ave, SI 3

- Ballyrogan Rd, B'fast Rd Jct At Giveaway Sign
- Belair Pk, SI4
- Belair Ave, Opp Ho No 2 On Grass Verge
- Belair Ave, Opp SI No. 6 At Tp Pole
- Old B'barnes Rd, New Ballybarnes Road
- Rosepark, Edith Helen Rd Jct (Opp Nameplate)
- Greenwell Street , S/L2
- East Street , S/L 10
- East Street , Opp Rhs S/L23 On Grss
- Queens Square, Lhs Entrance To Community House
- The Oaks , No 7
- The Oaks, No 12
- The Oaks , No 46
- Cranmore Ave, Bank At Bottom Of Hill
- Slieve Bearnagh Pk, Jct Slievicroob Ave
- Tudor Abbey, No 26
- Strangford Hts, Old Movilla Rd Jct (10M Below SI)
- Strangford Hts, S/L 2
- Strangford Hts, Slievicroob Ave Jct (Opp Ho No 2)
- Binnon Court, No 8
- Ringhaddy Gardens, No 2
- Morston Pk, No 9
- Eastmount , Jct Rockland Cresc (At Nameplate)
- Meadow Pk/Fairfield Crt, Lay-By At SI No.1
- South West Ards & Comber
- Moorfield Gardens, Grass Lhs S/L2 At No 5
- Dermott Crescent, House No 17
- Dermott Road, House No 61
- Dermott Road, Opp Ho No 27
- Copeland Crescent, Copeland Avenue
- Copeland Crescent, Grass At S/L 2
- Castlehill Crescent, No 4
- Castlehill Way, SI No 1
- Philip Way, Jun Coronation Cres
- Graffan Gardens, No 20
- Longlands Road, Opp No 41
- Linley Drive, Opp No 54 On Grass Verge
- Car Park Rd (Side Of Sup Value), Opp Mini Pillar No C4020
- Lime Grove, No 3
- Londonderry Ave, Between Ho Nos 26&28
- Londonderry Park, Grass Verge - Against Tp
- Londonderry Hill, Ho No 1
- Glenside, Jun Londonderry Pk
- Glenariff Drive, No 25
- Glenariff Drive, Ho No 3
- Heathermount Park, SI No 1
- Heathermount Park, Upp Jct Of Heathermount Cresc
- Heathermount Cresc, SI No 1
- Heathermount Cresc, SI No 3
- Heathermount Cresc, SI No 6(Ho No 12)
- Heathermount Court, Ho No 13
- Dalton Rise, Dalton Cresc Jct (At Bt Pole)
- Dalton Rise, Dalton Glen Jct (Beside SI No 4)
- Ballystockart Road, Grass Verge Opp Kathleen Drive
- Riverside (Off Castle Lane), SI 21 Near Brookview Jct
- Castlelodge Avenue, Opp SI No 1
- Enler Park, Ho No 24
- Ardarawood, Opp No10 On F/Way At Grass
- Andara Grove, Opp No. 4 Wall At Nie Sub Stat
- High Street Grove, Opp No 24 At Hedge
- High Street Court, SI 8 At End Of Cul De Sac
- Parkway, Opp S/L2
- Hillside Park (Off High St), Opp SI No 3
- De Wind Drive, Jun Cherryvalley Drive
- De Wind Drive, SI No 6 (Beside Steps On Main F'way)
- De Wind Drive, SI No 12
- Laburnum Grove, Opp SI No 3
- Carnesure Park (Off A22), SI No 6
- Carnesure Manor, Beside To No. N6

- Craigarusky Road, Opp Ho No 10 - Beside Steps
- Ganaway Drive, SI1 (Off Whiterock Bay)
- Inisharoan, No 3 (Lhs Jun Insishanier)
- Main Street, Rhs Ent To Ardview Park.
- Churchill Park, No 9
- Killinchy Village, Church Hill/Church Hill Pk Jct
- Whiterock Road, Under Chevron Sign - On Bend
- Oakdale, No 32
- Wheatfield, Side No 6
- Ardmore Grange, No 8
- Brae Park B'gowan, Jun The Brae
- Churchill Park, Gable No 2
- The Brae B'gowan, Beside SI 8
- The Hamptons, Lhs At Entrance On Belfast Rd
- Prospect Hill, At Entrance
- Prospect Court, Opp Ho No 2 (Off Prospect Rd)
- Carsons Road, 15M R/H/S Carsons Mews
- Old Mill Race, Opp S/L2
- Carnesure Road, Old B'gowan Rd Jct (At SI No 1)
- Carnesure Road, 15M R/H/S Carsons Mews
- Cuttles Road, Old B'gowan Rd Jct (At SI No 1)
- Cuttles Road, SI 7 Opp Jct Cuttles Ridge

Traffic Management Systems

Ms Maeve McLaughlin asked the Minister for Regional Development whether there are any plans to reactivate proposals for traffic management systems in the Park Avenue and Bishop Street areas of Derry city.

(AQW 21929/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The traffic management scheme, incorporating a one way system for the Bishop Street area, was designed to allow Councillor Patricia Logue and Catherine Pollock, of the TRIAX community group, the opportunity to carry out a consultation exercise with residents and businesses in the area, to gauge support, or otherwise, for the scheme.

This was to allow the Department to determine the merits of initiating the lengthy legislative process required to implement the scheme. Unfortunately, a number of businesses and residents submitted objections to the proposals and consequently my officials are not proposing to develop this scheme any further.

In addition, a traffic management scheme was designed for Park Avenue, to facilitate a consultation exercise, again to gauge support, or otherwise, for the scheme prior to commencement of the statutory processes. Officials have requested further information on the content of the consultation. Once officials have reviewed this information, a decision will be taken on the best way forward.

My Department has received representation from a business owner in Park Avenue indicating he would not be in support of the proposed scheme.

A5 between Aughnacloy and Londonderry and A6 between Dungiven and Londonderry

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development what are the (i) maximum; (ii) average; and (iii) minimum number of vehicles per day on the (a) A5 between Aughnacloy and Londonderry; and (b) A6 between Dungiven and Londonderry.

(AQW 21941/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department collects data from automatic traffic counting sites located throughout Northern Ireland. Details of the Annual Average Daily Traffic flow information and the minimum and maximum values from the weekly volume reports, recorded at various locations on the A5 and A6, are provided in the table below:

Route	CP No.	Location	Direction	Min.	Avg.	Max.
A5	390	Londonderry – Strabane, at New Buildings	All Directions	8,202	11,459	12,916
A5	391	Victoria Road, Londonderry, at Bolies	All Directions	13,441	17,368	19,336
A5	608	Ballygawley – Aughnacloy (South of A4 Junction)	All Directions	5,880	6,503	7,689
A5	610	Omagh – Ballygawley, South of B122 (past junction of U1306)	All Directions	9,964	11,863	13,630
A5	623	Sion Mills – Strabane, at Ballyfatten	All Directions	10,740	13,548	15,731
A5	626	Omagh – Newtownstewart, at Conneywarren	All Directions	9,188	12,825	15,063
A5	644	Omagh Throughpass (West of Dublin Road at Academy)	All Directions	15,843	22,149	26,224
A5	645	Omagh By-Pass, at footbridge	All Directions	14,894	21,172	24,145
A5	648	Strabane By-Pass (Barnhill Road West of Derry Road)	All Directions	10,112	13,009	15,256
A5	649	Omagh By-Pass, at Gortrush	All Directions	11,075	17,108	19,961
A5	652	Aughnacloy – Monaghan (North of River Blackwater)	All Directions	6,392	6,988	8,361
A5	653	Ballygawley - Omagh (North of Ballygawley Roundabout)	All Directions	9,760	11,700	14,095
A5	657	Newtownstewart By-Pass (West of Plumbridge Road, opposite lay-by)	All Directions	7,862	9,473	11,158
A5	659	Strabane By-pass Stage 2	All Directions	11,863	15,605	18,260
A5	660	Omagh – Ballygawley, South of Crevenagh Road Roundabout	All Directions	11,996	15,442	18,271
A5	663	Victoria Road, Strabane, Co. Tyrone	All Directions	8,243	11,127	12,746
A5	675	Tullyvar Road, Ballygawley	All Directions	5,961	7,099	8,694
A6	306	Dungiven - Londonderry, East of B74	All Directions	11,497	14,524	16,869
A6	360	Dungiven Road, Londonderry, at Drumahoe East	All Directions	10,235	13,222	15,344
A6	362	Dungiven Road, Londonderry, at Altnageivin Roundabout	All Directions	19,688	27,571	31,203
A6	363	Dungiven Road, Londonderry, at Rosstowney Roundabout	All Directions	17,279	24,900	28,669
A6	366	Claudy, Dungiven side of A6/B74 junction	All Directions	7,282	9,449	11,035

Increased Traffic Congestion

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Regional Development, given the increased traffic congestion which is created at the starting and finishing times of Primary Schools during term time, whether any discussions have taken place between his Department and the Department of Education regarding a consultation exercise around the effects of changing the times a school day starts and ends.

(AQW 21942/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I can advise that no discussions have taken place between my Department and the Department of Education, regarding a consultation exercise on the effects of changing school starting and finishing times.

I consider this would be a matter for either the Department of Education or the Department of the Environment, from a road safety perspective, to initiate.

Parking Tickets

Mr Weir asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the number of parking tickets issued in each constituency, in each of the last three years.

(AQW 21968/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department's Roads Service does not maintain an analysis of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued on a constituency basis.

Water Service Premises at Ballykeel, Ballymena

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Regional Development why the flagpole was removed during renovations at the Water Service premises at Ballykeel, Ballymena; and why it has not been replaced.

(AQW 21979/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that during construction work in 2012 to refurbish its Ballykeel premises, the flag pole was damaged and subsequently removed.

Since it is NIW's policy that no flags should be flown from any of its buildings at any time, there was no requirement for the flag pole to be replaced at this site.

Strategic Development in Carrickfergus

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans there are for strategic development in Carrickfergus under the 2015 plan, in particular the Marshallstown Road.

(AQW 21981/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The strategic road improvement scheme at A2 Shore Road, Greenisland commenced in March 2013 and is expected to be completed by the summer of 2015.

As you are no doubt aware, there are no further strategic road improvement scheme proposals in Carrickfergus, proposed under the Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP). However, the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) contains a number of proposals to manage traffic and to reduce the impact of traffic on the non-strategic network.

A number of non-strategic schemes, linked to committed developments and major new developments sites, as identified by the draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP), were included in the BMTP. In addition, proposals for the Carrickfergus Spine Road, which includes Victoria Road and Sloefield Road schemes, were retained from the Carrickfergus Area Plan 2001 and included in BMAP, which was the subject of an Area Plan Inquiry in 2007.

The Spine Road link is considered to be fundamental to the future development of Carrickfergus and will serve as an important distributor road for the town, while facilitating the ongoing development of land in the area. However, it should be noted the scheme is developer-led and is not included within the Department's current programme for delivery.

BMTP and BMAP both advise that developers will be responsible for funding the Spine Road scheme either in full, or in substantial part. Any contribution from my Department towards the scheme will be subject to detailed economic appraisal, the availability of funding and its inclusion within the major works programme.

Lamp Posts and Other Street Furniture

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Regional Development who has responsibility for the removal of items that have been erected on lamp posts and other street furniture without prior permission.

(AQW 22012/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I do not condone or support the unauthorised use of my Department's lamp posts, street furniture or other property, for any purpose. The two recurring issues facing my officials relate to flags and unauthorised advertising.

The removal of flags or emblems is a highly sensitive issue, due to the political, societal and potential public order issues associated with flag flying in Northern Ireland. To deal with flags, Roads Service has signed up to the Joint Protocol on the Display of Flags in Public Areas. This multi-agency protocol recognises that widespread community support is required for the approach to be most effective.

My Department is generally not perceived to be the lead agency under the current Protocol. In most cases, other parties such as the PSNI, OFMDFM, NIHE, or DSD are better placed to assume the lead role in arranging for the removal of flags and emblems through their contacts with community groups, local elected representatives and other relevant contacts.

Under the protocol, my officials, when called upon by the lead Agency, will provide the access equipment and resources to remove unwanted flags once agreement has been reached that they should be taken down but if the community cannot reach them easily.

Experience has shown that removing flags in the absence of widespread support simply worsens the situation, with even more flags being displayed. My Department must also take account of the risks to workers in removing flags where agreement has not been reached.

In accordance with its policy in relation to unauthorised advertising, I can confirm that, where advertising is erected illegally on its property, my officials take action to try to remove these items under Articles 87 & 21 respectively of the Roads (NI) Order 1993, and may subsequently seek to recover its costs for doing so.

Rapid Transit Proposals

Mr D McIlveen asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the Rapid Transit proposals.

(AQW 22092/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department completed an Outline Business Case for Belfast Rapid Transit in May 2012. The recommendations of the Outline Business Case were as follows:

- The introduction of a high quality, bus-based rapid transit system operating on the following routes:
 - CITI Route - from Queen Elizabeth Bridge along Queen's Quay and Queen's Road to Titanic Quarter and returning to the city centre via Queen's Road, Queen's Quay, Station Street, Bridge End and Queen's Bridge;
 - EWAY route from the city centre along Albertbridge Road and Upper Newtownards Road and terminating at a park and ride site in Dundonald; and
 - WWAY route from the city centre along Divis Street, Falls Road, Andersonstown Road, Stewartstown Road and terminating at a park and ride site near Dairy Farm or McKinsty Road Roundabout.

- The delivery of the majority of the design and infrastructure works for Belfast Rapid Transit through the existing expertise within the Department's Roads Service.
- The award of the contract to operate Belfast Rapid Transit to Translink, subject to clarification on performance and contractual issues.

The Outline Business Case received Department of Finance and Personnel approval in August 2012. Following my approval of the recommendations, the Committee for Regional Development were briefed on the findings and recommendations of the Outline Business Case in September 2012 and expressed their continued support for the Belfast Rapid Transit project.

I subsequently presented a paper to the Executive in November 2012 and they supported progression to the detailed design and implementation of the pilot Belfast Rapid Transit system based on the Recommended Option derived from the Outline Business Case.

My Department is currently taking forward the detailed design of the pilot Belfast Rapid Transit system which will link East Belfast, West Belfast and the Titanic Quarter with and through the city centre. It is anticipated that the initial implementation works will commence in 2014, subject to the completion of the necessary statutory processes. I should point out that these works, which will include the provision of new Park & Ride facilities and work to the roads on which Belfast Rapid Transit will operate, will be of benefit to existing public transport services in advance of the Belfast Rapid Transit system becoming operational.

The Belfast Rapid Transit route in the city centre is being facilitated by the Department's Belfast on the Move Transport Masterplan which is currently being implemented.

The pilot Belfast Rapid Transit network is scheduled to come into operation in 2017, subject to the availability of funding in the next budget period and the successful completion of the statutory processes.

Northern Ireland Water: Reservoirs

Mr Lyttle asked the Minister for Regional Development which reservoirs are no longer used by Northern Ireland Water.

(AQW 22149/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that 22 of its reservoirs are no longer in use as a source for the public water supply. The reservoirs and their locations are as set out in the table below.

Reservoir	Location
Lough Cowey	Portaferry
Quoile Upper	Broughshane
Quoile Lower	Broughshane
Craigahullier	Portrush
Portavo	Donaghadee
Ballyversall	Coleraine
Boomers	Lisburn
Ballydoolagh	Enniskillen
Stoneyford	Lisburn
Crieghtons Green	Craigantlet
Ballysallagh Upper	Craigantlet

Reservoir	Location
Ballysallagh Lower	Craigantlet
Conlig Upper	Conlig
Conlig Lower	Conlig
Church Road	Hollywood
Knockbracken	Carryduff
Dunalis	Coleraine
Killea	Londonderry
Leathemstown	Dundrod
Cappagh	Dungannon
Altmore	Pomeroy
Lough Money	Downpatrick

Gully-Cleaning and Patching in the Derry City Area

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the reasons for the lack of gully-cleaning and patching in the Derry City area.

(AQW 22315/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department maintains 31,804 gullies in the Derry City Council area and endeavours to clean the majority of these gullies twice in each calendar year. During the period up to December 2012, over 36,600 cleaning operations were carried out, indicating that each gully was cleaned at least once.

Resources deployed to clean gully gullies are not fixed and staff can be redeployed to deal with emergencies and/or to address other work priorities. Gully cleaning vehicles are a key asset in dealing with flooding incidents, which regrettably have become more frequent in recent years.

Patching work is primarily undertaken to repair defects identified during routine safety inspections, which are carried out at regular intervals by Roads Service inspectors. These defects are categorised and prioritised in accordance with the "Roads Maintenance Standards for Safety", on the basis to the risk they may present to the travelling public. Consequently, each priority category of defect has a corresponding target repair time, with the most serious defects treated within much shorter timescales.

It should be noted that structural maintenance in the form of carriageway and footway resurfacing is also important. During the past financial year, Roads Service in Londonderry resurfaced 34.57 lane kilometres of road and 7.15 lane kilometres of footway, at a cost of £2.6 million and £230,000 respectively.

On the basis of this information, I do not consider there to be a lack of gully cleaning and patching in Londonderry.

Car Sharing

Mr Hussey asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline how his Department encourages car sharing.

(AQO 3914/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department encourages car sharing as a sustainable alternative to single car use through its Travelwise initiative and through the provision of Park & Share car parks by Roads Service.

Travelwise NI uses a number of promotional tools:

- the issue of press releases through the media;
- messages on relevant NI Direct web pages and in social media outlets;
- the distribution of posters and leaflets to workplaces and public buildings; and
- presentations at workplaces to promote car sharing to employees including at South West Acute Hospital in November 2012.

Travelwise NI maintains a car share website, carsharenl.com and this successful website shows continued growth over the last two years with a journey match rate of over 50%. The website attracts over 4,000 visitors per month with 738 new members registered in the 12 month period from May 2011 to April 2012 and a further 874 new members registered in the 12 month period from May 2012 to April 2013.

In the 2012 / 2013 financial year, Transport NI allocated almost £500,000 for the provision of park and share facilities throughout Northern Ireland. Transport NI will work with Travelwise and Translink to continue to develop appropriate park and share facilities, through the Local Transport and Safety Measures programme.

Road Safety: Beltoy Road Carrickfergus

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the plans to improve road safety on the Beltoy Road in Carrickfergus.

(AQO 3915/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: My Department is aware of and very concerned about the increase in the number of road traffic collisions that have recently taken place at Beltoy Road, at its junction with Marshallstown Road.

In 2001, improvement works were carried out at this junction, which provided additional direction signage with high visibility backing board, reflective hazard marker posts, an additional sign warning of the junction ahead, and high friction surfacing on the approach road.

These works significantly improved the collision history at the location and accident statistics supplied by the PSNI indicate there was one personal injury collision recorded between 2002 and December 2012.

However, I am aware the situation has deteriorated over recent months and understand the high-visibility signage was damaged and the high friction surfacing is showing signs of normal age-related wear and tear.

I am pleased to advise the Member that new signage was erected on Wednesday 24 April 2013. Arrangements are also in place to replace the worn high friction surfacing.

It will be necessary to remove and replace the top layer of the road surfacing before the new high friction surfacing can be laid. It is hoped this work can be completed within the next three months.

The Member will recall his recent correspondence to me on this matter, requesting a site meeting with senior Departmental officials. I agree that a site meeting with senior Departmental officials might be the best way to conclude this matter.

A5 Western Transport Corridor: Habitats Directive

Mr McAleer asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline his position on the A5 Western Transport Corridor project including the steps his Department is taking to address outstanding environmental issues relating to the EU Habitats Directive.

(AQO 3916/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The two A5 projects remain on the Roads Service Major Works Programme.

The Judge's ruling has quashed all the statutory orders for the proposed A5 dual carriageway. Effectively, this brings the process back one step to the point where a Public Inquiry has been carried out and I am in receipt of the Inspector's Report. I considered the very complex legal and procedural matters at length upon receiving detailed legal advice. I have consequently accepted the ruling of Mr Justice Stephens and decided not to appeal. I feel this option offers the best opportunity to progress the scheme in a reasonable timescale.

At my request, work has commenced on an Appropriate Assessment process (AA), the first step of which will consider the impacts on the Rivers Foyle and Finn Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and mitigation measures. This work will be the subject of a public consultation exercise.

The need for an addendum to the Environmental Statement (ES) is being considered.

It is important that the outcomes of any assessment are not pre-judged and, therefore, I cannot provide any further detail at this time regarding timescales other than to say that there will be substantial delay.

A5 Western Transport Corridor

Mr Buchanan asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the future of the A5 Western Transport Corridor in light of the recent court ruling.

(AQO 3917/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: I refer the Member to the answer I provided to the previous question (AQO 3917/11-15).

I would reiterate that the development of the A5 Western Transport Corridor remains as an Executive commitment and we are working to address the issues emanating from the Court Ruling.

A7: Doran's Rock, Saintfield

Mr Hamilton asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the scheme for the A7 at Doran's Rock near Saintfield.

(AQO 3918/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: This proposed improvement scheme between Rowallane and Doran's Rock, south of Saintfield, entails the widening of 1.8 kilometres of the A7 carriageway and improving the forward visibility along this section of road.

My officials in Roads Service are continuing to develop this scheme. However, in common with other road improvement schemes, its delivery is dependent upon the availability of resources, and subsequent progression to the construction stage remains subject to the scheme clearing the statutory procedures and undergoing a satisfactory economic appraisal. Given other competing priorities, its implementation will also be dependent upon the funding made available in future budget settlements.

Balmoral Show: Traffic

Mr Craig asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline what arrangements have been made with the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society to ensure minimal traffic disruption on the road network in the Maze/Long Kesh area during the Balmoral Show.

(AQO 3919/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Member will be aware that the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society (RUAS) has lead responsibility for traffic management in relation to the Balmoral Show.

RUAS developed a Transport Management Plan which was submitted as part of the planning application for the development of part of the former Maze/Long Kesh prison site to create a showground facility. Planning permission was granted in January 2013 by DoE Minister Alex Attwood, who indicated that he had concluded that "effective traffic management by the applicant around events should keep disruption to a minimum".

In order to reduce car travel, Minister Attwood made approval conditional on the provision a shuttle bus service to and from Lisburn Railway Station. In addition, the Transport Management Plan requires to RUAS provide advanced directional signage on all main routes for the duration of the show in order to minimise traffic congestion.

Whilst not having any responsibility for, or oversight of, traffic management at the event, over recent weeks my Department has devoted considerable time and effort working with RUAS officials and their transport and planning consultant with the objective of ensuring the measures agreed by DoE, as part of the planning application, are put in place in time for the show. Travel by car to the show grounds is proposed by using three access routes:

- from Greater Belfast and the east via M1, Junction 8 (Sprucefield), Hillsborough Road and Blaris Road;
- from the south via A1 and Harry's Road; and
- from the west via M1, Junction 9 (Moira) and A3, Moira Road.

My officials have been highlighting, to RUAS, the importance of adequately promoting, and making the public aware of, the proposed measures.

Roads Service: Snowfall in Newtownabbey

Ms Brown asked the Minister for Regional Development for his assessment of the Roads Service response to the snowfall in Newtownabbey around Easter.

(AQO 3920/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: Whilst I consider that Roads Service performed very well, in terms of its planning and operations, in responding to the recent blizzard conditions, this was very much a multi-agency approach that was highly effective in ensuring relief efforts were quickly directed to the point of need and to those impacted most significantly by these very severe weather conditions. We owe a debt of gratitude to all of the services directly involved, not least the staff in my own Department, whose efforts and level of commitment were exceptional throughout.

The snowfall of 22-23 March 2013 was the most extreme we have experienced in 50 years and caused major disruption right across Counties Antrim and Down. During the snowfall, Roads Service's resources were fully stretched keeping main roads open. However, additional resources, comprising private contractors, Rivers Agency, various Councils, including Newtownabbey Borough Council and farmers were quickly mobilised to clear blocked roads using mechanical excavators. The high ground in Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus was particularly badly affected.

Snow clearance operations also took account of requests for roads to be cleared for funerals, those needing medical assistance, those stranded in rural areas, schools, access for carers and the elderly which necessitated re-prioritisation of activities on a daily basis.

The snow clearance was carried out in the most difficult of circumstances and the agencies involved worked tirelessly, for very long hours, to reopen blocked roads as quickly as possible.

One of the key outcomes of the previous review of Winter Service policy, which was fully discussed and accepted by the Northern Ireland Assembly, was that the practice of targeting our limited resources available for this service on the busier routes should continue. I hope you will appreciate it is not practicable to salt all routes across Northern Ireland, nor is it possible to have all routes cleared with immediate effect. Whilst it is inevitable that commuters, especially those who use more lightly-trafficked routes, will experience some inconvenience, every effort is made to target the worst affected areas in order to minimise the level of disruption.

As with all significant winter events, my Department will be carrying out a detailed review of its response to determine if there are lessons to be learned and actions that should be incorporated into its emergency response plans.

Belfast on the Move

Mr McGimpsey asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on Belfast on the Move. (AQO 3921/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The current phase of Belfast on the Move works began on 28 January and is progressing well, in line with my Department's programme.

Works on College Avenue and College Square East have been substantially completed and the new road layouts, including a new southbound bus lane, were introduced on Friday 12 April.

Following resurfacing the new road layout on Grosvenor Road, between Durham Street and Fisherwick Place, was introduced on Friday 19 April. Resurfacing of College Square North and Durham Street to Boyne Bridge has also been completed.

Work on Great Victoria Street between Hope Street and Grosvenor Road has also now been substantially completed and the new road layout, including a new northbound bus lane, was introduced on Friday 26 April. Following the completion of further work, this northbound bus lane will be extended from Great Victoria Street through to Wellington Place later this week.

As with all new road layouts, motorists are urged to take extra care as they get used to the new arrangements and, where possible, consider using alternative routes.

The final part of the works, which will focus on Wellington Place, Donegall Square North, Donegall Square East and Chichester Street, have now commenced.

Despite the fact that our resurfacing programme was held up by the adverse weather conditions in March, I am confident that the remaining work to complete the final phase of the Sustainable Transport Enabling Measures will be completed by the end of May this year.

Buses and Coaches for People with Disabilities

Mr Sheehan asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the availability of buses and tour coaches for people with disabilities. (AQO 3922/11-15)

Mr Kennedy: The Accessible Transport Strategy Action Plan 2012-15 includes a DRD commitment "to continue to ensure that any bus purchases funded through (bus purchase grant) the in-year bidding process are 100% compliant with PSV accessibility regulations".

Officials have liaised with Translink and I can advise you that:

- The entire Metro fleet is wheelchair accessible.
- Over 96% of the Ulsterbus scheduled service fleet is accessible, whilst almost 94% of the Ulsterbus fleet (including Tour Coaches) is accessible.
- Over 92% of Translink's scheduled service fleet is wheelchair accessible, whilst 89% of the Translink fleet (including Tour Coaches) is accessible
- Those vehicles not wheelchair accessible comply with Schedule 3 of the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, with particular regard to:-
 - Criteria for steps;
 - Handrails to assist disabled people;
 - Visual contrast of features such as handrails and steps to help partially-sighted people;
 - Easy-to-use bell pushes;
 - Audible and visual signals to stop a vehicle; and
 - External equipment to display the correct route and destination.

My Department has also provided over 30 16-seater minibuses to Rural Community Transport Partnerships. These buses are all fully accessible.

The Disability Action Transport Scheme which commenced on 1 April 2013 also uses fully accessible buses to provide this service.

My Department does not hold any data on the availability of accessible buses and tour coaches within the privately owned fleet – this would be a matter for DOE, who have responsibility for enforcement of the PSV accessibility regulations.

Department for Social Development

Trinity Housing Association Grant Aid

Mr Wells asked the Minister for Social Development how much grant aid has been allocated, or is planned to be allocated, by his Department to Trinity Housing Association for its development at 19 Downpatrick Road, Crossgar.

(AQW 21704/11-15)

Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development): In January 2008, the Housing Executive approved acquisition of this site for social housing and in February 2008 paid grant of £835,215 to facilitate purchase. No further grant has or can be allocated until Trinity confirms its proposals for the site. Because the scheme being proposed no longer bears any resemblance to that approved, the Housing Executive has taken a decision to initiate recovery proceedings.

Pensioners Bungalows at Ballyree Drive, Bloomfield Estate in Bangor

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the proposed plans for the pensioners bungalows at Ballyree Drive, Bloomfield Estate in Bangor.

(AQW 21756/11-15)

Mr McCausland: An Economic Appraisal has been referred to the Department of Finance and Personnel seeking the necessary approvals to proceed with the transfer of bungalows at Bloomfield in Bangor from NIHE to a Housing Association. On receipt of this approval the Housing Executive will proceed to formal consultation with tenants on Oaklee Housing's proposals for the properties.

Double Glazing in Housing Estates

Mr Easton asked the Minister for Social Development what housing estates in (i) Millisle; and (ii) Donaghadee are still to have double glazing installed; and when the work will begin.

(AQW 21759/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that there are no double glazing installations programmed for Millisle, as all their properties in the village have already been double glazed through previous External Cyclical Maintenance schemes.

However, its Ards Peninsula Double Glazing scheme started on 15 October 2012 which includes the remainder of the homes in Donaghadee requiring double glazing. 59 of the dwellings in the scheme are located in Barnagh Park and Cypress Park, Donaghadee, and work started there on 8 April 2013. The Housing Executive's contractor expects to have completed double glazing in Donaghadee by 7 June 2013.

One and Two Bedroom Social Housing Units

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of new build one and two bedroom social housing units that will be provided in the North Antrim constituency, in each of the next three years.

(AQW 21835/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The North Antrim Constituency corresponds to the NIHE Districts of Ballymena, Ballymoney and Moyle/ Ballycastle. The current 3 year Social Housing Development Programme for these Districts includes a total of 9 general need schemes for 179 units. Of this, 13% (23) are for 1 bed units, 60% (107) 2 bed and 27% (49) 3 bed units.

With regard to the issue of Welfare Reform and under occupation, the NIHE is actively seeking to include smaller units with new schemes and proposals. This includes encouraging and supporting Housing Associations to provide for the inclusion of a minimum of 200 x 1 bed units in schemes within each year of the NI Regional Social Housing Development Programme. It is hoped that Housing Associations will respond to this challenge.

Social Housing Tenants: Fuel Poverty

Mr Swann asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 16039/11-15 and given the impact of fuel poverty on social housing tenants, whether the previous commitments given on the date of awarding the new contract and the date for the completion of all replacement window schemes remain.

(AQW 21837/11-15)

Mr McCausland: In relation to the new low rise double glazing contract, the Housing Executive anticipates awarding the double glazing contracts during June, commencing on 1 July 2013. While the introduction of the new contract has slipped from the date originally envisaged, the Housing Executive remains totally confident that the target to install full double glazing in all Housing Executive dwellings by March 2015 will be met.

Migration to Employment Support Allowance

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development whether it is the responsibility of the claimant to inform their Jobs and Benefits Office of their migration to Employment Support Allowance (ESA) to ensure continuity of payment of Housing Benefit, or whether ESA confirm this on behalf of the claimant.

(AQW 21839/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The onus is on the claimant to report any change in circumstances to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive that may affect their Housing Benefit. However, when a claim is being migrated from Incapacity Benefit to Employment and Support Allowance an electronic data transfer notification is sent to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive via the Job Seekers Allowance Payment System. This confirms that Employment and Support Allowance is being put into payment.

These notifications are sent to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive between two and four weeks before the first Employment and Support Allowance payment is due, depending on the claimant's payment cycle.

Housing Benefit Arrears

Ms Lo asked the Minister for Social Development how many people have housing benefit arrears after a delay in their payments as a result of the benefit migration process.

(AQW 21840/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive does not specifically hold any data for this. There have been some cases where they have received an electronic termination of entitlement to Incapacity Benefit without being advised of a subsequent ESA entitlement. In these cases Housing Benefit may be stopped until ESA entitlement is confirmed, at which stage Housing Benefit payments will resume retrospectively and arrangements are in place for any delayed notification of ESA entitlement to be queried and resolved promptly. Therefore as a result of the migration no one should have incurred any lasting arrears of Housing Benefit.

Older People with Learning Disabilities

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development what plans he has to work with the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to minimise the need for crisis moves by identifying and responding early to the housing and support needs of older people with a learning disability and their families.

(AQW 21846/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The 2011/2015 Comprehensive Spending Review represented the assessed need for supported housing across all supported housing needs groups including older people and people with a learning disability.

The bid reflects the priority within the Bamford Review to resettle all people with a learning disability/mental health issues residing in long term institutions and the strategic review of services for older people. This is a DHSS&PS/DSD joint bid for capital and revenue funding to facilitate these priority requirements.

An independent review of the Commissioning Body responsible for the commissioning of housing support services has been undertaken on my request to ensure that future housing and health decisions are made by the most appropriate people with the ability to effectively assess need and procure services in line with Government policy within available resources.

HMRC Staff: Universal Credit

Mr Hilditch asked the Minister for Social Development whether HMRC staff will transfer to the Northern Ireland Civil Service when Universal Credit is implemented.

(AQW 21852/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Subject to approval being obtained from the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland, permanent staff remaining within the Benefits and Credits Directorate of HMRC who are based in Northern Ireland will be given the opportunity to transfer to the Department for Social Development at the end of the planned migration period for the phasing out of Tax Credits.

Transfers at the end of the migration period, which is expected to be in 2017/18 will be made under the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice for Staff Transfers in the Public Sector (COSoP) principles which will mean continuity of employment and Terms and Conditions for staff who wish to transfer.

NI Co-Ownership Housing Association

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development what salaries are paid to the senior management team in NI Co-Ownership Housing Association; and by what percentage have their salaries increased in each of the last five years compared to other employees within the organisation.

(AQW 21934/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The senior management in NI Co-Ownership comprises the Chief Executive and 2 Directors (a 3rd Director retired in November 2010).

The Chief Executive has received a salary in the £90 - £95,000 salary band in each of the last four years (from March 2010, when a 2% pay increase and a 2% pay increment were awarded); in the year prior to March 2010, the Chief Executive's salary was in the £85 - £90,000 salary band. The Chief Executive is also entitled to an Employer's Pension Contribution, Healthcare and Car Allowance.

The two Directors have received a salary in the £60 - £70,000 salary band in each of the last four years (from March 2010, when a 2% pay increase was awarded); in the year prior to March 2010, the directors' salaries were in the £55 - £60,000 salary band. The Directors are also entitled to an Employer's Pension Contribution, Healthcare and Car Allowance.

All staff in NICHA receive salaries and increases in accordance with the agreed NJC local government pay scales. There has, therefore, been one increase in staff salaries in the last five years which was a 2% increase awarded in the year ended March 2010.

NI Co-Ownership Housing Association

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development how have annual audit fees paid by NI Co-Ownership Housing Association ranged over the last five years; and whether the provision of such financial services are put to tender.

(AQW 21935/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The annual external audit fees paid by NI Co-Ownership Housing Association (NICHA) in each of the last five years is as follows:

2013	£25,260
2012	£25,145
2011	£28,084
2010	£17,044
2009	£25,514

The provision of external audit services for NICHA was tendered in 2011 and a three year contract awarded which will expire with the 2015 audit.

Volunteering Infrastructure Partners

Mr Durkan asked the Minister for Social Development what evidence was used for identifying the concerns over the level of non-collaboration between potential volunteering infrastructure partners.

(AQW 21995/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I terminated the new arrangements for volunteer infrastructure support due to concerns I had regarding the level of collaboration and partnership working and reservations as to whether the proposed new arrangements would assist in successfully delivering Northern Ireland's first ever Volunteering Strategy.

This was based on information which indicated the absence of a coordinated approach between volunteer infrastructure groups which could lead to the duplication of volunteering efforts in some areas and the absence of accurate and reliable volunteering data.

Pensions: Retail Price Index to the Consumer Price Index

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development what action he is taking to lessen the impact of the change from the Retail Price Index to the Consumer Price Index on pensions.

(AQW 22009/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Westminster Government believes that the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) is a more suitable measure of inflation for uprating than the Retail Prices Index (RPI). It believes that the CPI is less volatile and takes better account of how behaviour changes in response to changes in prices and more accurately reflects the inflation experience of pensioners and benefit recipients. It is also the headline inflation measure used by the Bank of England.

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions is required to review the level of benefits and pensions annually. My Department has no power to set different rates for Northern Ireland. Statutorily, the basic state pension is uprated in line with earnings, however, the current Government has given a commitment that it will uprate basic state pension by the rise in inflation, earnings or 2.5 per cent whichever is the highest. This is known as the triple lock. In addition, the minimum guarantee element

of State Pension Credit, which ensures that no pensioner has to get by on less than £145.40 per week, is uprated in line with earnings. Additional state pension is also uprated in line with inflation.

Whilst the CPI is used for the purposes of the statutory minimum revaluation and indexation of occupational pension schemes and for relevant payments made by the Pension Protection Fund and the Financial Assistance Scheme, occupational pension schemes whose rules provide for uprating in line with the RPI or which wish to uprate in line with the RPI may continue to do so.

Housing Executive's Maintenance Contractor in North Belfast

Mr A Maginness asked the Minister for Social Development to outline any difficulties faced by the Housing Executive's maintenance contractor in North Belfast in meeting service delivery standards; and what action he is taking to overcome such difficulties.

(AQW 22033/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The maintenance contractor in North Belfast went into administration on 22 April 2013 and the administrator has advised that the company cannot provide any further service to the Housing Executive. The Housing Executive has now instructed their other Response Maintenance contractors to provide a back-up/support service to the Districts affected including North Belfast.

ATOS Healthcare

Lord Morrow asked the Minister for Social Development how much Atos Healthcare is paid for each assessment carried out.

(AQW 22034/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I am unable to provide the specific information that relates to the costs for conducting each assessment as the charging regime within the Medical Support Services Agreement is designated as commercially sensitive information, in accordance with Schedule 30 of the Agreement.

Welfare Reform Bill: Housing Strategy

Mr B McCrea asked the Minister for Social Development to list the action plans that have been developed under the housing strategy; and how these plans are compatible with the Welfare Reform Bill.

(AQW 22035/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department is currently finalising the housing strategy action plan. This is the only action plan that has been developed under the housing strategy, and it is planned to be published in the coming weeks.

I have previously stated that my priority remains doing all I can to prevent evictions and tenants being declared homeless. The action plan will include a section specifically focusing on the impacts of Welfare Reform. I want to ensure that those affected by Welfare Reform receive the support and advice that they need, and that my Department continues to work with others to ensure that we are meeting housing need effectively.

Phase 2 Gas Installation Scheme in Hospital Lane, Limavady

Mr G Robinson asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the reasons for the delay in starting the Phase 2 gas installation scheme in Hospital Lane, Limavady.

(AQW 22070/11-15)

Mr McCausland: I have been advised by the Housing Executive that they are not aware of any undue delay in the commencement of the Hospital Lane, Phase 2 gas installation scheme in Limavady. The date of possession for this scheme is 22 April 2013 and the Housing Executive issued the letter of acceptance to the contractor on 17 April.

Social Security Agency Buildings: Canteen Closures

Mr P Ramsey asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 21781/11-15, whether his Department is seeking to re-tender the canteen provision in the affected facilities, or whether he is considering using TUPE to transfer the affected staff to departmental employment.

(AQW 22080/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department, on advice from the Department of Finance and Personnel, will not be seeking to re-tender the canteen provision in the 8 affected Social Security Agency offices.

The Department is not considering using TUPE to transfer the affected Serco catering staff to departmental employment.

Housing Waiting List: Coleraine

Mr Campbell asked the Minister for Social Development how many people on the housing waiting list in Coleraine would be eligible for 3 bed, four or five person accommodation.

(AQW 22136/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that at 1 April 2013 there were 137 applicants on the Waiting List requiring three bedroom accommodation (which could accommodate up to six people) who have registered Coleraine as their first area of choice.

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.

Community Care Grants

Mr Kinahan asked the Minister for Social Development what is the target time in which successful applicants for Community Care Grants are to receive their grants.

(AQW 22219/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Social Security Agency currently has a clearance time target of 12 days to clear Community Care Grant applications. The target was met in the 2012/13 business year with an achievement of 9.5 days and also met in each individual month.

All payments should be made within 3 working days of the application being successful.

Housing Executive Properties

Mr Storey asked the Minister for Social Development what plans the Housing Executive has to carry out work on existing properties, where the previous tenant did not give consent for a particular scheme.

(AQW 22274/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Housing Executive tenants sometimes refuse work for a number of reasons, for example, they may have already carried out such works themselves; they do not want the inconvenience; or because of personal issues such as ill health or family bereavement. The process to subsequently deal with these dwellings is as follows:-

- While a scheme is still in progress - depending on what stage it has reached in the contractor's schedule - it may be possible to re-instate the property in the scheme if a tenant subsequently changes his/her mind on the works;
- Properties which have fallen out of previous schemes are highlighted during the annual Roll-On process through which the Housing Executive reviews its Programme requirements at a local level and introduces new planned schemes for the following three to five year period. Such properties may therefore be considered for inclusion in a future scheme planned, for example, for a nearby estate.
- If there is a re-let of such a property, depending on the type of work involved, some of this may be addressed through the Change of Tenancy repairs. Major works - for example, a complete kitchen

refurbishment or a replacement heating system - are more likely to be carried out by including the property in an appropriate current or future scheme.

- In circumstances where proposed works have a health and safety dimension, for example, the installation of smoke alarms or carbon monoxide detectors, or the removal of asbestos - the Housing Executive warns tenants of the dangers of non-compliance and may issue proceedings for an injunction to pursue access in such cases to carry out the works required.

Coleraine Town Centre Master Plan

Mr McClarty asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Coleraine Town Centre Masterplan launched in May 2012.

(AQO 3926/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Coleraine Town Centre Masterplan was published on 9 May 2012. It includes 61 actions and 6 wider town centre strategies to be delivered over a 15 to 20 year timescale.

Responsibility for the delivery of initiatives in the Masterplan lies with Coleraine Borough Council who have established a new Town Centre Advisory Group to assist them in the delivery of these initiatives. The first meeting of the Advisory Group, which includes all statutory agencies as well as business and community representatives who have an interest or stake in Coleraine Town centre, was held on Thursday 25 April.

The first three actions to be taken forward from the Masterplan are:

- A revitalise project for the properties in the Waterside and Bridge Street areas of the town. My Department has provided funding of £250,000 for this project which will improve the visual appearance of the area by tidying up shop fronts and gap sites and running promotional activities to boost footfall and trade in the area. Work has already commenced on this project and is due to be completed by 31 March 2014.
- A review of the use of the town hall to determine how its use could be extended during evenings and weekends. This review has just commenced.
- A review of the evening economy within the town centre. This review will commence later this year.

The other initiatives in the Masterplan will be considered for delivery by the Town Centre Advisory Group during the lifetime of the Masterplan.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Temporary Decampment

Mr Beggs asked the Minister for Social Development what determines whether temporary decampment is required for existing tenants when major renovation of a Northern Ireland Housing Executive property takes place.

(AQO 3932/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has advised that any improvement work they now do is mainly in relation to Kitchen Replacements, External Cyclical Maintenance, Double Glazing and Fire Door Replacement which does not normally require decanting.

However, for example, they may occasionally have a kitchen scheme where internal structural work is required or an extension is required and daytime or temporary decanting may be considered.

In relation to Major Adaptations on their properties for persons with disabilities, due to the nature of the work and the needs of the tenant, alternative accommodation can sometimes be sought to facilitate the works being carried out and to minimise disruption to the tenant, given the particular nature of their disability. Any question of whether decanting would be necessary is decided on a case by case basis in conjunction with all parties concerned, including the tenant.

Rural Housing

Mr McMullan asked the Minister for Social Development what action he will take to deal with unfitness in rural housing.

(AQO 3933/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are two key methods of dealing with unfitness of housing in rural areas, namely private sector grants and social housing new build.

Grant aid available to rural areas includes mandatory grants in the form of a Disabled Facilities Grant and Repairs Grants for Landlords. There are also Discretionary grants in the form of Rehabilitation and Replacements Grants along with funding available to low-income households to improve energy efficiency by availing of the Warm Homes or Boiler Replacement scheme.

As a last resort the Housing Executive can also exercise a system for closing orders and Demolition Notices.

The new Rural Action Plan 2013 - 2015 being launched in May 2013 highlights the increased importance of ensuring that an equitable share of mandatory grants are directed towards rural areas. The plan will also identify rural Housing Executive dwellings requiring energy efficiency works such as heating, insulation, double glazing and ensure that they are included in future programmes.

My Department has a commitment to deliver an appropriate share of new social housing in rural areas and this will also contribute to the reduction of levels of unfitness.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Oil-fired Heating

Mr McElduff asked the Minister for Social Development to outline the strategy in place to remove oil fired heating systems from Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in order to replace them with gas systems.

(AQO 3934/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The first boilers for oil fired heating systems provided by the Housing Executive are beginning to reach the end of their useful life of 15 years during this financial year, 2013/14. These boilers are included in a planned programme for replacement.

Where a mains gas supply is available, the tenants will be offered gas. Only in exceptional circumstances and after detailed consultation will tenants retain oil fired central heating as their heat source.

DSD: Intranet

Mr Allister asked the Minister for Social Development how his Department's Dignity at Work policy is applied to the operation of its intranet site.

(AQO 3935/11-15)

Mr McCausland: My Department operates under the NICS Dignity at Work policy. The NICS is committed to equality of opportunity and this policy is about creating and sustaining a working environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect, and free from any form of inappropriate behaviour. This policy extends to all work related aspects including the operation of the Department's intranet site.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive: Cavity Wall Insulation

Mrs Cochrane asked the Minister for Social Development will the cavity wall insulation schemes that were scheduled to take place in Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties in East Belfast be completed on schedule.

(AQO 3936/11-15)

Mr McCausland: The Housing Executive has no cavity wall insulation schemes programmed for East Belfast, nor has there been any planned for a number of years. There are also no schemes planned in the Housing Executive's Castlereagh District Office area.

Homeowners: Financial Assistance

Mr F McCann asked the Minister for Social Development how the ceasing of means tested financial assistance to home owners to deal with deterioration in their properties will impact on home owners in the future.

(AQO 3937/11-15)

Mr McCausland: It is important to note that the lack of available resources to assist homeowners undertake repair and/or improvement means that the current grants scheme is no longer fit for purpose. At present my Department is carrying out a review of the support for repair and improvement in the private housing sector. Responses to the proposal, to deregulate the current grants scheme and replace it with a more flexible system of help, are currently being considered and a series of proposals will be published when this consideration concludes. I anticipate any new scheme will therefore provide a viable method to assist homeowners deal with any perceived deterioration in their properties in the future.

The Housing Executive has advised that the current grants/schemes available to owner occupiers are as follows:

Renovation Grants/Home Repairs Assistance Grants

- only available in exceptional circumstances to improve homes where there is imminent and significant risk to the health and safety of the occupants

Warm Homes Scheme

- To provide loft and cavity wall insulation, and to provide new heating where none exists or to replace Economy 7 heating with oil or gas

Boiler Replacement Scheme

- To replace old, inefficient boilers which are more than 15 years old in owner occupied homes

Housing: East Belfast

Mr Newton asked the Minister for Social Development how many new build homes are planned for the East Belfast constituency in the next twelve months.

(AQO 3938/11-15)

Mr McCausland: There are a total of 93 new build homes planned for the East Belfast constituency during the 2013/14 programme year. A total of 64 units are currently programmed for General Needs and 29 units are currently programmed for Supported Housing.

The Housing Executive is currently in the process of formulating the new Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) for 2013/14 to account for year end slippage at end of 2012/13. The SHDP will be published on the Housing Executive's website when this exercise is complete.

Welfare Reform Bill

Mr Copeland asked the Minister for Social Development how many children will be placed into poverty following the introduction of the proposed Welfare Reform Bill.

(AQO 3953/11-15)

Mr McCausland: Reform of the welfare system is absolutely essential notwithstanding the need to develop it in a way relevant to Northern Ireland's specific needs. Welfare reform will make important and substantial changes to the current tax and benefit system and Universal Credit in particular will

make a positive contribution to tackling the root causes of child poverty in Northern Ireland. The removal of the 16 hour working rule before childcare costs can be reimbursed coupled with a reduction in the marginal participation tax rates means that parents in part time work will no longer have to deal with cliff edges in their take home pay when they work more than 16 or 25 hours per week. This will help to address some of the structural causes of poverty. Universal Credit is also focused on increasing the support paid to those families with the lowest incomes

Currently it is not possible to quantify the specific impact of welfare reform on child poverty but work is ongoing to develop a Household Income Administrative Database which will allow more accurate assessment of the impact on specific groups. The structure of the database should facilitate the estimation of income at an individual and household level (through benefit receipt and private sources). Not only will this facilitate an assessment of the take-up of means tested benefits but (subject to data quality) it should also allow an analysis of the individual and combined effects (including financial) of the various Welfare Reform policies. I anticipate that the database will be ready for full testing by late summer / early autumn 2013.

My Department will of course continue to target its resources on those who experience the worst levels of disadvantage through delivering initiatives which target both the causes and consequences of poverty.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

MLA Support: Libel or Slander

Mr Swann asked the Assembly Commission to detail (i) the support available to MLAs when they are accused of, and subsequently admit or are found guilty of, libel or slander; and (ii) any variations in the support depending on circumstances.

(AQW 21984/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):

- (i) Currently the Assembly Commission holds a combined Employer's and Public Liability insurance policy which covers all MLA's and Assembly Commission employees. Under the Public Liability section of this policy, libel or slander falls under the definition of "Personal Injury". As such the policy may indemnify for damages and legal costs payable to any person who is not an "employee". This cover is only applicable to an MLA when he or she is speaking in their capacity as an MLA.
- (ii) Whether a particular case is indemnified or not under the terms of the policy is a matter for the insurers. Each case is assessed by the insurers on an individual basis.

Financial Restitution

Mr Swann asked the Assembly Commission to detail any occasions since 2007 when it has provided financial restitution to a third party arising from the actions of an MLA; and the circumstances that led to the restitution.

(AQW 21985/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): From 2007, the Assembly Commission has paid no financial restitution to any third parties arising from the actions of an MLA. However, you may be aware of a recent case (O'Loan v Givan and others) that has been covered in the local media. Under the personal injury section of the Assembly Commission's combined Employer's and Public Liability insurance policy an amount of damages and costs have been awarded to the plaintiff. However, the final "financial restitution" has still to be advised by the Assembly Commission's insurers.

Defamation Proceedings

Mr Allister asked the Assembly Commission, whether an MLA is entitled to avail of its insurance policy for the purpose of (i) initiating defamation proceedings; (ii) defending defamation proceedings; and (iii) the conditions attached.

(AQW 22020/11-15)

Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission): The Assembly Commission's Combined Employer's and Public Liability Insurance policy provides cover for Assembly Commission employees and MLAs. Under the Public Liability section of this policy, libel or slander falls under the definition of "Personal Injury". As such, the policy may indemnify for damages and compensation costs in respect of defamation proceedings.

The policy may not be used by an MLA for the purpose of initiating defamation proceedings but may provide cover for defending defamation proceedings. The conditions attached to this aspect of the policy will include standard policy conditions but more specific conditions are:

- Indemnity will not apply for any libel or slander made prior to the inception date of the policy;
- Indemnity will not apply for any libel or slander that is made by or at the direction of the insured or an employee of the insured with the knowledge of the defamatory nature thereof;
- Indemnity will not apply for any libel or slander that is made by any person acting outside the scope of their authority.

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Revised Written Answers

Friday 3 May 2013

(AQW 20899/11-15)

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:

Position at:-	Total Applicants	Applicants in Housing Stress (30 points or more)
31 March 2008	1913	1011
31 March 2009	1930	1006
31 March 2010	1885	958
31 March 2011	1884	960
31 March 2012	2197	1081
1 March 2013	2406	1194

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.

(AQW 21287/11-15)

The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate data by Electoral Ward. 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:

Position at:-	Total Applicants	Applicants in Housing Stress (30 points or more)
31 March 2008	1913	1011
31 March 2009	1930	1006
31 March 2010	1885	958
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