

# Written Answers to Questions

Official Report (Hansard)

**Friday 24 May 2013**

**Volume 85, No WA2**



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

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Swann, Robin (North Antrim)  
Weir, Peter (North Down)  
Wells, Jim (South Down)  
Wilson, Sammy (East Antrim)

# Northern Ireland Assembly

Friday 24 May 2013

## Written Answers to Questions

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

#### **Maze Conflict Transformation Centre**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what is the estimated annual income flow and profit from the Maze Conflict Transformation Centre once it is operational.

**(AQW 14210/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness (The First Minister and deputy First Minister):** Information on the estimated annual income flow and profit from the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre at Maze/Long Kesh is potentially commercially sensitive and would not be released at this time.

#### **November 2012 China Trade Mission**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) to list the participants in the November 2012 China Trade Mission; (ii) to detail the number of Ministers, special advisers and civil servants involved; and (iii) to detail the cost to the public purse.

**(AQW 16801/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The information has been published on the OFMDFM website.

#### **North South Ministerial Council: Education for Protestant Children**

**Mr Campbell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in light of the withdrawal of the Ancillary Grant to Protestant schools in the Republic of Ireland in 2009, whether they will consider the right to equal opportunity of education for Protestant children in the Republic of Ireland as an agenda item for the next meeting of the North South Ministerial Council.

**(AQW 19647/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** It is the role of the Ministers, with lead responsibility for an Area of Co-operation, to agree agendas for North/South Ministerial Council (NSMC) meetings in Sectoral Format.

The issue of 'Ancillary Grant to Protestant Schools' in the Republic of Ireland may fall within the NSMC 'Education' Area of Co-operation and the relevant department is the Department of Education (DE) and the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in the South.

#### **Grievance Cases and Whistleblowing Complaints**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 17445/11-15, when they will be in a position to provide the full costs of the recent trade mission to China.

**(AQW 20150/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The information has been published on the OFMDFM website.

## Alleged Irregularities within Victims Groups

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister (i) whether their Department, or any of its agencies, has ever lodged a complaint with the police in respect of alleged irregularities within victims groups; (ii) when such complaints were made; and (iii) against which groups.

**(AQW 22050/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We can confirm that one complaint was lodged with the PSNI by the Community Relations Council in August 2010 against the group SAVER/NAVER.

## Social Investment Fund

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on the Social Investment Fund; and how much has been spent to date on (i) administration; (ii) project delivery; (iii) training; and (iv) consultation.

**(AQW 22198/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The first phase of the Social Investment Fund has been extended to March 2016 with £80 million ring-fenced to support area plan based delivery. Agreed area plans were received on 28 February and are currently being considered as part of a comprehensive appraisal process.

In relation to funding, this has all now been subsumed into the larger Delivering Social Change Fund. However, specifically in relation to area-based plan-related expenditure, spending to date on (i) administration; (ii) project delivery; (iii) training; and (iv) consultation is detailed in the table below:

Spend	Amount
Administration	Nil
Project delivery <sup>1</sup>	£382,735
Training	Nil
Consultation <sup>2</sup>	£18,246
<b>Total</b>	<b>£400,981</b>

Eighty-nine projects have been recommended by the steering groups and they are currently undergoing economic appraisal. We anticipate funding being released against those projects in the next few months.

- 1 Includes costs incurred in preparation for delivery such as provision of support to develop Area plans
- 2 Includes cost of public consultation and engagement and information sessions

## Former Ballykelly Army Base

**Mr Campbell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 8222/11-15, to detail the (i) maintenance; (ii) security; (iii) utilities; and (iv) other costs in relation to the former Ballykelly Army Base from 7 October 2011 to 31 March 2013.

**(AQW 22267/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The costs in relation to the former Ballykelly Army base from 7 October 2011 to 31 March 2013 are as follows:-

	11/12	12/13	Total
(i) Maintenance	£96,041.30	£214,714.80	<b>£310,756.10</b>
(ii) Security	£139,778.14	£264,988.54	<b>£404,766.68</b>

	<b>11/12</b>	<b>12/13</b>	<b>Total</b>
(iii) Utilities	£101,762.16	£112,429.26	<b>£214,191.42</b>
(iv) Other costs	£7,593.49	£5,915.95	<b>£13,509.44</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>£943,223.64</b>

### **OFMDFM: Paid and Unpaid Invoices**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, (i) the total number of invoices paid by their Department and its respective Arm's-Length Bodies; (ii) the number of invoices paid within thirty calendar days; (iii) the number of invoices paid within ten working days of receipt; (iv) how each of their Department's Arm's-Length Bodies has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and (v) the number of invoices that remain unpaid.

**(AQW 22624/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The table below details the unaudited prompt payment performance of the Department and its Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

<b>Name</b>	<b>(i) Total Invoices paid</b>	<b>(ii) Invoices Paid within 30 days</b>	<b>(iii) Invoices Paid within 10 days</b>	<b>(iv) NDPB Prompt Payment Performance</b>	<b>(v) Invoices currently outstanding from 2012/13</b>
OFMDFM	6,075	5,854	5,162	96.36%	19
Commission for Victims and Survivors for Northern Ireland	676	670	555	99.11%	5
Commissioner for Children and Young People for Northern Ireland	340	332	285	97.65%	0
Commissioner for Older People for NI	326	325	288	99.69%	0
Community Relations Council for Northern Ireland	769	672	552	87.39%	2
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	1167	1132	829	97.00%	0
Ilex Urban Regeneration Company Limited	846	838	680	99.05%	22
Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation	396	396	269	100.00%	0

<b>Name</b>	<b>(i) Total Invoices paid</b>	<b>(ii) Invoices Paid within 30 days</b>	<b>(iii) Invoices Paid within 10 days</b>	<b>(iv) NDPB Prompt Payment Performance</b>	<b>(v) Invoices currently outstanding from 2012/13</b>
Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission	728	712	683	97.80%	3
Northern Ireland Memorial Fund	1691	1691	1691	100.00%	0
Strategic Investment Board	1018	994	872	97.64%	0
Victims and Survivors Service	711	481	226	67.65%	0

### Dealing with Legacies

**Mr McDevitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister what action they have taken to find an agreed and comprehensive framework to deal with the legacies of the past.

**(AQO 3951/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We have recently announced the establishment of an all party group to consider and bring forward recommendations on a range of matters including dealing with the past.

We established the Commission for Victims and Survivors in May 2008 to promote an awareness of matters relating to the interests of victims and survivors and of the need to safeguard those interests.

One of the key objectives for the Commission is to advise Government and to contribute to the broader consideration of ways to deal with the past as an essential element of transition. The advice that the Commission has provided to us to date on this issue has been incorporated into the current Victims and Survivors programme, being implemented by the recently established Victims and Survivors Service over the next two years.

Within this CSR period we have significantly increased funding, totalling £50 million, to meet the needs of victims and survivors.

### Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the business case for the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre was completed.

**(AQW 22806/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The business case for the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre was approved in November 2011.

### Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the evidence, to which the deputy First Minister referred during Question Time on 7 May 2013, on the income and employment that will be generated by the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre.

**(AQW 22807/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The projections of 70 additional jobs and approximately £1 million per annum from visitor income and employment generated by the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre were calculated in line with relevant guidance.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why the empirical evidence for the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre has not been brought before the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

**(AQW 22808/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Officials and representatives from the Maze/Long Kesh Programme Delivery Unit and Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation have provided evidence regularly to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre (PBCRC), the latest appearance being on 6 March 2013.

From September 2010 the Committee also receives regular bi-monthly update reports on the regeneration of Maze/Long Kesh including detail on progress with the PBCRC.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, in relation to the research carried out by Colliers International on the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution centre, to detail (i) the cost of this research; (ii) the number of people surveyed; (iii) the jurisdictions visited; (iv) the religious breakdown of those surveyed; and (v) the proportion of people surveyed who were ex-prisoners or known former paramilitaries.

**(AQW 22809/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:**

- i The cost of the Colliers International report was £34,700.
- ii. The number of people surveyed was 1,007.
- iii. The jurisdiction for the survey was Northern Ireland.
- iv. The religious breakdown was 46% Protestant; 40% Catholic and 14% other -(did not express a religious background).
- v This information was not gathered as part of the survey.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the research which has been commissioned into the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre.

**(AQW 22810/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Colliers International was commissioned to produce a visitor analysis report for the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre at Maze/Long Kesh. The information contained in the report has commercial in confidence aspects that prevent it from being made public at this time.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre: Consultation Process**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to detail the consultation process that took place on the proposal for a Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre at the Maze, including who was consulted, when the consultation took place, and the method of consultation.

**(AQW 22873/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre is being built at Maze/Long Kesh in accordance with Recommendation 3.3.12 of the All-party Maze Consultation Panel Report (February 2005).

Extensive consultations take place on an ongoing basis with many stakeholder groups, reference groups and local residents to obtain how their needs may best be met on the site.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre: Colliers International**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to list the questions that Colliers International was requested to ask in its research on the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre.

**(AQW 22914/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Colliers International was commissioned to produce a visitor analysis report for the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre (PBCRC) at Maze/Long Kesh.

The information contained in the report, including the questions asked, is commercial-in-confidence. This prevents the information requested being made public at this time.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline (i) the target for visitors to the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre, in each of its first five years; (ii) the income expected to be generated; and (iii) an estimate of any subvention required.

**(AQW 22917/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The information on visitor numbers and income generated through visitors, contract work and other services is potentially commercially sensitive and will not be released at this time.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre**

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister to outline the discussions or consultation they have had with the Minister of Education and the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment on the participation of schools at the proposed Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre.

**(AQW 22921/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** To date we have not corresponded with the Minister of Education about the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre at Maze/Long Kesh.

Representatives from the Maze/Long Kesh Development Corporation met on two occasions, on 7 January and 16 February 2011, with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment and delivered a preliminary overview of the Education, Research, Teaching and Learning work strand of the Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre.

### **Special Enterprise Zones**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for an update on plans to establish Special Enterprise Zones.

**(AQW 22975/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** We received correspondence from the Secretary of State on 28 March 2013 detailing some proposed economic measures for the local economy.

As you will be aware from statements made in the press by the Secretary of State, the economic package contains an expanded offer on Enterprise Zone tax allowances.

We are currently considering carefully the issue of special Enterprise Zones, but cannot discuss the detail until we have a chance to evaluate it, and its implications, in full.

### **Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister how, and when, their Department met its Section 75 obligations in regard to its proposal for a Peace Building and Conflict Resolution Centre at the Maze.

**(AQW 22976/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Maze/Long Kesh Programme Delivery Unit completed an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) in May 2012.

### **Unanswered Question: AQW 19647/11-15**

**Mr Campbell** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when they will answer AQW 19647/11-15.  
**(AQW 22978/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** AQW 19647/11-15 was answered on 20 May 2013.

### **Planning Appeals Commission: Appeals and Article 31 Hearings**

**Mr Weir** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 22646/11-15, how many of the appeals are awaiting a decision; and how many of these appeals have been waiting for longer than twelve months.

**(AQW 23050/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Planning Appeals Commission is an independent tribunal Non-Departmental Public Body. Given its status, we have asked its Chief Commissioner to provide a response directly to you.

### **Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister when the tender will be awarded for the Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.

**(AQW 23071/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** Work is still ongoing on the recent tender for a Service for Victims and Survivors. The results will be made known as soon as a final decision has been reached.

### **Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister which organisations have submitted tenders for the Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.

**(AQW 23073/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The evaluation process for this competition is still ongoing and details cannot be released as submitted tenders are classified as 'Commercial in Confidence'.

### **Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why Survivors and Victims of Institutional Abuse were not involved in the preparation of the tender for the Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.

**(AQW 23074/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The tender specification for a support service was developed following discussions with victims and survivors through a number of consultation meetings arranged by the Historical Institutional Abuse Inter-departmental taskforce, which took place in March 2011.

## **Strategic Investment Board: Consultants**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 21765/11-15, how much the Strategic Investment Board spent on consultants, in each year since 2007, broken down by project supported, including where the value of support was less than £100,000.

**(AQW 23135/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** A copy of a detailed breakdown of consultancy expenditure by the Strategic Investment Board in each year since 2007 has been placed in the Assembly Library.

## **Grievance Cases and Whistleblowing Complaints**

**Mr Allister** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister, pursuant to AQW 16158/11-15, to list the arm's-length bodies against whom whistle blowing allegations were made; and the recommendations arising from the subsequent investigations.

**(AQW 23137/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The three whistle blowing cases related to the Strategic Investment Board (SIB). Two were referred to SIB and one to OFMDFM and were investigated by the relevant Internal Auditors.

The 2009 case related to an alleged conflict of interest on the part of an SIB Adviser. The investigation concluded that there had been no misconduct but that the SIB Adviser was in breach of SIB's conflict of interest guidance which could have given rise to a perception of conflict of interest and recommended that steps were taken to prevent further conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest and to brief relevant stakeholders on the outcome of investigations.

The 2011 case referred to SIB was in relation to the use made by a third party of funding provided by SIB. The subsequent internal audit report dismissed three out of four specific allegations. The fourth allegation related to non-compliance by the funding recipient with procurement procedures and the auditor made nine recommendations in relation to governance and procurement matters and review of the project to ensure that correct procurement procedures were in place for the future.

The 2011 case referred to OFMDFM related to the appointment of another adviser and possible conflict of interest. The investigation found no evidence of wrong doing by the adviser but made recommendations on enhanced governance and procurement measures for future appointments.

All the agreed recommendations of the audit reports have been implemented.

## **Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister who, within their Department, is responsible for managing the tender process for the Support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.

**(AQW 23146/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** As is standard for the tendering process in departments, tendering for the support Service for Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse is being managed by Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) in DFP. Officials in the Historical Institutional Abuse Sponsorship Division are liaising with CPD on this matter on behalf of the department.

## **Irish and British Governments All-Party Talks on Parades, Flags and Emblems and the Past**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister whether the Irish and British Governments will be involved in the proposed all-party talks to deal with issues such as parades, flags and emblems, and the past.

**(AQW 23155/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** All five Executive parties have been invited to put forward two nominees for the Working Group, which will also include the Junior Ministers. It will have an independent chairperson.

There is no plan to involve the British or Irish Governments in the group.

### **Strategic Investment Board: Staff Costs**

**Mr McGlone** asked the First Minister and deputy First Minister why there was an increase in the staff costs of the Strategic Investment Board in the latest monitoring round.

**(AQO 4059/11-15)**

**Mr P Robinson and Mr M McGuinness:** The Strategic Investment Board plays a vital role in supporting the delivery of the challenging and ambitious goals set out in the Programme for Government and Investment Strategy against the background of a reduction in our block grant.

One of the ways in which the Strategic Investment Board supports the Executive is to provide specialist advisory and programme delivery staff not otherwise available within the public sector. This enables departments to have access to the professional input required to deliver projects and programmes on target and within budget.

In the past, SIB achieved this mainly through the employment of consultants. However, we are committed to reducing our use of consultancy and to making savings across the public sector as set out in the Savings Delivery Plan.

In response to this and to an increased demand for its services following the publication of the new PfG and Investment Strategy, SIB has delivered more with less money by increasing the number of staff it recruits directly on fixed term contracts.

Depending on the type of work and contract involved, this can save up to one-third of the cost of an equivalent consultancy arrangement. This means that while its staffing costs have increased, the Strategic Investment Board's expenditure on external consultancy and other professional services is lower than was anticipated when budgets were set.

The effect of this is that, overall, the Strategic Investment Board saved around £0.5m in excess of its overall target in 2013/14 while still delivering its business objectives.

## **Department of Agriculture and Rural Development**

### **Moy Road Site, Dungannon**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline her present and planned commitments in relation to the (i) financing; and (ii) staffing of various functions and organisations that are based at the Moy Road site, Dungannon.

**(AQW 22066/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill (The Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development):** At the outset of the current NI Rural Development Programme (NIDRP) the decision was taken to contract out part of the Axis 1 Measures to a Delivery Agent. Following a competitive process, a contract was signed with Countryside Services Ltd (CSL) on 31 January 2009 for the delivery of some of the Axis 1 Measures for a period up to 31 December 2015. The award to CSL and two sub contractors, Ai Services Ltd (AiS), based at Newtownabbey and the NI Rural Development Council (RDC), based at Cookstown, was under the collective title of the Countryside Agri Rural Partnership.

The original contract was for £9.11m for the delivery of the Focus Farm, Benchmarking, Farm Family Options, Farm Modernisation, METS and Supply Chain Development programmes with a combined budget of £29.49m. There have been a few variations to the contract and with two scheme extensions, the scheme budget is currently £31.05m with delivery costs of £9.42m. Of the £9.42 delivery costs,

£5.8m is for the administrative function which includes staff costs. The contract specified key staff and outlined the time period for their involvement in scheme delivery.

Most Measures will be closed by 31 March 2015 and the remaining period to 31 December 2015 will be taken up with finalising payments and assisting with scheme evaluations.

A review of programme delivery is currently being planned to inform delivery options for any future schemes.

### **Unanswered Questions: AQW 20662/11-15 and AQW 21080/11-15**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why she has not yet answered AQW 20662/11-15 and AQW 21080/11-15.

**(AQW 22071/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** AQW 20662/11-15 was answered on the 25th April 2013 and AQW 21080/11-15 was answered on the 8th May 2013.

### **Wind Turbine Applications**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of wind turbine applications that have (i) been assessed under the Rural Development Programme; (ii) that have received a letter of offer; and (iii) for which funding has been made available.

**(AQW 22423/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I have taken your question to mean any funding allocated to wind turbines including feasibility studies and those that are part of a larger project. To date (i) 108 applications for Wind Turbines have been assessed under the Rural Development Programme, (ii) 94 have received a Letter of Offer and (iii) 91 have accepted the Letter of Offer and had funding made available.

### **Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund**

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what benefit Portavogie will receive from Axis 4 of the European Fisheries Fund through the Northern Ireland Fisheries Local Action Group.

**(AQW 22457/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department is currently considering the Axis 4 Local Development Strategy and associated business case, submitted by the South East Fisheries Local Action Group (SEFLAG). The business case, once approved, envisages £2.5m of public investment in the fishing dependent communities in County Down. Portavogie is one of the three main fishing villages which will benefit from Axis 4 funding. The SEFLAG, consistent with the EFF ethos of a "bottom-up approach" will be responsible for selecting the projects to be funded. The extent of the investment that Portavogie will receive will therefore depend on the grant applications made and SEFLAG's decisions on those applications.

### **Neonicotinoid Chemicals in Pesticides**

**Mr Cree** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development for her assessment of the use of neonicotinoid chemicals in pesticides; and whether she has any plans to carry out localised field trials on the impact of such pesticides on pollinators.

**(AQW 22558/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Neonicotinoids are primarily used for the treatment of seeds, mainly on oilseed rape and maize. The area of these crops grown in the north and consequent use of neonicotinoids are relatively limited. Pesticide usage statistics from 2010, provided by the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute, indicate that the neonicotinoids were used for seed treatment on 0.6% of the agricultural land area in the north of Ireland.

Due to concerns over the potential impact on bees, the European Commission has indicated that it will shortly prohibit the use of 3 neonicotinoids for seed treatment, soil application and foliar treatment on bee attractive crops. The sale of these neonicotinoids to amateur growers will also be prohibited.

A range of problems unrelated to pesticides also interact to affect bees and pollinators, including weather and the presence of pests and/or disease.

In light of all of the factors above, I have no immediate plans to carry out localised field trials on the impact of neonicotinoid insecticides on pollinators.

## **Bee Issues**

**Mr Cree** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to list the bee-keepers and environmentalists that have contacted her Department regarding bee issues over the last twelve months, including the use of pesticides containing neonicotinoids.

**(AQW 22559/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In the past twelve months, my Department has been contacted by three members of the public and one environmentalist about pesticides containing neonicotinoids and their possible impact on bees.

## **Damage Caused by Recent Adverse Weather**

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department has undertaken an assessment to quantify the damage caused by the recent adverse weather.

**(AQW 22575/11-15)**

**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 Payments Scheme, which will help to mitigate the costs of the livestock losses that have been sustained by farmers arising from the snow storm.

The Department has undertaken an assessment of the nature and extent of those livestock losses as a consequence of the recent snow storm. This is based on the information that has been built as farmers have had stock removed and disposed of by the approved renderers.

## **Farmers Affected by Adverse Weather**

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department has explored the possibility of financial remuneration from Europe for farmers affected by adverse weather.

**(AQW 22576/11-15)**

**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 my Department 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.

Any government hardship funding has to be compliant with EU State Aid Rules. The relevant options that are available and were considered are as follows:

- The first option, namely support from the European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF), was set up to respond to natural disasters. For a member state to access support under this fund, which is concerned with infrastructure and not individual businesses, it must have had a major national disaster where the damage exceeds €3 billion, in the case of Britain and the north of Ireland, or

0.6% of the country's national income whichever is the lower. This option is not relevant in the circumstances and was ruled out.

- The second option, Commission Regulation (EC) 1857/2006 State Aid Block Exemption, allows state aid to be given for losses due to adverse climatic events which can be assimilated to natural disasters. Such are defined as losses in excess of 30% of the average of annual production of a given farmer. It is unlikely that the level of losses sustained in the snow storm would meet these loss criteria and it would also place a greater burden on farmers by way of information requirements and take considerable time to process and therefore this option was also ruled out.
- The third option, concerns the State Aid de minimis provision, which allows for funding of up to €7,500 in a 3 year period. This is the vehicle most appropriate for the circumstances as it will enable support to be provided quickly to meet the needs of the majority of farmers in respect of the snow storm livestock losses.

Hardship payments will be made under the EU State Aid de minimis rules and capped at a maximum of €7,500 per farmer, including the collection and disposal costs of the fallen animals.

I hope to release details of the scheme and how to apply in the very near future.

## Two Year Fishing Vessel Licences

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that her Department was not consulted by the Manx Authorities regarding the introduction of a fee for two year fishing vessel licences, what action her Department has taken to challenge the decision.

**(AQW 22577/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** My Department was not consulted by the Isle of Man authorities prior to them taking a decision to introduce a £435 fee for a 2-year fishing vessel license from April 2013.

Defra subsequently wrote to the Manx authorities on 11 December 2012 and raised the issue of a lack of consultation. However the Isle of Man responded that they do not consider that licence charges are management measures that required consultation under the Fisheries Management Agreement 2012.

The matter of consultation on all measures that are likely to impact on fishermen will require further discussion between the Manx authorities and the Fisheries Administrations. No agreed date has been arranged for the next meeting.

## Fishing Industry: Light Dues

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development why the fishing industry is required to pay light dues by the Department of Transport when other jurisdictions are exempt.

**(AQW 22578/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Light dues are payable by all owners of fishing vessels over 10 metres in length and vessel owners here and in Scotland pay light dues. DEFRA agreed to pay for light dues in 2008 on behalf of their fishermen, as part of their hardship package in response to the economic downturn and other pressures facing the industry at that time. Each Administration took a different approach and here we funded harbour charges for one year whilst England did not. I understand that whilst DEFRA have paid for light dues since 2008 and including 2013, the matter is currently under review.

## Brucellosis: Pre-Movement Tests

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development (i) how many pre-movement tests for Brucellosis were conducted in the last financial year; (ii) what were the results of these tests; and (iii) what plans her Department has to reduce the level and amount of testing for Brucellosis.

**(AQW 22602/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:**

- (i) In the 12 months ending 28 February 2013 there were a total of 175,835 animals pre-movement tested.
- (ii) In this period, 2 cattle had positive blood tests, but these 2 serological reactors did not have infection confirmed by culture. In addition, 1,039 animals gave an inconclusive reaction requiring further testing of the animals concerned. These cattle were declared negative following further tests.
- (iii) Any recrudescence of this disease could set back the prospect of achieving Official Brucellosis Free (OBF) status, as no application for OBF status can be considered until 3 years after the last confirmed brucellosis breakdown. As the last confirmed brucellosis breakdown was on 28 February 2012, it is still essential that my Department maintains a level and amount of testing which is proportionate to the disease risk and the goal of achieving OBF status. This will be kept under review and any future changes to the level and amount of testing will be on the basis of carefully considered veterinary risk assessment.

**DARD: Invoices Paid and Unpaid**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, (i) the total number of invoices paid by her Department and its respective Arm's-Length Bodies; (ii) the number of invoices paid within thirty calendar days; (iii) the number of invoices paid within ten working days of receipt; (iv) how each of her Department's Arm's-Length Bodies has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and (v) the number of invoices that remain unpaid.

**(AQW 22625/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The performance of my department and its Arm's-Length Bodies for the payment of invoices during the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 is summarised in the table below:

Department / Arm's-Length Body	Total No of Invoices Paid 01/04/12 - 31/03/13	No of Invoices Paid Within 30 Working Days 01/04/12 - 31/03/13	% of invoices paid within 30 working days	No of Invoices Paid Within 10 Working Days 01/04/12 - 31/03/13	% of Invoices Paid Within 10 Working Days	No of Invoices Unpaid 01/04/12 - 31/03/13	Value of Invoices (£) Unpaid 01/04/12 - 31/03/13
DARD	33,131	32,405	97.81%	29,963	90.44%	73	118,935
AFBI	14,474	13,416	92.69%	7,752	53.56%	39	71,000
LOUGHS AGENCY	5,564	5,450	97.95%	n/a	n/a	0	0
NIFHA	1,195	1,135	94.98%	824	68.95%	0	0
LMC	864	849	98.26%	62	7.18%	0	0

Details for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013:

- I. Total No of invoices paid by DARD (including Agencies): 33,131  
Total No of invoices paid by Arm's-Length Bodies:
- (a) AFBI: 14,474
- (b) Loughs Agency: 5,564
- (c) NIFHA: 1,195
- (d) LMC: 864

- II. No of invoices paid by DARD (including Agencies) within 30 working days:  
32,405 - (97.81%)
- III. No of invoices paid by DARD (including Agencies) within 10 working days: 29,963 - (90.44%)  
No of invoices paid by Arm's-length Bodies within 10 working days:
- (a) AFBI: 7,752 – (53.56%)
  - (b) Loughs Agency: n/a
  - (c) NIFHA: 824 – (68.95%)
  - (d) LMC: 62 – (7.18%)
- IV. No of invoices paid by Arm's-Length Bodies within 30 working days:
- (a) AFBI: 13,416 (92.69%)
  - (b) Loughs Agency: 5,450 (97.95%)
  - (c) NIFHA: 1,135 (94.98%)
  - (d) LMC: 849 (98.26%)
- V. No of invoices in DARD (including Agencies) remaining unpaid: 73 – (£118,935)  
No of invoices in Arm's-Length Bodies remaining unpaid:
- (a) AFBI: 39 – (£71,000)
  - (b) Loughs Agency: 0 (£0)
  - (c) NIFHA: 0 – (£0)
  - (d) LMC: 0 – (£0)

### **Cross-Border Movement of Animals for Agricultural Shows**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether she plans to ease the regulations on the cross-border movement of animals for agricultural shows, provided that owners can prove their animals have tested disease free.

**(AQW 22736/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The movement of animals between EU Member States is regulated by a number of EU Directives. The movement of cattle is regulated by EU Directive 64/432.

My officials have agreed a protocol with their counterparts in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine to facilitate the movement of cattle throughout Ireland to agricultural shows. This protocol includes criteria in line with Directive 64/432 such as residency, standstill and testing within 30 days of movement to the show in the other jurisdiction. The protocol requires the show premises to operate as an approved EU Assembly Centre, and the official veterinarian at the show to issue a certificate of non-cominglement which provides health assurances that allow animals to return to their residences immediately after the show.

This protocol has been in place for a number of years now and operates effectively in assuring appropriate disease control measures while facilitating the movement of animals to shows. The protocol demonstrates the benefits of co-operation on animal health issues on an all Ireland basis.

The achievement of free movement of animals throughout Ireland based on the assessment of risk is a key aim of mine and an objective of the All-Island Animal Health and Welfare Strategy, which was agreed by the North South Ministerial Council Ministers in March 2010. The new EU Animal Health Law (AHL), which was published by the Commission on 6 May 2013, aims to reduce administrative burdens and costs including relaxation of conditions relating to the movement of animals between member states, whilst ensuring risk-based controls are in place to reduce the incidence and impact of animal disease.

Future proposals under the AHL will therefore represent a key opportunity for the free movement of animals throughout Ireland by providing an opportunity to frame legislation in a way that could help attain this objective.

### **Equine Slaughter Plant or Processing Plant near Belfast**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 21070/11-15, AQW 21719/11-15 and AQW 20059/11-15, (i) whether there was an equine slaughter plant or processing plant near Belfast; (ii) was such a plant licensed by the appropriate inspectors; (iii) whether departmental vets carried out inspections; (iv) whether the premises were regulated by the Food Standards Authority; and (v) whether any premises linked to this plant were inspected by her Department or monitored for compliance with animal welfare standards.

**(AQW 22767/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I refer to my previous answer provided in AQW's 20059/11-15; 21070/11-15 and 21719/11-15.

I can once again confirm that the only establishment approved by the Food Standards Agency to slaughter equines in the North, in recent times was a small slaughter plant near Lurgan, Co Armagh.

This establishment ceased slaughtering horses completely on 25th January 2013 and has since asked the FSA to completely remove their authorisation to slaughter equines.

The establishment was and remains approved for the slaughter of cattle and sheep, and continues to slaughter these species.

During the time of its operation as an equine slaughter facility, this establishment, like all slaughter plants, was under the supervision of a Department of Agriculture Official Veterinarian at all times, to ensure the Food Business Operator's compliance with the legislation pertaining to public health, animal health and animal welfare.

Each animal (including equines, when their slaughter was taking place) is individually examined in the lairage for fitness for the food chain before being allowed to be slaughtered. This inspection also verifies their identity, and ensures that their welfare is protected throughout the process.

### **DARD Hotline**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 21412/11-15, how many calls to the hotline were not responded to within 24 hours of the original call being made.  
**(AQW 22826/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In my response to AQW 21412/11-15 I explained that the helpline had been manned 24 hours a day from 25 March. This remained the case until the closure of the fallen stock collection scheme on 19 April. During that time over 1,000 calls had been dealt with.

In the majority of cases the caller spoke directly to a member of the helpline team. However during particularly busy times, when all lines were in use, callers were diverted to answer machine and the call was returned shortly thereafter.

There was a spike in call numbers early in the severe weather incident due to a large number of offers of fodder being made. During this time more calls than usual were diverted to answer machine. Staff worked hard to ensure these calls were returned in a timely manner. While no records were maintained of the exact response times most were dealt with immediately and most of the rest within two hours. It is possible that some answer machine calls were not replied to within two hours and some could not be replied to due to the customer not leaving sufficient contact details.

Farmers were also able to contact the Helpdesk using the email address published on the website and in press releases. There was also dedicated resource in place to deal with email queries.

## Field Boundary Restoration Work

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farmers, who completed field boundary restoration work in 2012, have received their Single Farm Payment for 2012.

**(AQW 22828/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In 2012, 400 farm businesses claimed Field Boundary Restoration work as part of their NI Countryside Management Scheme as well as claiming Single Farm Payment (SFP). At 14 May 2013, 375 of these farm businesses had received their SFP for 2012.

## Use of Helicopters: Cost

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, pursuant to AQW 21871/11-15, when the cost for the use of the helicopter will be settled; and from which budget will this cost be met.

**(AQW 22830/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The cost for the use of the British Ministry helicopters will be settled once the final invoice has been received. The budgetary consequences are dependent upon the quantum requested and identification of any easements within the Departments budget that can be reallocated. This process will be completed as part of a future monitoring round.

## Field Boundary Restoration Work

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farmers who completed field boundary restoration work in 2012 have been, or are scheduled to be, inspected.

**(AQW 22831/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In 2012, 400 participants in NI Countryside Management Scheme claimed for Field Boundary Restoration work, of which 74 have been inspected.

## Animal Cruelty

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what plans her Department has to introduce additional measures to combat animal cruelty.

**(AQW 22842/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The welfare of animals is protected by the Welfare of Animals Act 2011. The 2011 Act recognises that causing unnecessary suffering to any animal is a very serious offence and the tough penalties contained within the Act reflect this.

The powers of the 2011 Act cover not just offences of unnecessary suffering, but also a wide range of other offences such as failing to provide for the welfare needs of the animal. Fines and penalties under the Act have been significantly increased from those available under the previous Act.

In addition, the Courts can deprive a person convicted of a serious animal welfare offence for such a period as it sees fit, from owning, keeping, participating in the keeping, control or influencing the way an animal is kept. This disqualification could be for life, even for a first offence, and can be imposed in relation to animals generally, or to one or more species of animals.

Since the Welfare of Animals Act was introduced I have brought forward several Statutory Rules and Codes of Practice to safeguard and promote the welfare of both farmed and non-farmed animals. From 1 January 2013, it has been an offence to dock a dog's tail or allow someone else to dock their dog's tail. The Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations which came into operation here on 1 April 2013 provide commercial dog breeders with clear standards which they must meet and maintain to ensure the welfare of all breeding bitches, stud dogs and pups in the establishment. I am confident that the new enforcement powers and penalties will act as a deterrent to those taking part in illegal dog breeding activities.

At present Regulations regarding the welfare of animals at the time of killing are progressing through the legislative process. Next year I plan to bring forward legislative proposals in relation to the welfare of animals in petshops, animal boarding establishments, riding and other establishments. I also plan to bring forward legislation to protect the welfare of animals and poultry at markets.

### **Training for Young People**

**Ms Fearon** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what capital funding is available in her budget for organisations situated in a rural area which provide training for young people with a wide range of needs.

**(AQW 22846/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** There is no capital funding available for organisations in rural areas providing training for young people.

Within Axis 1 of the Rural Development Programme there is funding available which is targeted at closing the skills gap within the farming community. These fully funded training courses include "ICT for the Farm Family", FarmSafe Awareness" and "BVD Eradication Information & Awareness". These courses are available to any farm family member aged 17 years and over.

Through the Tackling Poverty and Social Isolation framework, my Department is supporting two rural youth initiatives aimed at increasing employability and promoting entrepreneurship among the young unemployed in rural areas.

### **Regulations for Dog Grooming Establishments**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether consideration has been given to introducing regulations for dog grooming establishments to include minimum training requirements and insurance.

**(AQW 22940/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Over the coming period officials from my Department will be undertaking a review of the current legislation relating to petshops, animal boarding and riding establishments. As part of this review I have asked my officials to consider a range of other establishments where animals are kept, including companion animal enterprises such as pet grooming establishments. This review will be taken forward in consultation with Councils who have responsibility for the enforcement of the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 in respect of non-farmed animals, including pets. I can assure you that a wide range of options will be explored, including the need for training requirements and insurance for pet grooming establishments. Should the outcome of the review identify the need for regulation for dog grooming or any other types of establishments such legislative proposals will be subject to a full 12 week public consultation.

### **Dog Grooming Establishments**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development whether her Department inspects dog grooming establishments.

**(AQW 22941/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** There is currently no legislation in place to regulate dog grooming establishments here and therefore such establishments are not inspected by my Department.

However, Council Animal Welfare Officers are authorised under the Welfare of Animals Act 2011 to enter any premises, except a private dwelling, when investigating an animal welfare complaint in relation to non-farmed animals. In the event of a welfare complaint involving a dog grooming establishment being received by a Council, an Animal Welfare Officer may carry out an inspection of such an establishment during the course of his/her investigation and issue an improvement notice or instigate prosecution action if appropriate.

## All-Ireland Licence System

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, in relation to the proposed Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Licensing of Fishing Engines) Regulations 2013, when the Loughs Agency began working on an all-Ireland licence system and what consultation has taken place with stakeholders.

**(AQW 23007/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** The proposed Foyle Area and Carlingford Area (Licensing of Fishing Engines) Regulations 2013 are primarily intended to modernise the current Foyle and Carlingford Area angling licensing arrangements. They will, however, assist in laying an early foundation for a future all Ireland licence programme which is one of a range of marine tourism and angling projects to be implemented by 2015 under the INTERREG programme. The development of an all Ireland licence remains at a very early discussion phase and will involve significant input from other bodies including DCAL Fisheries and Inland Fisheries Ireland prior to a scoping stage with stakeholders and full public consultation. Preparations have, however, commenced and a 'value for money' assessment is currently under consideration with the aim of commencing the scoping study before the end of 2013.

## Farming: Severe Weather

**Mr Clarke** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given that she assisted farmers during the severe weather crisis around Easter, whether there are any plans to provide similar assistance in response to the shortage of silage.

**(AQW 23157/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** Many farmers are having extreme difficulty in obtaining fodder to feed their livestock, which is now resulting in severe hardship and animal welfare issues. The difficulty arises because of a succession of poor summers, which have depleted farmers' resources; the combination of the current extended spell of cool weather and a late spring, which is significantly inhibiting grass growth, and means many farmers are unable to turn animals out on fields; and the high price of fodder and fodder substitutes. For instance, cumulative grass growth to date is almost 40% less than the 10 year average. The impact is being felt widely across the industry, including especially the wetter areas of the north, and the assessment of my technical staff is that we have a short term crisis, and potentially a medium term problem.

I have established a taskforce, which will draw together industry stakeholders and the Department to look at medium term actions to mitigate the problem. Consultations with stakeholders indicated, however, that they would require immediate assistance to their cash flow to offset to some extent the impact of the exceptionally high fodder prices. I presented a case to the meeting of the Executive Committee on 16 May, and we agreed to extend the amount of hardship funding by up to an additional £1m, to be made available to offset the high cost of fodder. My officials are working with the industry to identify the best way to utilise this funding.

## Fodder Crisis

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline what actions are being taken by her Department to assist farmers in addressing the fodder crisis.

**(AQW 23179/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** I have established a taskforce, which will bring together industry stakeholders and the Department to consider medium to long term issues facing the livestock industry and propose interventions. Initial consultations with stakeholders indicated however, that immediate assistance was required to address the impact of fodder shortages. I presented a case to the Executive Committee on 16 May, and we agreed to extend the amount of hardship funding by up to an additional £1m, to be made available to offset the high cost of fodder. My Department implemented a scheme that will operate in a similar way to the one in the South. It will provide financial assistance towards the cost of transporting fodder into the North from Britain.

## Three Rivers Project, Strabane

**Mr Byrne** asked the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline how the Rivers Agency is dealing with the Three Rivers project proposed for Strabane.

**(AQW 23206/11-15)**

**Mrs O'Neill:** In 2012, Rivers Agency, as a consultee of the planning authority provided advice regarding a development proposal at this site, the majority of which lies within the river flood plain. Planning Policy Statement 15 – Planning and Flood Risk, states that “within flood plains the Department of Environment will not permit development unless it falls within one of the exceptions or it is demonstrated that the proposal is of overriding regional importance.”

It is a matter for the Department of Environment through their planning authority to determine if the development is an exception or of overriding regional importance. If this proves to be the case then River Agency can provide advice on measures to mitigate the risk of flooding.

## Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure

### National Museums Northern Ireland

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure why the 2012/13 Northern Ireland Civil Service pay agreement has not been implemented by National Museums Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 21176/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín (The Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure):** Before the NICS pay agreement can be implemented, a pay remit business case must be completed by the body and approved by DFP

National Museums submitted their draft business case to my Department on 13th February 2013. My Departmental officials are currently working with National Museums to ensure that the business case has been carried out correctly and, importantly, that the planned pay award is consistent with Executive pay policy. Once the business case has been finalised, approval will be sought from DFP to allow the pay agreement to be implemented.

### National Museums Northern Ireland

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail, who within the Executive and National Museums Northern Ireland authorises the implementation of the agreed Northern Ireland Civil Service pay awards.

**(AQW 21177/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The pay remit approval process and guidance 2012/13 (FD (DFP) 14/12) was issued to Departments on 13th August 2012. The purpose of this Finance Director (FD) letter was to provide departments with guidance on the application of public sector pay policy.

The UK Government's Pay Policy and associated pay remits approval process must be applied to all NICS departments, agencies, Non-Departmental Public Bodies and other public bodies.

Enforcement of pay growth limits is devolved to the Executive. With the Executive's endorsement, the Minister for Finance and Personnel approves pay remits for most of the staff groups in bodies within the wider public sector in the North within the broad parameters of the UK Government's public sector pay policy. This includes National Museums.

### National Museums Northern Ireland

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail (i) how many staff are employed by National Museums Northern Ireland; and (ii) how many employees are affected by the 2012/13 Northern Ireland Civil Service pay award.

**(AQW 21178/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** The answer is as follows:

- (i) National Museums NI currently employs 531 staff (inclusive of casual staff). This equates to 302 full time equivalents.
- (ii) Of these 531 staff, 402 are eligible for progression under the 2012/13 Pay Award.

### **National Museums Northern Ireland**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure, in relation to the staff structure at National Museums Northern Ireland, for a breakdown of how many staff are on each pay grade within each section of the organisation.

**(AQW 21179/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Please find outlined below a breakdown of the numbers of National Museums staff at each pay grade and by site location:

#### **ULSTER MUSEUM**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
AA (and analogous)	33
AO (and analogous)	62
E011 (and analogous)	33
E01 (and analogous)	5
S0 (and analogous)	4
DP (and analogous)	1
UG7 (and analogous)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>

#### **ULSTER FOLK & TRANSPORT MUSEUM**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
AA (and analogous)	38
AO (and analogous)	88
E011 (and analogous)	12
E01 (and analogous)	4
S0 (and analogous)	3
DP (and analogous)	1
UG 7 (and analogous)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>

**ULSTER AMERICAN FOLK PARK**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
AA (and analogous)	9
AO (and analogous)	78
EO11 (and analogous)	10
EO1 (and analogous)	5
SO (and analogous)	4
DP (and analogous)	4
UG 7 (and analogous)	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>

**ARMAGH COUNTY MUSEUM**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
AO (and analogous)	9
EO11 (and analogous)	1
SO (and analogous)	1
DP (and analogous)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

**COLLECTIONS STORE**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
AA (and analogous)	1
AO (and analogous)	7
EO11 (and analogous)	6
EO1 (and analogous)	4
SO (and analogous)	2
DP (and analogous)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>

**CENTRALISED SERVICES**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
AO (and analogous)	13
EO11 (and analogous)	8
EO1 (and analogous)	26
SO (and analogous)	22
DP (and analogous)	19

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Number</b>
UG 7 (and analogous)	6
UG 6 (and analogous)	4
UG 5 (and analogous)	1
UG 3 (and analogous)	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

  

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>531</b>
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### **Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay Awards**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure to detail whether there has been any delay in the implementation of Northern Ireland Civil Service pay awards at National Museums Northern Ireland, and to provide reasons, in the last five years.

**(AQW 21180/11-15)**

**Ms Ní Chuilín:** Before the NICS pay agreement can be implemented, a pay remit business case must be completed by National Museums and approved by DFP

In the first instance it is the role of National Museums to submit the business case to my Department for approval. Departmental officials review the business case to ensure that it is consistent with Executive pay policy and then liaise with DFP to gain the necessary approvals.

The table below provides details on the dates when pay remit business cases were first submitted to DCAL, for each of the last 6 years, and indicates when DFP approval was granted in each case.

<b>Remit Year</b>	<b>Date Pay Remit business case received by DCAL</b>	<b>Date of DFP Approval</b>
2006/07 Remit – covering years 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09	May 2007	June 2007
2009/10 Remit	October 2010	January 2011
2010/11 Remit – covering years 2010/11 and 2011/12	October 2011	December 2011

## **Department of Education**

### **Retired Teachers**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Education how many teachers in each educational sector began teaching again in (i) 2007; and (ii) 2012, within twelve months of retirement.

**(AQW 22713/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd (The Minister of Education):** The number of teachers who began teaching again, within 12 months of retirement, in academic years 2006/07 and 2011/12 is shown by educational sector from which the teacher retired in the table below.

Number of teachers who began teaching again, within 12 months of retirement.

<b>Educational Sector</b>	<b>Academic Year 2006/2007</b>	<b>Academic Year 2011/2012</b>
GMI	*	*
BELB	29	10
WELB	18	5
NEELB	65	9
SEELB	42	13
SELB	41	6
CCMS	142	21

**Source:** Teachers' Payroll and Pensions Systems

Figures for Voluntary Grammar Schools are not included, as the Department does not pay these salaries.

Date of retirement is taken from date of first receipt of pension.

Teachers are shown in the sector from which they retired, which may differ from the sector where they began teaching again.

Figures have been suppressed for any sector where disclosure of small numbers might lead to the identification of individuals.

### **Mobile Classrooms**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education what action his Department is taking to reduce the use of mobile classrooms.

**(AQW 22722/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I do not have any targets or timescales for reducing the number of mobile classrooms in the schools estate. I must utilise all means at my disposal to ensure that the capital infrastructure is in place to support the educational needs of pupils. This may include the provision of good quality modular buildings as one way of addressing accommodation deficiencies within a relatively short timescale.

You should note that statutory approvals, such as Planning Approval and Building Control Approval require modular buildings to be provided to the same building performance standards as that of permanent builds and my Department ensures that the project managers acting on behalf of the relevant school authorities fully comply with the statutory approval process.

I would also add that in considering projects for inclusion in my 2012 and 2013 major capital investment programme that the undue reliance on temporary accommodation within schools was taken into account.

### **Mobile Classrooms**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education whether his Department has a timescale and a target for the reduction in the use of mobile classrooms.

**(AQW 22723/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I do not have any targets or timescales for reducing the number of mobile classrooms in the schools estate. I must utilise all means at my disposal to ensure that the capital infrastructure is in place to support the educational needs of pupils. This may include the provision of good quality modular buildings as one way of addressing accommodation deficiencies within a relatively short timescale.

You should note that statutory approvals, such as Planning Approval and Building Control Approval require modular buildings to be provided to the same building performance standards as that of permanent builds and my Department ensures that the project managers acting on behalf of the relevant school authorities fully comply with the statutory approval process.

I would also add that in considering projects for inclusion in my 2012 and 2013 major capital investment programme that the undue reliance on temporary accommodation within schools was taken into account.

### **Integrated Pre-Schools**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education how many parents opted to send their child to an integrated pre-school as their first preference; and how many were (i) granted a place; and (ii) not granted a place due to the lack of integrated provision in their area, in each of the last three years, broken down by Education and Library Board area.

**(AQW 22771/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The tables below provide details of the number of 1st preference applications received by nursery units at integrated primary schools in each education and library board for each of the last three years, together with (i) the number of children offered a place at their 1st preference setting and (ii) the number of children not offered a place at their 1st preference setting.

A child not offered a place in their 1st preference setting does not indicate a lack of pre-school places, as they may have been offered a place in an alternative setting chosen by their parents during the application process. Unlike the primary and post primary sector, the pre-school sector is considered to be non- sectoral.

#### **2010/11**

	<b>Number of 1st preference applications received</b>	<b>Number of children offered a place at their 1st preference setting</b>	<b>Number of children not offered a place at their 1st preference setting (1)</b>
BELB	89	73	16
WELB	116	95	21
NEELB	156	129	27
SEELB	132	95	37
SELB	96	69	27

#### **2011/12**

	<b>Number of 1st preference applications received</b>	<b>Number of children offered a place at their 1st preference setting</b>	<b>Number of children not offered a place at their 1st preference setting (1)</b>
BELB	88	69	19
WELB	101	89	12
NEELB	158	130	28
SEELB	157	104	53
SELB	107	78	29

**2012/13**

	<b>Number of 1st preference applications received</b>	<b>Number of children offered a place at their 1st preference setting</b>	<b>Number of children not offered a place at their 1st preference setting (1)</b>
BELB	102	77	25
WELB	106	99	7
NEELB	156	126	30
SEELB	138	99	39
SELB	105	76	29

**Note**

- (1) While a child may not have been offered a place at a particular pre-school setting, they may have been offered a place at an alternative setting chosen by their parents during the application process.

**Oversubscribed Integrated Pre-Schools**

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education to list the integrated pre-school settings in each Education and Library Board that are over-subscribed; and by how many places each facility is over-subscribed. **(AQW 22772/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The table below provides details of 14 of the 17 statutory nursery units in integrated primary schools which were oversubscribed with 1st preference applications at the end of stage 1 of the 2013/14 admission process and the number of places each nursery unit had available.

		<b>Number of 1st preference applications received (1)</b>	<b>Number of places available</b>
BELB	Cliftonville Integrated Primary School	33	26
	Hazelwood Integrated Primary School	89	52
WELB	Enniskillen Integrated Primary School	37	26
	Oakgrove Integrated Primary School	51	52
	Omagh Integrated Primary School	64	26
NEELB	Acorn Integrated Primary School	42	26
	Braidside Integrated Primary School	38	26
	Millstrand Integrated Primary School	45	26
SEELB	Cedar Integrated Primary School	28	26
	Fort Hill Integrated Primary School	43	26
	Loughview Integrated Primary School	55	26
	Millennium Integrated Primary School	31	26
SELB	Saints & Scholars Integrated Primary School	36	26
	Windmill Integrated Primary School	54	26

**Notes**

- (2) The number of 1st preference applications provides an indication of the number of parents who listed a school as the preferred choice for their child. As these schools were oversubscribed, some of the children may not have been offered a place at that school. However, they may have been offered a place at an alternative setting chosen by their parents during the application process.

**Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Subjects**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education what assessment his Department has made of the impact of the programme to raise awareness of science, technology, engineering and maths.

**(AQW 22792/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The promotion of STEM subjects is one of the Department's priorities and we are currently supporting a number of programmes to encourage the uptake of STEM subjects in schools here.

Since the publication of the Report of the STEM Review and to address the priorities identified in the Government STEM Strategy 'Success Through STEM', my Department has been taking action on a number of fronts to promote STEM-related subjects in school focusing on; improving teaching and learning in STEM-related areas; stimulating pupils' interest in, and enthusiasm for, STEM-related areas of learning in primary and post-primary schools; improving the range and quality of resources available to support teachers and pupils in STEM-related areas of learning; and promoting the uptake of STEM subjects post-16. Assessment and feedback from these actions have to date been very positive.

The Department currently measures the impact of its STEM programme on promoting STEM subjects by comparing the uptake on the number of examination entries for STEM subjects. Statistics support the view that actions taken to date to promote STEM within our schools has been successful with an increase in both GCSE and A-Level STEM examination entries as a percentage of all examination entries. The following table illustrates the increase.

	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2010/11*</b>
GCSE STEM entries as a percentage of all examination entries	33.9%	37%
A-Level STEM entries as a percentage of all examination entries	37%	40.4%

\* Data for the 2011/12 academic year is not available

As part of the ongoing management of the STEM initiative, the STEM implementation steering group intends to oversee a review of the STEM strategy in 2014.

**Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Programme**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education what action has been taken by his Department since the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's evaluation of the Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Programme.

**(AQW 22793/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Officials have checked with officials in DEL and DETI. There is no record of any evaluation report by DETI of Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance.

DETI is a member of the Careers Steering Group along with representatives from business, career practitioner's representatives and officials from DE and DEL to guide and monitor the implementation of the strategy and continues to meet biannually.

**Ballymena Learning Together Area Learning Community**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education whether the North Eastern Education Library Board consulted with his Department, including the Shadow Education and Skills Authority, on the original proposals regarding schools within the Ballymena Learning Together area learning community; and to

detail his level of involvement, and that of his officials, in developing the new proposals put forward by the Education and Library Board.

**(AQW 22811/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** In drawing up its plans for post-primary provision, the North Eastern Education and Library Board (NEELB) was responsible for consulting with the schools in its area and other educational sectors and stakeholders.

Neither the Department nor its Education and Skills Authority Implementation Team were consulted on the proposals, and neither had any involvement in developing new proposals.

The NEELB's 'Post Primary Consultation Findings' Report, available on its website, outlines the consultation process undertaken by the Board and the findings of the public consultation which took place last year. This informed the Board's process of revising and refining the Area Plan.

As you will be aware any changes to the schools would require the publication of a Development Proposal. Should this happen then we are into a statutory process during which I will consider all the information pertinent to the proposal before deciding whether or not to approve any proposed change.

### **Catholic Certificate of Religious Education**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21897/11-15, and given the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education's Statement of Principles includes a section under Faiths and Values stating that the integrated school provides a Christian based rather than secular ethos, and at section (b) the school will facilitate specific provision for Catholic pupils whose parents wish them to undergo sacramental preparation, why this has to be carried out by a teacher with a Catholic Certificate in Religious Education and not, for example, by a priest or similar cleric; and whether there is a difficulty in having clerical persons attend integrated primary schools in order to carry out preparation for sacraments.

**(AQW 22816/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The NI Council for Integrated Education (NICIE) have advised that children are prepared for their Sacraments in schools by their teachers.

### **Primary and Post Primary Schools**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Education what is the unit cost per pupil for (i) primary; and (ii) post-primary schools in each Education and Library Board.

**(AQW 22848/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Unit costs per pupil are not readily available. Alongside delegated budgets, schools may receive other centre funding support including resources for Statemented pupils, programme funds etc. and other costs (such as transport and administrative costs) are not readily identifiable at phase level.

Every school receives a fully delegated budget, distributed under the current Common Funding Formula arrangements. The figures below represent the average budget per pupil, for schools managed by the respective Education & Library Board for the current 2013/14 financial year (excludes Grant Maintained Integrated and Voluntary Grammar schools).

### **EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD SCHOOLS - COMMON FUNDING BUDGETS AND PER PUPIL FUNDING 2013/14**

<b>Board / Phase</b>	<b>Common Funding Formula Budget £</b>	<b>Pupils (Full-time Equivalent)</b>	<b>Per Capita</b>
BELB Primary	69,888,544	23,197	3,013
BELB Post-Primary	56,719,619	13,399	4,233
WELB Primary	86,976,087	27,664	3,144

<b>Board / Phase</b>	<b>Common Funding Formula Budget £</b>	<b>Pupils (Full-time Equivalent)</b>	<b>Per Capita</b>
WELB Post-Primary	65,462,433	15,468	4,232
NEELB Primary	105,793,234	35,862	2,950
NEELB Post-Primary	85,229,110	21,083	4,043
SEELB Primary	94,712,889	32,971	2,873
SEELB Post-Primary	63,627,414	15,932	3,994
SELB Primary	118,022,949	38,922	3,032
SELB Post-Primary	94,547,748	23,067	4,099

**Source:** CFF 2013/14

### **Closure of Rural Primary Schools**

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Education to detail the consultation he has had with the (i) Minister of the Environment; (ii) Minister for Regional Development; (iii) Minister for Social Development; (iv) Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development; and (v) Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment about proposals to close some rural primary schools.

**(AQW 22850/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards are currently undertaking a public consultation on draft area plans for primary provision, which include proposals for changes to the schools estate, including school closures.

This consultation will run until the end of June. I would encourage all those with an interest in education to respond to the consultation.

If other Ministers have concerns about proposals contained in the plans and wish to meet me to discuss them, I would be happy to do so.

At this stage I have had no such requests.

### **Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Subjects**

**Mr Storey** asked the Minister of Education what assessment has been made of the progress of the Programme for Government 2011-2015 targets regarding science, technology, engineering and maths subjects.

**(AQW 22884/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Programme for Government commitment to increase uptake in economically relevant Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths (STEM) places focuses primarily on increasing the number of students engaged in STEM courses in further and higher education.

I recognise that, for the Department for Employment & Learning to be able to deliver that commitment, there is a need to focus on promoting STEM subjects and developing pupils' scientific knowledge and skills of innovation and inquiry at a much earlier stage. My Department therefore contributes significantly to the Executive's wider STEM strategy through the promotion of STEM subjects in schools.

Since the publication of the Report of the STEM Review, my Department has been taking significant action on a number of fronts to promote STEM-related subjects in school focusing on; improving teaching and learning in STEM-related areas, building on existing good practice; stimulating pupils' interest in, and enthusiasm for, STEM-related areas of learning in primary and post-primary schools; improving the range and quality of resources available to support teachers and pupils in STEM-related areas of learning; and promoting the uptake of STEM subjects post-16.

## First Choice School or Nursery Unit: North Belfast

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of (i) primary 1; and (ii) nursery pupils in North Belfast who did not receive a place in their first choice school or nursery unit in the 2013-14 intake; and what action he will take to address this shortfall.

**(AQW 22893/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I have been advised by the North Eastern and Belfast Education & Library Boards - which both cover parts of the North Belfast constituency - that 44 primary 1 children and 146 nursery children in that area did not receive a place in their first preference primary school or nursery unit.

The admissions process is preference-based but admissions to schools are necessarily limited by the physical capacity of the accommodation available and no child can be guaranteed a place at any individual school. A child not being offered a place in their first preference setting does not indicate a shortage of places in a particular area, as they may have been offered a place in an alternative setting chosen by their parents during the application process. In the pre-school sector, in addition to places in the statutory sector, funded places are available in the voluntary and private sector.

Area planning will be the process through which need for all education provision will be determined. Where area plans identify a need for a permanent increased number of places in a particular sector they will also specify how these places should be provided.

## Primary Schools Prioritising Children

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education whether there is a requirement for primary schools to prioritise children within their geographic area in their admission criteria; and if not, whether he has any plans to introduce such a requirement.

**(AQW 22945/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Article 16 of the Education (NI) Order 1997 Order requires the Board of Governors of each grant-aided school to draw up criteria to be applied in selecting pupils for admission to their school. The admissions criteria used by any school are entirely a matter for the Board of Governors of the school concerned and reflect the particular priorities they wish to give for admission to their school. Where schools are oversubscribed they have to apply their admissions criteria to determine which pupils to admit.

The Department does not have a role in deciding a school's admission criteria, other than to offer guidance to schools. For admissions for the 2013/14 school year this is contained within DE Circular 2012/12 Open Enrolment to Primary Schools on the Department's website. There is no requirement for primary schools to prioritise children within a particular geographic area and the Department does not have the statutory authority to impose such a requirement.

## Teaching Posts

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education how many newly qualified teachers have obtained a teaching post in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 22962/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department does not hold the information in the format requested. However, data provided by the GTCNI provides a snapshot of the numbers of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and graduates who have taken up posts in the last three years. This data is set out in Tables 1 and 3. Table 2 provides information on the number of teaching appointments sourced from the Teachers' payroll system.

**TABLE 1: NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS, REGISTERED WITH GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL (GTCNI) IN THE YEAR OF THEIR GRADUATION AND WHO GAINED EMPLOYMENT OF A PERMANENT OR A SIGNIFICANT TEMPORARY NATURE\* IN THAT YEAR.**

Year of Graduation	All Graduates registered with GTCNI	All Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis	North of Ireland Graduates registered with GTCNI	North of Ireland Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis
2010	788	155 (at December 2010)	576	126 (at December 2010)
2011	707	134 (at January 2012)	525	119 (at January 2012)
2012	664	88 (at January 2013)	475	79 (at January 2013)

**Note:**

- \* Significant temporary nature reflects employment of one term or more – it does not include short term substitute /supply teachers.

**TABLE 2: ALL TEACHER APPOINTMENTS INCLUDING THOSE TEACHERS MOVING ACROSS THE EDUCATION SECTOR; SCHOOLS AMALGAMATING, AND WHERE EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS HAVE REQUESTED, SETTING UP INDIVIDUAL POSTS TO ENABLE RE-STRUCTURING OF PERIPATETIC SERVICES.**

Financial Year	Appointments
2010/2011	1119
2011/2012	1069
2012/2013	928

**Notes:** Figures include all permanent, pro-rata and yearly appointments made in each of the last 3 financial years.

Figures include all amalgamations.

Figures include re-structuring of peripatetic services.

Figures do not include the Voluntary Grammar Sector.

**TABLE 3: NUMBER OF TEACHERS, REGISTERED WITH GTCNI, WHO HAVE GAINED EMPLOYMENT OF A PERMANENT OR A SIGNIFICANT TEMPORARY NATURE\* BY 30 JANUARY 2013.**

Year of Graduation	All Graduates currently registered with GTCNI	All Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis by 30 January 2013	North of Ireland Graduates currently registered with GTCNI	North of Ireland Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis by 30 January 2013
2010	795	306	542	243
2011	763	193	524	160
2012	664	88	475	79

**Note:**

- \* Significant temporary nature reflects employment of one term or more – it does not include short term substitute /supply teachers.

## Teaching Posts

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education what progress has been made in securing 300 additional posts for new teachers.

**(AQW 22965/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** On 17 May 2013, I announced further details of the Delivering Social Change Literacy and Numeracy Signature Project (the project). The project will involve the employment of 230 recently graduated teachers, who are without permanent employment, on a two-year fixed-term contract, to help schools deliver tuition to children who are currently struggling to achieve required levels in literacy and numeracy.

My Department is responsible for the implementation of the project and has commissioned the Western Education and Library Board as the Lead Board to work in partnership with the other Employing Authorities to deliver the project over the next two academic years.

Primary and post primary schools identified as eligible to participate in the project have been selected using a combination of academic performance and level of entitlement to Free School Meals. Eligible schools have been invited to participate in the project and will attend information sessions over the coming weeks to receive guidance on the recruitment and selection process, and on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The eligible schools assisted by the Education and Library Boards will begin recruiting early next month. The new teachers will be in post from September 2013.

The press release can be accessed via the following weblink:

[http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news-de-170513-odowd-announces-recruitment?WT.mc\\_id=rss-news](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/news-de-170513-odowd-announces-recruitment?WT.mc_id=rss-news)

## Teaching Posts

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education how many appointments to teaching posts have been made in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 22966/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department does not hold the information in the format requested. However, data provided by the GTCNI provides a snapshot of the numbers of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and graduates who have taken up posts in the last three years. This data is set out in Tables 1 and 3. Table 2 provides information on the number of teaching appointments sourced from the Teachers' payroll system.

**TABLE 1: NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS, REGISTERED WITH GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL (GTCNI) IN THE YEAR OF THEIR GRADUATION AND WHO GAINED EMPLOYMENT OF A PERMANENT OR A SIGNIFICANT TEMPORARY NATURE\* IN THAT YEAR.**

Year of Graduation	All Graduates registered with GTCNI	All Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis	North of Ireland Graduates registered with GTCNI	North of Ireland Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis
2010	788	155 (at December 2010)	576	126 (at December 2010)
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**Note:**

- \* Significant temporary nature reflects employment of one term or more – it does not include short term substitute /supply teachers.

**TABLE 2: ALL TEACHER APPOINTMENTS INCLUDING THOSE TEACHERS MOVING ACROSS THE EDUCATION SECTOR; SCHOOLS AMALGAMATING, AND WHERE EDUCATION AND LIBRARY BOARDS HAVE REQUESTED, SETTING UP INDIVIDUAL POSTS TO ENABLE RE-STRUCTURING OF PERIPATETIC SERVICES.**

Financial Year	Appointments
2010/2011	1119
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**Notes:** Figures include all permanent, pro-rata and yearly appointments made in each of the last 3 financial years.

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Figures include re-structuring of peripatetic services.

Figures do not include the Voluntary Grammar Sector.

**TABLE 3: NUMBER OF TEACHERS, REGISTERED WITH GTCNI, WHO HAVE GAINED EMPLOYMENT OF A PERMANENT OR A SIGNIFICANT TEMPORARY NATURE\* BY 30 JANUARY 2013.**

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2011	763	193	524	160
2012	664	88	475	79

**Note:**

- \* Significant temporary nature reflects employment of one term or more – it does not include short term substitute /supply teachers.

### Graduates: Teaching

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education how many teaching graduates have received a permanent teaching appointment in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 22967/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department does not hold the information in the format requested. However, data provided by the GTCNI provides a snapshot of the numbers of newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and graduates who have taken up posts in the last three years. This data is set out in Tables 1 and 3. Table 2 provides information on the number of teaching appointments sourced from the Teachers' payroll system.

**TABLE 1: NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS, REGISTERED WITH GENERAL TEACHING COUNCIL (GTCNI) IN THE YEAR OF THEIR GRADUATION AND WHO GAINED EMPLOYMENT OF A PERMANENT OR A SIGNIFICANT TEMPORARY NATURE\* IN THAT YEAR.**

Year of Graduation	All Graduates registered with GTCNI	All Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis	North of Ireland Graduates registered with GTCNI	North of Ireland Graduates employed on a permanent or a significant temporary basis
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**Note:**

- \* Significant temporary nature reflects employment of one term or more – it does not include short term substitute /supply teachers.

**Newcomer Guidelines for Schools**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education, in relation to the Newcomer Guidelines for Schools, what steps are being taken to ensure that the 18 Inclusion and Diversity Officers can adequately cover all schools.

**(AQW 22969/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** In summer term all schools are contacted to ascertain if they require support from the Inclusion and Diversity Service in the following school year. One of our 11 Inclusion and Diversity Officers is then assigned to those schools which request support. An audit is carried out with the school to determine the level of support required and to ensure best use of Inclusion and Diversity Service Officers' time and resources. Officers will then support the school to build capacity both at classroom and management level in achieving the targets set. Officers are also available to those schools which did not request support initially but find they have need of support as the school year progresses.

Further to this, the Inclusion and Diversity Service is developing an innovative e-learning Coordination Training Tool to provide up to date quality support. I am satisfied that the Inclusion and Diversity service is providing a comprehensive service to all schools that require its support.

**Support for Pupils**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education what action his Department is taking to ensure that pupils with English as their second language are receiving suitable support.

**(AQW 22970/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** My Department has in place a designated amount of funding under the Common Funding Scheme (CFS) to support Newcomer pupils, which is claimed directly by the school. Schools use this funding to provide additional support for newcomer pupils, for example in areas such as nurture classes; employing classroom assistants to provide additional support; developing pastoral care initiatives; organising inter-cultural school events to encourage greater participation and engagement by parents and families of newcomer pupils.

In addition to the CFS funding my Department provides additional earmarked funding for the provision of the regional Inclusion and Diversity Service. This service provides support and capacity building training to all grant aided schools and special schools. This service is responsible for assessing priorities, and for monitoring and responding to areas of need in pastoral, curricular, linguistic and inter-cultural matters pertaining to a Newcomer child.

**Newcomer Funding**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Education how his Department monitors the use of Newcomer funding to schools.

**(AQW 22973/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Newcomer funding is delegated to schools via the Common Funding Formula. Schools can use this funding to provide additional support to assist children with their linguistic, emotional and social development, for example by employing classroom assistants to provide additional support or providing interpretive services. Under the Local Management of Schools Scheme, schools are free to deploy delegated resources to meet their own priorities. Monitoring of school expenditure is undertaken by the LMS sections of the Education and Library Boards whose accounts are subject to audit by the NI Audit Office.

## Galbally Primary School

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education what criteria were used to create extra Year One places at Galbally Primary School.

**(AQW 22974/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** St Joseph's Galbally was oversubscribed after applying its admissions criteria and sought a temporary variation to their enrolment and admissions numbers to accommodate eight additional children for the 2013/14 school year.

After careful consideration, and in line with the Department's existing open enrolment policy, a temporary variation was granted to the school's admission and enrolment numbers to allow the school to admit the additional children. The decision was based on a consideration in respect of each pupil, based on the school's rank order waiting list, as to whether there were places available in other maintained schools in the area within a reasonable distance of the pupil's home address.

## Special Educational Needs Resource File

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education to detail the cost of developing and publishing the Special Educational Needs Resource File.

**(AQW 23024/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** It is not possible to disaggregate salary costs associated with developing the Special Educational Needs Resource File as these were subsumed within the overall salary costs for the entire capacity building programme.

Breakdown of costs specific to the development of the Resource File are as follows:

Substitute cover for Writing Group	£49,000
Room hire for Writing Group Meetings	£296.50
Catering for Writing Group	£664.72
Translation costs	£42,909.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>£92,870.34</b>

The cost of publishing the Resource file was £50,220.00. This included an amount of £4,980.00 for distributing the files to schools.

Additionally, the Resource File material is also available to schools electronically.

## ASPIRE Face-to-Face Information Seminars

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education which members of staff, other than Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators, were invited to attend ASPIRE face-to-face information seminars.

**(AQW 23025/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Invitations to attend the ASPIRE Seminars were issued by email to all schools here inviting the school principal to attend. In some cases the principal chose to delegate attendance to either the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or to another teacher in their school.

A recording of one of the seminars was made by ESAGS TV to enable those schools that did not have representation at a seminar, to benefit from the information shared at the seminars. An email will issue to all schools to advise when this recording is available to view on the ESAGS TV website.

A hard copy of the ASPIRE resource was issued by post to every school and in addition the resource has been placed on the Department of Education's website to enable schools to download additional copies.

There was no substitute cover provided to schools to attend the ASPIRE seminars.

Nonetheless, numbers at the sessions were high, with approximately one in three of all schools invited attending a seminar.

ASPIRE is a resource tool to assist schools in developing their capacity when using the SEN Resource File. This will enhance teachers' understanding, knowledge and skills to ensure more effective learning in the classroom. An outcome of using ASPIRE should be improvement relating to aspects of professional practice and personal development.

An ASPIRE completion certificate is available on the Department of Education's website for schools to download. Schools may amend the certificate to suit their own school needs and to recognise that their staff have committed to completing ASPIRE.

There are no plans to obtain external accreditation for this resource.

### **ASPIRE Seminars**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education to outline the financial support made available to schools for substitute cover so members of staff can attend ASPIRE seminars.

**(AQW 23026/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Invitations to attend the ASPIRE Seminars were issued by email to all schools here inviting the school principal to attend. In some cases the principal chose to delegate attendance to either the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or to another teacher in their school.

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There are no plans to obtain external accreditation for this resource.

### **ASPIRE Self-Study Module**

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education whether the ASPIRE self-study module will be considered as a Continuing Professional Development accreditation document.

**(AQW 23027/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Invitations to attend the ASPIRE Seminars were issued by email to all schools here inviting the school principal to attend. In some cases the principal chose to delegate attendance to either the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or to another teacher in their school.

A recording of one of the seminars was made by ESAGS TV to enable those schools that did not have representation at a seminar, to benefit from the information shared at the seminars. An email will issue to all schools to advise when this recording is available to view on the ESAGS TV website.

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An ASPIRE completion certificate is available on the Department of Education's website for schools to download. Schools may amend the certificate to suit their own school needs and to recognise that their staff have committed to completing ASPIRE.

There are no plans to obtain external accreditation for this resource.

## Teacher Training

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister of Education whether he has any plans for 'go-to reference sources' to replace teacher training by qualified instructors.

**(AQW 23028/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I want teacher training to reflect the need of schools, teachers and our children in the 21st Century. That is why I propose to establish a single school development service under ESA. Its role will be to secure the provision of professional development rather than its delivery. It is envisaged that it will work with principals and teachers to identify and address their development and support needs.

I do not want the new service to be wedded to one method of training. Rather it should be flexible enough to facilitate greater opportunities, where appropriate, for teachers to take the initiative to engage in professional development through a range of resources including "go to reference sources" and other online training programmes as well as tutor led twilight courses and summer schools.

## Children in Integrated Schools

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21126/11-15, whether he will give a similar commitment to parents who opt to send their children to an integrated school in areas where, due to oversubscription, children remain unplaced, and his Department and the relevant Education and Library Board will work with parents to ensure that all children are allocated a place in the integrated sector.

**(AQW 23087/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** I am committed to ensuring as far as possible that all children of compulsory school age are placed in a school of their preferred sector within a reasonable distance of their home address. The relevant Education and Library Board(s) are responsible for administering the admissions process, and if due to oversubscription within an area children remain unplaced, the Board and the Department will work with parents to ensure that all children are allocated a place in their appropriate sector.

As you will appreciate this may be constrained by the availability of places in integrated schools in any particular area.

## Demand for Integrated Provision

**Mr Lunn** asked the Minister of Education what mechanism is used by his Department to determine the level of demand for integrated provision in areas where such provision does not exist; and how his Department ensures that provision is in line with demand and parental choice.

**(AQW 23089/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Area Planning is the process through which a network of viable and sustainable schools will be developed so that all pupils will have access to a high quality education.

The Education and Library Boards, working closely with the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and the other school sectors, have been tasked with developing collective strategic plans on an area basis. The considerations of need should take account of all pertinent information including population projections which set the control total and expressed and revealed parental preference for each sector in a given area.

If there is evidence of demand for Integrated education in an area where there is currently no provision, the N I Council for Integrated Education (NICIE), as the lead body responsible for supporting and developing integrated education, should bring forward robust, evidence based cases for growth for consideration within in the area planning context. As there is a finite number of pupils for which education provision is required a balance must be reached on the overall distribution of places across all sectors within an area. Inevitably growth in one sector will require a reduction in the other sectors.

My Department's role in relation to the assessment of area plans is one of scrutiny and challenge. The aim will be to ensure that the planning process is robust and that all area plans and the proposals within those plans adequately reflect the needs of the young people and the wishes of their parents.

Any significant change to the existing provision in an area, such as the establishment of a new school, will require the support of an approved statutory development proposal.

## School Placed in Intervention

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education to outline the procedure which would lead to a school being placed into intervention.

**(AQW 23139/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The procedures leading to a school being placed into formal intervention are outlined in Annex C of the Department's school improvement policy - 'Every School a Good School – a Policy for School Improvement' (ESaGS). The policy aims to support schools and teachers in their work to raise standards and to ensure that pupils are receiving a high-quality education. ESaGS includes a requirement that, where there is evidence that pupils are not receiving a high-quality education, the school will be provided with focused support through the Formal Intervention Process (FIP).

The evidence is provided through school inspection undertaken by the Education and Training Inspectorate. Where a school is inspected and the overall quality of education provided is reported to be less than satisfactory, the school will enter the FIP

The Department writes to the local Education and Library Board (and the CCMS in the case of Catholic maintained schools), within two weeks of the completion of the inspection, to inform them that the school has entered the FIP and to advise of the requisite follow-up action. The letter is copied to the chair of the school's Board of Governors and the school principal.

Further details on the FIP can be found on the Department's website:

[www.deni.gov.uk/index/curriculum-and-learningt-new/standards-and-school-improvements/every-school-a-good-school/formal-intervention-process.htm](http://www.deni.gov.uk/index/curriculum-and-learningt-new/standards-and-school-improvements/every-school-a-good-school/formal-intervention-process.htm).

## School Placed in Intervention

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Education to list the schools which have been placed in intervention on more than one occasion.

**(AQW 23140/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Dundonald High School is the only school to have been placed in formal intervention on more than one occasion since the introduction of the formal intervention process in 2009.

## Primary One Places in Schools in Bangor

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Education what consideration has been given to allowing an increase in enrolment numbers for 2013/14 for primary one places in schools in Bangor.

**(AQW 23152/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Two primary schools in Bangor requested approval from the Department of Education to increase their permitted intake to primary one in September 2013; Towerview PS and St Comgall's PS. Neither of these applications was approved as places are available at alternative schools in the town.

## 22 New School Builds

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education for an update on the 22 new school builds which were approved in January 2013, including how many have received planning permission and how many have submitted development plans.

**(AQW 23162/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** In my statement to the Assembly on 22 January 2013 I announced a programme of 22 new build projects that would advance in planning. Most of these projects are at an early stage in planning, principally economic approval stage.

However a smaller number are at a more advanced stage and my officials are examining options for these projects to advance more quickly, subject to funding and all approvals being in place.

In relation to planning permissions, most of the projects are not yet at the stage where planning approvals are being sought. Currently planning approvals have been confirmed for 2 schools; Elmgrove Primary School and Edenderry Nursery School.

In relation to your query on Development Proposals, I can confirm that of the 22 projects, six require the publication and approval of development proposals. Two development plans have been received in relation to Devenish College and Lisnaskea High School and the statutory consultation period for these ends on 28 May 2013.

Four further Development Plans remain to be published. These relate to Craigbrack, Listress & Mullabuoy Primary Schools; Glenravel & St Mary's Primary Schools ; Portora Royal School & Enniskillen Collegiate Grammar School; and St Mary's, St Paul's & St Michael's Grammar Schools, Lurgan.

The development plan for the amalgamation of Kilcoan and Mullaghduh Primary Schools was approved in April 2004.

## Capital Money

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Education how much capital money his Department has returned to the Department of Finance and Personnel, in each of the last five financial years.

**(AQW 23163/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The total amount of capital funding returned to the Department of Finance and Personnel in each of the last five years is as follows:

YEAR	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m	2010/11 £m	2011/12 £m	2012/13 £m
In –Year Reduced Requirement	14.5	9.8	Nil	Nil	Nil
Year End Capital Underspend	1.9	0.1	1.4	0.7	0.5
Capital Budget Spend	99.1%	99.9%	99.2%	99.4%	99.6%

**Note:** 2012/13 underspend position is based on Provisional Outturn position)

The reduced requirement declared in 2008/09 related to the deferment of a site purchase which subsequently proceeded in 2009/10.

In 2009/10, the capital reduced requirement was due to slippage in anticipated expenditure profiles of capital projects.

There were no in-year capital funding reduced requirements declared to the Department of Finance and Personnel in the last three years.

### Principals and Vice-Principals: Redundancy Payments

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Education, pursuant to AQW 21637/11-15, how many of the 33 Principals received an additional payment or entered into a legal confidentiality agreement with their employers.

**(AQW 23198/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Education and Library Boards and the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools have confirmed that none of the 33 Principals/ Vice-Principals made redundant, in the last three years, for reasons other than school closures received an additional payment or entered into a legal confidentiality agreement with their employers.

### Galbally Primary School

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of children enrolled in each year group at Galbally Primary School; and the number of children that will be enrolled in the 2013/2014 academic year.

**(AQW 23214/11-15)**

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

#### ST JOSEPHS PRIMARY SCHOOL, GALBALLY – ENROLMENTS 2012/13

Year	Year group									Total enrolment
	Nursery	Reception	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2012/13	0	0	27	26	32	23	22	23	21	<b>174</b>

**Source:** School census

The projected enrolment for this school in 2013/14 is 191 pupils.

### Killyman Primary School

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Education to detail the number of children enrolled in each year group at Killyman Primary School; and the number of children that will be enrolled in the 2013/2014 academic year.

**(AQW 23223/11-15)**

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

### **KILLYMAN PRIMARY SCHOOL – ENROLMENTS 2012/13**

Year	Year group									Total enrolment
	Nursery	Reception	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2012/13	0	0	22	26	22	22	21	15	22	<b>150</b>

**Source:** School census

The projected enrolment for this school in 2013/14 is 158 pupils. These figures include children with a statement of special educational needs.

### **Children with Special Needs in Post-Primary Education**

**Mr McCartney** asked the Minister of Education to outline the service provision for children with special needs in post-primary education.

**(AQW 23253/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** Special educational needs (SEN) provision for all children is matched to the individual needs of the child. Provision can be made in special schools, designed for children with particular needs, or in learning support centres (LSCs) attached to mainstream schools or in mainstream classes themselves. It may also consist of home or hospital tuition or placement outside the north of Ireland. LSCs make specialist provision for special educational needs such as autism, speech, language and communication difficulties, hearing impairment and moderate learning difficulties.

The Code of Practice (COP) on the Identification and Assessment of SEN sets out a 5-stage approach to service provision for children with SEN. Most post-primary age children, like primary age children, will have their needs met in their own mainstream school (Stages 1-3 of the COP). Some children's needs will, however, require more specialist intervention often through the completion of a statutory assessment and statement of SEN by the Education and Library Board (Stages 4 and 5 of the COP).

### **New Transfer Tests**

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister of Education how many children, who did not take the new transfer tests in the previous academic year, have subsequently transferred to grammar schools.

**(AQW 23437/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The Department does not hold any information on the number of children who have taken unregulated entrance tests in any of the years since they were first used by grammar schools in contravention of the Department's policy that no child should have to sit a test as part of the process of transfer from primary to post-primary school. It is therefore not possible to identify how many children were admitted to grammar schools without having sat unregulated entrance tests in the previous academic year.

### **Free Public Transport for all School Pupils**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Education, further to the Private Member's Motion on 4 February 2013 on school transport, for an update on the feasibility study into providing free public transport for all school pupils.

**(AQW 23442/11-15)**

**Mr O'Dowd:** The feasibility of providing free public transport for all school pupils will be considered as part of a wider Review of Home to School Transport policy. My officials are currently taking forward work to establish the Review and I hope to make an announcement in the near future.

## Department for Employment and Learning

### Further Education Colleges: Pay Increases

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning why Further Education Colleges have not paid staff members earning less than £21,000 an increase of at least £250 per annum.

**(AQW 22495/11-15)**

**Dr Farry (The Minister for Employment and Learning):** Historically, Further Education non-teaching staff in Northern Ireland are contractually entitled to pay rises determined by the National Joint Council (NJC). Unfortunately, it is my understanding that any agreements reached by the NJC are excluded from the automatic entitlement to the £250, as the Council is not deemed by HM Treasury to be a Pay Review Body

It is also my understanding that pay negotiations for the years 2010/11 and 2011/12 have yet to be completed. Whilst my Department has no role in the negotiation process, and given the recent announcements by the Department of Education in relation to these payments in the schools sector, I have asked the College Employers to explore the possibility of making this payment available to eligible staff. I am hopeful that, in the interest of equity, this matter will be resolved satisfactorily to all concerned.

### Qualifications Achieved in 2010/11 and 2011/12

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning how many people were involved in obtaining the 140,000 qualifications in academic years (i) 2010/11; and (ii) 2011/12.

**(AQW 22528/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The number of people who were involved in obtaining the 140,000 qualifications in academic years (i) 2010/11 were 56,885; and (ii) 2011/12 were 62,376.

Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA); Further Education Leavers Survey (FELS); Essential Skills Enrolment Return (ESER); Client Management System (CMS).

#### Notes:

- There is no unique identifier across all four datasets therefore it is possible for an individual to achieve within higher education, further education, essential skills and within a government training programme.
- An individual may achieve in both academic years and will be counted in both years if this has occurred.

### University of Ulster: Daycare Facilities

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he has sought, or will seek, evidence and the equality impact assessment from the University of Ulster on its plans to close daycare facilities; and for his assessment of any evidence.

**(AQW 22557/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** As I advised in my letter to you dated 30 April 2013, decisions relating to the operation of student services at the University of Ulster are rightly a matter for the management of the University.

My officials have, however, contacted the University to discuss the closure of the on-site childcare facilities at its Jordanstown and Magee campuses.

The University has provided information to support the closure and has provided assurances that it remains committed to providing the current levels of direct financial support for childcare in order to ensure a the impact on student parents is minimal and to implement University policies to assist employees in the day nurseries to be redeployed or re-employed.

The University has also advised that it carried out an equality screening exercise in line with the requirements in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland act 1998. The report of this equality screening exercise is available on the University of Ulster website.

### **Agency Workers Regulations 2011**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he is aware of any Department that is contravening the Agency Workers Regulations 2011.

**(AQW 22619/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** I am not aware of any tribunal case law which has found a Northern Ireland Government Department to be in breach of the Agency Workers Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Whilst my Department is responsible for inspecting employment agencies to ensure compliance with the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, it is not responsible for enforcement of the Agency Workers Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011. As is the case with most employment legislation, enforcement of the employment protections under the Agency Workers Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 is provided for through the industrial tribunals.

### **Northern Ireland Civil Service**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he recognises the Northern Ireland Civil Service as an employer.

**(AQW 22635/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** I recognise my Department as one of the twelve government departments which comprise the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS). While each department has a separate Human Resources function, the Department of Finance and Personnel, through Corporate Human Resources (CHR), ensures that NICS-wide policies and services are in place in relation to the employment and management of staff.

### **Programme for Government: Commitment 36**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, with regard to Commitment 36 in the Programme for Government, how many people who moved from welfare into employment have returned to welfare, in the last three years.

**(AQW 22674/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Commitment 36 in the Programme for Government is to "Support people (with an emphasis on young people) into employment by providing skills and training".

The milestone for 2012/2013 was 65,000; the milestone for 2013/14 is 89,000 cumulative.

The Department does not monitor how many of those clients have returned to welfare and therefore the information requested is not available.

### **Programme for Government: Commitment 25**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, in relation to delivery of Commitment 25 of the Programme for Government, how the number of qualifications claimed translates into the number of actual individuals.

**(AQW 22675/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** In relation to delivery of Commitment 25 of the Programme for Government, the number of qualifications claimed translates into 119,261 individuals.

Sources: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA); Further Education Leavers Survey (FELS); Essential Skills Enrolment Return (ESER); Client Management System (CMS).

**Notes:**

- There is no unique identifier across all four datasets therefore it is possible for an individual to achieve within higher education, further education, essential skills and within a government training programme.
- The volume of qualifications mentioned in the question is over a two year period. The individual count was determined within each academic year separately and then added together. An individual may achieve in both academic years and will be counted in both years if this has occurred.

**Further Education Colleges**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail the (i) numeric; and (ii) percentage drop-out rate amongst students in Further Education Colleges, both cumulatively and in respect of each college, for the latest year for which figures are available and a breakdown of the reasons provided.

**(AQW 22676/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Dropout rates (withdrawal rates used as proxy) for final year student enrolments for each college for the 2011/12 academic year are listed below: DEL and the Colleges do attempt to monitor reasons for withdrawal. At present this is only known for one third of dropouts, the major reasons from known cases being 'personal reasons' - 46%, 'entered employment' - 20% and 'health reasons' - 19%.

College	No. of Withdrawals	% Withdrawn
Belfast Metropolitan	3335	12%
Northern Regional	2310	14%
South Eastern Regional	2710	12%
Southern Regional	1665	7%
South West	1635	10%
North West Regional	2705	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14365</b>	<b>12%</b>

**Source:** Further Education Leavers Survey

**Notes:**

- 1 Retention/Achievement analysis in FE focuses on final year student enrolments, those for whom an outcome is expected per academic year, which covers 80% of enrolments.
- 2 Numeric data is rounded to nearest 5 in line with disclosure protocol.

**DEL: Paid and Unpaid Invoices**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, to detail (i) the total number of invoices paid by his Department and its Arm's-Length Bodies; (ii) the number of invoices paid within thirty calendar days of receipt; (iii) the number of invoices paid within ten working days of receipt; (iv) how each of her Department's Arm's-Length Bodies has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and (v) the number of invoices that, to date, remain unpaid.

**(AQW 22757/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The information requested for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 for this Department and its Arm's-Length Bodies is set out in the attached Annex. Details are included for the following organisations:

- Department for Employment and Learning (DEL);

- Ulster Supported Employment Limited (USEL);
- CITB–ConstructionSkills Northern Ireland (CITB);
- Labour Relations Agency (LRA);
- Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC);
- Northern Regional College (NRC);
- North West Regional College (NWRC);
- South Eastern Regional College (SERC);
- Southern Regional College (SRC);
- South West College (SWC); and,
- Stranmillis University College.

**DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING AND ITS ARM'S-LENGTH BODIES FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2012 TO 31 MARCH 2013**

	<b>DEL</b>	<b>USEL</b>	<b>CITB</b>	<b>LRA</b>	<b>BMC</b>	<b>NRC</b>	<b>NWRC</b>	<b>SERC</b>	<b>SRC</b>	<b>SWC</b>	<b>Stranmillis</b>
Total number of invoices paid	7,489	6,479	1,247	1,514	12,612	10,565	10,756	13,738	12,282	15,373	3,577
Number of invoices paid within 30 calendar days of receipt	7,219	6,479	1,245	1,408	7,933	7,596	10,186	10,316	9,785	10,026	1,735
Number of invoices paid within 10 working days of receipt	6,585	*	1,146	937	3,692	1,801	7,501	5,874	3,653	**	454
30 Day Payment Performance	96.4%	100.0%	99.8%	93.0%	62.9%	71.9%	94.7%	75.1%	79.7%	65.2%	48.5%
Number of invoices that, to date, remain unpaid	55	0	0	8	62	131	0	57	83	40	52

\* It has been agreed with DFP that, as USEL is a commercial company that pays promptly on the 20th day of the month following the receipt of an invoice, performance against target is not required.

\*\* South West College currently does not capture data regarding invoices paid within ten working days but is reviewing its financial system in order to capture this information

### **Queen's University Students' Union: Stewarding Service**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what aspects of the stewarding service provided at Queen's University Students' Union warrant the privatisation of the service.

**(AQW 22784/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department does not fund Queen's University Students' Union.

As Queen's University is responsible for its own policies and procedures, including management of services, you may find it more helpful to deal directly with the university on this matter.

### **Queen's University Students' Union: G4S**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to provide details of the value of the contract to GS4 for providing steward and security service at Queen's University Students' Union.

**(AQW 22785/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department does not fund Queen's University Students' Union.

As Queen's University is responsible for its own policies and procedures, including management of services, you may find it more helpful to deal directly with the university on this matter.

### **Queen's University Students' Union: G4S**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether he can provide assurances that the stewards employed by GS4 for Queen's University Students' Union will be students.

**(AQW 22786/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department does not fund Queen's University Students' Union.

As Queen's University is responsible for its own policies and procedures, including management of services, you may find it more helpful to deal directly with the university on this matter.

### **Third Level Education: Privatised or Outsourced**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what other sections of third level education does he anticipate will be privatised or outsourced to private companies.

**(AQW 22787/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department provides funding to the local Higher Education Institutions for teaching and research purposes. The Institutions, however, are responsible for their own policies and procedures, including how they manage other functions within their business areas.

### **Young People with a Diverse Range of Needs**

**Ms Fearon** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning what capital funding is available in his budget for organisations who train and provide services for young people with a diverse range of needs.

**(AQW 22845/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The Department's Further Education and Higher Education Divisions fund Further Education Colleges, Higher Education Universities and Higher Education University Colleges. The capital budget for Further Education for 2013-14 is £7m and for 2014-15 £19m. The capital budget for Higher Education for 2013-14 is £16m and for 2014-15 £23m.

Further Education and Higher Education sectors train and provide services for young people with a diverse range of needs.

## **Chair of the Board of Governors of Stranmillis University College**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to detail (i) when the Chair of the Board of Governors of Stranmillis University College will be appointed; (ii) how many people applied for the post and the date of application; and (iii) how many people were interviewed and when.

**(AQW 22885/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Prof Sir Desmond Rea was appointed Chair of the Governing Body of Stranmillis University College with effect from 13 May 2013.

Ten applications were received for the post. These were dated as follows: 12 and 16 January, 20, 21, 25, 26 and 28 (3 applications) February, and 1 March 2013. Seven people were interviewed for the post. The interviews took place over three dates, the 9, 10 and 22 of April 2013.

## **Queen's University Students' Union: G4S**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning, following the announcement that G4S will have responsibility for security services at Queen's University Students' Union, whether all existing security staff will be given the opportunity to have The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations applied.

**(AQW 22896/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** My Department does not fund Queen's University Belfast's Students' Union. However, my officials contacted the University regarding this matter and the University has stated that the Queen's Students' Union is committed to providing jobs for students in the Students' Union. Students are currently employed in security roles on the Union's Belfast premises. Following the Students' Union Referendum on Thursday 7 May 2013, a decision has been taken to engage an independent security advisor to review security services within the Union. The University has also stated that the review will include consultation with all relevant stakeholders and existing security arrangements will remain in place pending the outcome of the review.

Therefore, my Department is not in a position to comment in this instance.

## **Economic Inactivity**

**Mr Hilditch** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning to outline how he can ensure that the private sector is fully engaged in drafting a strategy to reduce economic inactivity.

**(AQW 23009/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** Following the publication of the baseline analysis of economic inactivity, my Department and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment have continued to develop a draft strategy to tackle the high levels of economic inactivity in Northern Ireland. A key part of this process involves engagement with public, private and third sector organisations. The Department for Social Development and Invest NI were identified as key partners within Government, and have recently joined the working group to contribute to the further development of the strategy. The inclusion of Invest NI in particular will be useful in engaging with the private sector, as it has developed a successful working relationship with many private sector businesses and representative organisations.

In taking forward this process, the working group will finalise a wider stakeholder engagement plan, which will provide opportunities for public, private and third sector organisations to contribute to the strategy. Organisations such as the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and the Northern Ireland branches of the Federation of Small Businesses and the Confederation of British Industry will be among those engaged with before the public consultation stage of the strategy.

## **Allstate: 650 Jobs**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Employment and Learning whether there are sufficient people with the relevant skills to fill the 650 jobs which are being created by Allstate.

**(AQW 23160/11-15)**

**Dr Farry:** The 650 new posts to be created include technology, knowledge and business outsourcing positions across Allstate's sites at Belfast, Londonderry and Strabane. The full complement of staff is due to be in place by 2016. The company has already made solid progress in recruiting with approximately 200 of the 650 appointments having been made. It is confident that it can continue this trend.

Allstate recruits both experienced IT professionals and those from a non-IT background. The nature of the posts to be filled, and Allstate's commitment to skills development, mean that a significant proportion of the roles can be filled by talented people from a non-IT background.

Over the years my Department has worked regularly with Allstate in support of its recruitment campaigns, with over 700 of the company's workforce having joined with assistance from the Bridge to Employment Programme, and has helped in the recruitment of some of the 200 already recruited in the current campaign. My Department is already therefore in contact with Allstate and will be happy to continue to work with them to help secure the remaining number of suitably skilled recruits they require.

This is in addition to the work being taken forward by the ICT Working Group which I established in January 2012 and chair. This group brings together officials, local ICT employers, employer representative bodies and further and higher education. The remit of the Group is to ascertain the skills issues being faced by the ICT sector and to develop an action plan to articulate the short, medium and long term actions to address the issues identified. The ICT action plan was published in June 2012 and the ICT Working Group will meet in June 2013 to review the progress of implementation in the year since publication.

## Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment

### Diversification of Trade

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how she plans to work with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade to increase diversification of trade.

**(AQW 22567/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster (The Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment):** Growing the Northern Ireland economy sits at the centre of the Programme for Government with ambitious plans to increase exports. The Republic of Ireland continues to be Northern Ireland's largest export market with over one third (£2.1bn, 37%) of total Northern Ireland export sales (£5.7bn) in 2012, across a diverse range of market sectors. Notably, the Food and Live Animals sector accounts for almost 30% of Northern Ireland exports to the RoI. The difficult economic conditions, however, continue to be a challenge and have contributed to a 6% reduction in exports in 2012, with the manufacturing and construction sectors being hardest hit.

My Department, through Invest NI, works closely with Enterprise Ireland to drive Northern Ireland exports and trade diversification. Enterprise Ireland, in turn, works with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to implement the Irish Government's Trade Strategy. A Memorandum of Understanding (2007) exists between Invest NI and Enterprise Ireland to enable collaboration across a number of business development areas, such as reciprocal arrangements with respect to trade mission participation. Also, Invest NI's Chairman and Chief Executive meet their respective counterparts in Enterprise Ireland, biannually, to discuss progress and consider other opportunities to work together to grow our respective economies. Officials from Invest NI and Enterprise Ireland are in regular contact and seek to organise joint events, as appropriate.

Both Governments continue to support InterTradeIreland to develop North/South trade and innovation opportunities.

## Shale Gas in Fermanagh

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what analysis has her Department has conducted to ensure that the business model, for developing shale gas in Fermanagh, presented by Tamboran Resources is accurate and viable.

**(AQW 22653/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The business model presented by Tamboran Resources is based on a high level analysis commensurate with the information available now, at this early stage of exploration. My Department is content with the company's work to date but recognise that initial drilling and testing of the shales is required to verify some of the assumptions made about the shale gas resource that underpin Tamboran's business model. Unless and until such drilling is carried out a detailed analysis of the company's model would have limited validity.

## Smart Specialisation Strategy

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the progress made on a Smart Specialisation Strategy will deliver on sub-regional economic clusters.

**(AQW 22670/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Developing a Framework for Smart Specialization (S3) is the process promoted by the European Commission as a means for regions to identify their innovation and research priorities. Northern Ireland is at an advanced stage in the development of this Framework. The Framework builds on the extensive work undertaken by Matrix and the research undertaken for the development of the Economic Strategy. Northern Ireland has been the first UK Region to be successfully 'peer reviewed' by the EU Smart Specialisation Platform and we are currently undergoing an 'Expert Review' by DG Regio. That Review will inform the final development of the Framework which will be submitted to DG Regio later this year.

Economic clustering is an important part of the S3 Framework. Clustering supports increased collaboration between companies and with academia, which can support companies increase their competitiveness in national and international markets. Clusters, which can grow organically at a sub regional level, are supported through a range of Invest NI programmes, such as the Collaborative R&D programme and the Collaborative Network Programme (CNP).

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what discussions her Department has had with Broadband Delivery UK regarding the provision of a 2 Megabit per second broadband service following the closure of the Department's public consultation on the matter in October 2012.

**(AQW 22677/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department has had regular and ongoing discussions with BDUK throughout the process, considering State Aid rules and commercial arrangements.

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether, following discussions with Broadband Delivery UK, her Department is revisiting any baseline data relied upon at the time of its consultation 'The Provision of a 2 Megabit per second Broadband Service across Northern Ireland.'

**(AQW 22678/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The process is subject to constant refinement to ensure compliance with State Aid rules.

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of the baseline data used in the Department's consultation 'The provision of a 2 Megabit per second Broadband Service across Northern Ireland.'

**(AQW 22679/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Initial baseline data was based on the information available from providers at that time and information held by the Department.

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has asked BT to re-examine data provided to her Department for inclusion in its consultation document 'The Provision of a 2 megabit per second Broadband Service across Northern Ireland.'

**(AQW 22680/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The process is subject to constant refinement, to ensure compliance with State Aid rules. This applies to all stakeholders including the Department, BDUK and any prospective supplier.

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment when she will respond to the consultation document 'The provision of a 2 Megabit per second Broadband Service across Northern Ireland.'

**(AQW 22681/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** It is my intention to publish a document in the near future that will include detail of the responses received and to provide a final opportunity to help determine the area of intervention, in accordance with State Aid rules.

## InvestNI

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the measures that InvestNI can implement to address issues of underinvestment in local areas; (ii) the engagement that InvestNI has had to date with Down District Council; and (iii) whether InvestNI can make an advisor available to Down District Council in an effort to increase investment in the district.

**(AQW 22705/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Invest NI continues to offer a wide range of support to encourage investment in local areas.

The Regional Start initiative (RSI) is designed to support locally focussed entrepreneurs into self employment. The RSI is set in the context of Invest NI's work with local Councils and the widest possible business base.

Invest NI's Boosting Business programme was launched in November 2011 in direct response to the difficulties being faced by businesses as a result of the economic downturn. In June 2012 Invest NI established a full time Business Support Team to deal with enquiries from businesses across Northern Ireland.

The Invest NI Jobs Fund has been developed to promote 5,000 jobs and provides employment grant support to investment projects which will create new sustainable jobs. Invest NI is continuing to build a pipeline of projects that will lead to further new job creation in Down District and across Northern Ireland.

Invest NI has a good working relationship with Down District Council at all levels and regularly meets with their representatives. Recently Mark Bleakney (Southern Regional Manager) met with John Dummigan (CEO Down District Council) to discuss general economic development in the area and on

the 8th May Alastair Hamilton (CEO Invest NI) and Mark Bleakney met with the Council's Development Committee to discuss Invest NI activity in Down.

Invest NI also continues to work with Down District Council and the SEED (South East Economic Development) group of Councils on a range of new initiatives under the Local Economic Development Measure (LED).

In addition Invest NI is working with Down Council and SEED to jointly develop an FDI sales application.

Invest NI staff will liaise with Down District Council in their endeavours to increase investment in the district.

### **Future Investment Opportunities in South Down**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for her assessment of future investment opportunities in South Down.

**(AQW 22706/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The factors that are important to and influence a potential investor exist to varying degrees across Northern Ireland's Parliamentary Constituency Areas (PCAs) and, as a result, levels of investment will vary across the different PCAs. However, I am firmly of the belief that the benefits provided by securing high quality investment – both local and foreign – extend well beyond the borders of the PCA in which the company decides to locate.

Each potential investment project will have its specific requirements, but investors will typically focus on the availability of skilled labour, suitable property and infrastructure requirements, along with existing clusters of companies in their business sector. It is important to note that any attempt to direct Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to locations that do not meet the company's requirement would jeopardise the chances of Northern Ireland securing the investment.

My Department, including Invest NI, is well aware of the challenges facing many of our local areas, including South Down. We are committed to working with local stakeholders to maximise the offering in their area. For example, in order to help raise Northern Ireland's profile within international markets, Invest NI has recently developed and launched a smartphone application ('FDI app') which can be used as a tool to help promote the benefits of setting up in the region to potential foreign investors. Local councils have been invited to participate in using this tool by inputting a local proposition for their area.

Invest Northern Ireland continues to offer a wide range of support to encourage local investment in local areas.

The Regional Start initiative (RSI) is designed to support locally focussed entrepreneurs into self employment. The RSI is set in the context of Invest NI's work with local Councils and the widest possible business base.

Invest NI's Boosting Business programme was launched in November 2011 in direct response to the difficulties being faced by local businesses as a result of the economic downturn. In June 2012 Invest NI established a full time Business Support Team to deal with enquiries from businesses across Northern Ireland.

The Invest NI Jobs Fund has been developed to promote 5,000 jobs and provides employment grant support to investment projects which will create new sustainable jobs. Invest NI is continuing to build a pipeline of projects that will lead to further new job creation in Down District and across Northern Ireland.

### **Hydraulic Fracturing Licence**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether the geographical area covered by Petroleum Prospecting Licence PL1/13 will not include licences for hydraulic fracturing.

**(AQW 22709/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** I would refer the member to the answer I gave to AQW 14180/11-15, which he also submitted, in which I advised that my Department does not issue licences for hydraulic fracturing.

### **Tamboran Resources Hydrocarbon Reserve Claims**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what evaluation her Department has conducted of the hydrocarbon reserve claims of Tamboran Resources in their licence area.

**(AQW 22711/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** It is inappropriate to attempt a detailed evaluation of the estimates that Tamboran Resources have made of the amounts of recoverable gas in their licence area at this early stage of exploration. Some of the parameters used in the calculations are derived from the existing exploration data from the area but others are based on extrapolations from other areas. Initial drilling and testing of the shale gas resource is required to verify some of the assumptions inherent in these estimates. A stratigraphic borehole to obtain rock core from the Bundoran Shale Formation would, for example, provide more accurate information about the Total Organic Content and the mechanical properties of the shales than could be obtained from the old drill cuttings available from previous exploration wells in the area.

### **Tamboran Resources**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what evaluation her Department has conducted on Tamboran's forecasted ultimate recovery rate of an average well.

**(AQW 22712/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** My Department has made a preliminary evaluation of Tamboran's estimate of the ultimate recovery rate of an average well. In the absence of any shale gas production in Northern Ireland Tamboran's estimate relies on values from shale gas producing areas in the USA. The values used by Tamboran are in line with those published in recent analyses of producing wells in the Barnett, Fayetteville, Woodford, Haynesville and Eagle Ford shales.

However, caution should be exercised when evaluating estimates of ultimate recovery rates made before, or in the early stages of, gas production. The uncertainties involved in the estimation of shale gas resources are discussed at some length in Chapter 2 of the JRC report for the European Commission, 'Unconventional Gas: Potential Energy Market Impacts in the European Union', available for download at the web address: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc\\_report\\_2012\\_09\\_unconventional\\_gas.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc_report_2012_09_unconventional_gas.pdf)

### **Wind Power**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for his assessment of the viability of a production target for wind power that is 20 percent greater than the rest of the UK.

**(AQW 22725/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Strategic Energy Framework (SEF) target of 40% electricity consumption from renewable sources by 2020 is not solely a wind target; it covers all forms of renewable generation. The setting of the target is evidence based and derived from the higher than average amount of renewable resource available in Northern Ireland.

Based on the amount of renewable electricity projects in the planning system, Northern Ireland is on target to meet the interim Programme for Government target of 20% of electricity consumption from renewable energy sources by 2015. In the second half of the decade to 2020, offshore wind generation will make a significant contribution to meeting the 40% target, but will be subject to the Utility Regulator approving the required level of investment in the electricity grid.

There is no mandatory UK target for electricity generation but it is expected that, by 2020, 30% of electricity consumption will come from renewable sources in the UK.

## Wind Power

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment who he will target to buy wind power.

**(AQW 22726/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** It is not the role of government to direct potential transactions between buyers and sellers. These are commercial matters in a privatised market. All market participants in the Single Electricity Market generating more than 10MW are required to bid their generation into SEM from which it will then be dispatched by the market operator according to the most efficient market schedule.

## Causeway Coast: International Sales Representatives

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in which countries do the International Sales Representatives, who participated in the recent visit to the Causeway Coast, operate.

**(AQW 22741/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The International Representatives were drawn from all of Invest NI's key target markets for Foreign Direct Investment. The countries represented were as follows:

- United Kingdom (London and Northern Ireland offices)
- Republic of Ireland
- USA
- Canada
- Belgium (covering Continental Europe)
- India
- Japan

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she will rule out a further period of consultation prior to inviting tenders for the provision of a 2 megabit per second broadband service.

**(AQW 22746/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** As we continue to refine our area of intervention, it is a condition of the State Aid decision to undertake a further consultation shortly before any procurement commences.

## European Commission's Document, State Aid SA.33671 (2012/N)

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment what assessment she has made of whether the European Commission's document, State Aid SA.33671 (2012/N), places unique burdens on Northern Ireland that are not placed on her counterparts in Scotland or Wales.

**(AQW 22747/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The success of the rollout of next generation broadband services due to investment made by my Department, has had additional implications on Northern Ireland, to ensure it complies fully with State Aid rules. Any planned intervention must be targeted in those areas where broadband services are currently limited.

## 2 Megabit Per Second Broadband Service

**Mr B McCrea** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in how many of the postcodes identified in her Department's document 'Postcodes across Northern Ireland' is the provision of a 2

megabit per second Broadband service limited to one or two suppliers; and whether there is evidence to suggest that they do in fact have a service limited to one or two suppliers.

**(AQW 22748/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The document published by my Department lists some 5440 postcodes. This was based on a number of working assumptions, set out in the information paper that was also published on the department's website. This is available at [http://www.detini.gov.uk/next\\_generation\\_services\\_coverage\\_assessment\\_\\_151\\_kb\\_.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/next_generation_services_coverage_assessment__151_kb_.pdf)

### Document 'A Telecommunications Action Plan

**Mr B McCreagh** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether her Department has revised any assumptions in its document 'A Telecommunications Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2011-2015.'

**(AQW 22750/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** None of the assumptions have been revised in the aforementioned paper.

### DETI: Paid and Unpaid Invoices

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, to detail (i) the total number of invoices paid by her Department and its Arm's-Length Bodies; (ii) the number of invoices paid within thirty calendar days of receipt; (iii) the number of invoices paid within ten working days of receipt; (iv) how each of her Department's Arm's-Length Bodies has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and (v) the number of invoices that, to date, remain unpaid.

**(AQW 22759/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The attached table details the information requested.

	(i) Total Number of Invoices paid	(ii) Number of Invoices paid within 30 days	(iii) Number of Invoices paid within 10 days	(iv) Performance (% of Invoices paid within 30 days)	(v) Number of Invoices remaining unpaid
DETI	3,650	3,559	3,335	97.5	0
Invest Northern Ireland	7,517	7,235	6,811	96.2	20
Northern Ireland Tourist Board	5,320	5,068	4,882	95.3	10
Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland	639	638	631	99.8	0
Consumer Council for Northern Ireland	687	684	558	99.6	0

### Titanic Belfast Visitors

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail (i) the number of visitors to Titanic Belfast in its first year of operation; (ii) the number of those visitors who paid for a tour of the facility; and (iii) the projected or targeted visitor numbers for each of the next ten years.

**(AQW 22798/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:**

- (i) The number of visitors to Titanic Belfast in its first year of operation was 807,340 making it the most popular visitor attraction in Northern Ireland.
- (ii) The number of those visitors who paid for a tour of Titanic Belfast was 752,224 with a further 55,116 visitors attending events in the Titanic suites.
- (iii) A Green Book Economic Appraisal for the project was completed in June 2008. The visitor figures used in this appraisal were based on visitor projections prepared by an independent expert. The projected visitor numbers for the next 9 years of operation are as follows:
- Year 2: 335,229
  - Year 3: 318,014
  - Year 4: 308,899
  - Year 5: 305,871
  - Year 6: 305,096
  - Year 7: 308,313
  - Year 8: 311,577
  - Year 9: 314,890
  - Year 10: 318,250

The operator's current visitor projections are not available.

**Game of Thrones Series: Jobs Created**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment how many jobs have been created in Northern Ireland as a result of the filming of the Game of Thrones series in Belfast.

**(AQW 22827/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The Northern Ireland Screen Commission (NI Screen) is the lead organisation for developing the film and television industry in Northern Ireland. Invest NI is the largest funder of NI Screen, providing support of £43.4 million for the period 1st April 2003 to 31st March 2013, including £7.9 million in the last financial year. The following table provides the requested information related to the number of full time equivalent (FTE) jobs created in Northern Ireland as a result of the 'Game of Thrones' production over the relevant period 2009 – 2013.

	<b>FTE's from Production of GoT<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Average Length of Contract (Mths)</b>
Pilot (2009)	30	n/a
Series 1 (2010)	190	6
Series 2 (2011)	221	6
Series 3 (2012)	250	6
Series 4 (2013)	250 <sup>2</sup>	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>.....</b>

1 FTE's have been calculated by summing the periods of individual employment contracts and then converting to total years.

2 Estimated

The above data is related to FTE's only and does not include those employed on shorter term daily rates on an 'as and when required' basis. Neither does it include the number of cast members

(including extras) engaged on each production. The following table details the total number of people involved in the production of each series of Game of Thrones.

	<b>Core Crew<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Dailies</b>	<b>Local Cast</b>	<b>Total</b>
Pilot (2009)	155	100	202	<b>457</b>
Series 1 (2010)	316	113	1,010	<b>1439</b>
Series 2 (2011)	336	553	1,498	<b>2387</b>
Series 3 (2012)	261	151 <sup>4</sup>	1,665	<b>2077</b>
Series 4 (2013)	Not available	Not available	Not available	<b>Not available</b>

3 Includes NI resident permanent FTE's

4 Base estimation, Northern Ireland Screen expects this to be more in the region of 500 - 600

### **InvestNI: Lands Available**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to detail lands available to InvestNI within the Dungannon District.

**(AQW 22894/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** Within the Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council area Invest NI holds some 91 acres of land of which 15 acres remain available to support economic development projects brought forward by qualifying businesses. These figures are correct as at 31st March 2013.

As noted in my response to AQO 3646/11-15 the organisation has recently completed the sale of almost 15 acres of its new industrial land at Dungannon Business Park in support of such a project.

I can also advise that there are registered interests from a further eight businesses seeking to acquire land within Dungannon Business Park. Invest NI will work closely with each of these companies over the coming months to further develop their interests.

### **Giro d'Italia 2014**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment whether she has approached the organisers of the Giro d'Italia 2014 regarding the possible inclusion of North Antrim in the route for the event.

**(AQW 23022/11-15)**

**Mrs Foster:** The exact route has yet to be finalised. This is the remit of RCS Sport who will work with the teams to develop the route. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board and I are keen that as much of Northern Ireland is showcased as possible, depending on the feasibility as judged by RCS Sport and the teams. Discussions are on-going.

The Northern Ireland Tourist Board has established a group to engage with local authorities. This group met for the first time on 11 April 2013 with North Antrim local authorities involved. This local authority group will meet again once the route is decided and will have a key role in delivering on the range of opportunities that the event will provide locally.

## Department of the Environment

### Gasification Plant in Derry

**Mr McCartney** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on his plans to address the public concern over the planning process in relation to the gasification plant in Derry.

**(AQW 22349/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood (The Minister of the Environment):** It is important to recognise what the gasification proposal means – in the case of Enviroparc waste will arrive from the existing on site Material Recovery Facility in the form of an RDF (i.e. waste that has been converted to fuel by shredding and dehydration). The RDF will be fed into a gasifier, where it will be heated in a reduced oxygen environment converting it into a synthetic gas fuel. The gas is then utilised as an efficient fuel in an oxygen rich environment. The energy (in the form of steam) from the combustion is used to drive a turbine. From this process electrical energy and recoverable heat energy will be produced. Any residual waste will fall into an ash pit which will be taken for off-site disposal to a suitably licensed landfill as a non-hazardous waste or for further processing by a third party ash processing company, to recover the ash as an aggregate.

Therefore, the model sees separation of waste, energy from waste with a recycle at the end of the process. Moreover, it is a gasification – not an incineration – model.

After the planning application for this facility was determined some concern on human health and impact on the environment have now been raised. These issues were fully considered during the processing of the application and expert advice was sought from a range of consultees. An approval was issued after the expert advice was considered.

In addition public consultation was carried out during the processing of the application by way of press advertisement and neighbour notification. There were 4 objections to the proposal received during processing of the planning application and objectors were notified of the outcome of the decision. The public had the opportunity to input into this consultation on any and all issues including matters of concern. The opportunity to comment, oppose, agree or make any comment whatsoever existed. I note that few took up the opportunity – be it business, individual, political or otherwise.

There was a requirement to place a general notice in the local press after the planning decision had been taken. Due to an administrative oversight this was not done at the time. It has now been rectified. An investigation is now taking place to identify how this oversight occurred and to ensure that procedures are put in place to avoid a recurrence on dealing with future planning applications.

I am satisfied that the public and others had the opportunity to input into this planning process and decision and that no person, group, organisation or community has been denied their legal entitlements. I will, of course, address concerns, if they exist. I believe others should take the opportunity to explain the situation, advise people that it is a gasification plant that there was many opportunities to contribute to the planning process and that the challenge of EU waste requirements, the need to ensure less and less landfill and our obligation to our heritage mean that everyone behave responsibly and not try to create worst fears.

### Planning Applications in North Down Council

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of the Environment how many planning applications in the North Down Council area have been in the planning system for three or more years; and to detail the nature of each application.

**(AQW 22838/11-15)**

**Mr Attwood:** As of 31 March 2013, a total of 6 planning applications in the North Down Council area had been in the planning system for three or more years. This figure has been taken from the most recent statistical information available in relation to outstanding planning applications.

Details of each application are as follows:

- 1 **W/2006/0416/F** – Modification of existing approval W/2002/0514 from a 5 no. duplex apartment block to 3 no. townhouses at site to the rear of land formerly occupied by 111-115 Bloomfield Road South, Bangor.
- 2 **W/2007/0038/F** – Demolition of existing dwellings and development of a terrace of 5 townhouses and 4 detached dwellings at 16-18 Victoria Road, Holywood (recommendation to refuse to Council 21/05/2013)
- 3 **W/2009/0486/F** - The demolition of two existing dwellings (nos. 4 & 4a) and construction of three detached houses at 2, 4 & 4a Ballymullan Road, Crawfordsburn (since 31/03/2013 being granted permission)
- 4 **W/2009/0695/F** – Erection of a 2 ½ storey detached dwelling at site adjacent to 25 Downshire Road, Bangor.
- 5 **W/2009/0714/F** – Proposed conversion and extension of existing dwelling into 2 no. dwellings and erection of 3 no. new dwellings at 3 Alexandra Park, Holywood.
- 6 **W/2007/0022/DCA** – Complete demolition of 2 dwellings at lands at 16-18 Victoria Road Holywood (recommendation to refuse to Council 21/05/2013)

I have asked for further information in relation to each of these applications.

## Department of Finance and Personnel

### Defamation Bill

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether he withdrew a paper proposing a legislative consent motion on the Defamation Bill; and to outline the reasons for this action.

**(AQW 22620/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson (The Minister of Finance and Personnel):** No.

### Premature Deaths: Air Pollution

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an estimate of the annual number of premature deaths in Belfast as a result of air pollution.

**(AQW 22654/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Deaths are registered with the General Register Office and are classified using the International Classification of Diseases (ICD10). In Belfast City Council Area, since 2001, there were no deaths registered where Air Pollution<sup>1</sup> was mentioned on the death certificate.

Cause of death is based on a medical or coroner's certificate. The certifying doctor or coroner states the direct cause of death (e.g. 'ischaemic heart disease') on the certificate. It would thus be very unusual for "Air Pollution" to be written on a death certificate.

- 1 The International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death codes used for 'Air Pollution' are Z58.1 and Z57.3.

### Flag Poles for Public Buildings

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail (i) the number of flag poles for public buildings that have been purchased in the last twelve months; (ii) the total cost involved in purchasing and erecting these flag poles; and (iii) whether the work of erecting the flag poles was put out to tender.

**(AQW 22699/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** In the last 12 months five orders for flagpoles have been issued for buildings in the office estate. Total estimated cost is £6,550.

The orders were placed through a property management framework that was competitively tendered by DFP.

### Flags and Flag Poles

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what consultation he has undertaken with employees who work in the buildings on which he is proposing to erect flags and flag poles.

**(AQW 22727/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Since the decision to erect flagpoles on specified buildings was undertaken to comply with the law which had been supported by all parties in the Assembly, there was no requirement to consult with employees in relation to the proposal to erect flagpoles and fly the union flag on office buildings where DFP has premises responsibility.

### DFP: Paid and Unpaid Invoices

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, to detail (i) the total number of invoices paid by his Department and its Arm's-Length Bodies; (ii) the number of invoices paid within thirty calendar days of receipt; (iii) the number of invoices paid within ten working days of receipt; (iv) how each of her Department's Arm's-Length Bodies has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and (v) the number of invoices that, to date, remain unpaid.

**(AQW 22760/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Details of the number of invoices paid and associated prompt payment performance for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013 are as follows:

	<b>Invoices paid during 2012/13</b>	<b>Invoices paid within 30 days</b>	<b>Invoices paid within 10 days</b>
DFP (including Arm's Length Bodies)	38,609	37,930	36,215

DFP has five arm's length bodies. During the period the Lay Observer and the Public Service Commission paid 16 invoices, all within the 30 day prompt payment target.

Prompt payment statistics for the NI Building Regulations Committee, Statistics Advisory Committee and Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (NI) Governance Group are not separately recorded on the departmental accounting system. However, the number of invoices generated by these bodies is small and the impact on prompt payment performance is therefore minimal.

As at 31 March 2013, the departmental accounting system showed that there were 56 invoices remaining unpaid.

### Payment from Public Funds for Travel and Hotel Expenses

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel 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 on behalf of the Departmental Solicitor's Office; and whether any such payments have been made, and to what extent.

**(AQW 22821/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** Solicitors in the Departmental Solicitor's Office acting on behalf of Departmental clients and public bodies are required to instruct counsel who are appointed to the Northern Ireland Government Civil Panels, all of whom are called to the Northern Ireland Bar. Only where the knowledge and expertise required is not available from the Panels will consideration be given to instructing off-panel, and then only with the authority of the instructing Department and the approval of the Departmental Solicitor.

In the small number of cases where counsel from outside the jurisdiction has been instructed reasonable expenses have been paid to cover travel and accommodation costs, as appropriate.

### **Together: Building a United Community**

**Mrs Overend** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the budgetary reallocations necessary following the publication of “Together: Building a United Community.”

**(AQW 22918/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The “Together: Building a United Community” strategy was developed by OFMDFM and I currently have no information as to the potential budgetary implications of this initiative.

### **People Aged 18-24 Years**

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail, by Council Area and Electoral Ward, the number of people aged 18-24 who are (i) in employment; (ii) in education; (iii) in training; and (iv) not in employment, education or training.

**(AQW 22939/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The information requested for persons aged 18-24 is available from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) at the Northern Ireland level and the most recent estimates are provided in Table 1 overleaf. However, the LFS is a sample survey and the information is not available for this age group at district council or ward level due to sample size constraints.

The district council and ward level information will become available (for 2011) when detailed characteristics at the sub-Northern Ireland level are released from the 2011 Census of Population in Summer 2013.

**TABLE 1**

	<b>Northern Ireland Total</b>
In Employment	82,000
In Education	70,000
In Training	7,000 <sup>1</sup>
Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET)	38,000

Please note that the employment, education and training categories are not mutually exclusive.

1 Estimates for those in training are based on relatively small sample size and are subject to a high degree of sampling variability. They should therefore be treated with caution.

### **Social Value Act**

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel whether a Social Value Act will be considered for introduction here.

**(AQW 22950/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The Programme for Government contains a key commitment to include social clauses in all public procurement contracts. In addition the Executive’s Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy requires compliance with the statutory duties on equality of opportunity and sustainable development as well as the need to pay due regard to its other economic, social and environmental policies. I do not believe that further legislation is required.

## Dundonald House Premises: Refurbishment

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel for an estimate of the cost of refurbishing the Dundonald House premises, currently occupied by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

**(AQW 22979/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** No estimate is available for the standalone refurbishment of those parts of Dundonald House occupied by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The estimated cost of refurbishing all of Dundonald House is £35.85m.

## Civil Servants Salaries

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many civil servants are paid over (i) £50,000; (ii) £75,000; (iii) £100,000; (iv) £125,000; and (v) £150,000 per annum.

**(AQW 22982/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** The information provided below includes Northern Ireland civil servants in the 13 NICS departments as well as NICS staff working in the Health and Safety Executive, the Assembly Ombudsman and Commissioner for Complaints, the Attorney General's office, the Prison Service and the Youth Justice Agency. The figures are as at 1 April 2012, which is the latest set of validated figures available and are based on full time equivalent basic salaries.

- (i) 838 Northern Ireland civil servants are paid over £50,000 per annum of which;
- (ii) 78 are paid over £75,000 per annum;
- (iii) 15 are paid over £100,000 per annum;
- (iv) 4 are paid over £125,000 per annum; and
- (v) 2 are paid over £150,000 per annum.

## Departmental Arms-Length Bodies or Quangos

**Mr McNarry** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel how many employees of departmental arms-length bodies or quangos are paid over (i) £50,000; (ii) £75,000; (iii) £100,000; (iv) £125,000; and (v) £150,000 per annum.

**(AQW 22985/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** There were no employees of my Department's arms-length bodies who were paid over the amount of £50,000 per annum.

This response is provided for the Department of Finance and Personnel only as the information for all departments is not held centrally. The Member should contact individual departments for their information.

## Civil Service Buildings: Loop System

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to what extent are civil service buildings equipped with the loop system to assist visitors or employees who have a hearing impairment.

**(AQW 23138/11-15)**

**Mr Wilson:** All refurbished and newly leased DFP properties have had deaf loop systems installed in designated meeting/interview rooms since the Disability Discrimination Act was introduced in 1995. In addition, where requested, portable loop systems for use in any room within a building are provided. These provide local coverage as necessary.

## Equal Pay Settlement

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what discussions he has had with the PSNI on progressing a business case for civilian staff who were not covered by the equal pay settlement.  
(AQW 23170/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** I have had no discussions with the PSNI regarding this matter that would be an issue for the DOJ Minister

## Equal Pay Settlement

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to outline the contact he has received lobbying on the issue of civilian staff not covered by the equal pay settlement.  
(AQW 23171/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** I have received correspondence regarding this issue from MPs, individual MLAs, the Committee for Finance and Personnel and PSNI staff. I have also answered a number of Assembly Questions relating to this matter.

## Equal Pay Settlement

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel what assessment he has made of the case presented by the groups lobbying his Department on behalf of civilian staff in the PSNI who were not covered by the equal pay settlement.  
(AQW 23172/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** The arguments put forward by those lobbying on this issue do not change the fact that the position in terms of eligibility has been clear from the outset of the equal pay settlement and this has now been upheld in the County Court, which found that the settlement applied only to periods of service in the 11 NICS departments and did not apply to bodies such as the NIO and PANI/PSNI, who had lawfully received delegation for pay matters, which was still in effect during the relevant time period. No legal liability has been established upon which to base any rationale to approve payment of the settlement to PSNI staff.

## Death by Suicide

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister of Finance and Personnel to detail the number of people in each constituency who died by suicide, in each of the last five years.  
(AQW 23204/11-15)

**Mr Wilson:** The table overleaf details the number of deaths registered as a suicide<sup>1</sup> in Northern Ireland, for 2008 to 2012, broken down by Assembly Area.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF DEATHS REGISTERED AS SUICIDE<sup>1</sup> IN NORTHERN IRELAND BY ASSEMBLY AREA<sup>2</sup>, 2008-2012**

Assembly Area	Registration Year				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belfast East	10	17	23	14	11
Belfast North	27	26	25	31	21
Belfast South	15	13	20	21	17
Belfast West	30	27	20	29	29

Assembly Area	Registration Year				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
East Antrim	12	9	9	12	14
East Londonderry	14	16	19	12	20
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	12	19	13	16	17
Foyle	20	17	25	15	16
Lagan Valley	9	6	23	15	20
Mid Ulster	15	14	9	14	10
Newry and Armagh	31	18	16	19	12
North Antrim	10	11	20	13	14
North Down	10	9	13	8	7
South Antrim	9	12	13	14	16
South Down	13	6	20	9	12
Strangford	9	6	16	10	11
Upper Bann	15	16	17	26	20
West Tyrone	21	17	12	11	8
Resident outside Northern Ireland	0	1	0	0	3
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>278</b>

- 1 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 current Assembly Area Boundaries.

## Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

### Health and Social Care Trust Service and Budget Agreements

**Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on what date each Health and Social Care Trust signed its Service and Budget Agreements in the (i) 2009/10; (ii) 2010/11; (iii) 2011/12; (iv) 2012/13; and (v) 2013/14 financial years.

**(AQW 22305/11-15)**

**Mr Poots (The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety):** The date on which each Health and Social Care Trust signed its Service and Budget Agreement is set out in the table below.

Information for the current financial year 2013/14 has not yet been finalised and is therefore not available.

#### BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Date HSCB issued SBA to Trust	30-Jun-09	16-Feb-11	02-Dec-11	10-Oct-12
Date SBA signed by Trust	Not signed	Not signed	Not signed	Not signed
Value of contract	£848,445,255	£916,414,000	£968,847,000	£992,266,912

**SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Date HSCB issued SBA to Trust	26-Jun-09	11-Feb-11	30-Nov-11	12-Oct-12
Date SBA signed by Trust	23-Jul-09	26-May-11	Not signed	Not signed
Value of contract	£391,185,802	£417,851,000	£436,548,000	£450,366,000

**NORTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Date HSCB issued SBA to Trust	23-Nov-09	11-Feb-11	30-Nov-11	10-Oct-12
Date SBA signed by Trust	Not signed	Not signed	Not signed	Not signed
Value of contract	£448,152,990	£503,250,000	£520,163,000	£528,630,000

**SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Date HSCB issued SBA to Trust	26-Jun-09	11-Feb-11	30-Nov-11	10-Oct-12
Date SBA signed by Trust	09-Jul-09	02-Aug-11	Not signed	16-Oct-12
Value of contract	£402,083,192	£436,770,000	£458,481,000	£466,433,000

**WESTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Date HSCB issued SBA to Trust	30-Jun-09	16-Feb-11	30-Nov-11	10-Oct-12
Date SBA signed by Trust	15-Jul-09	19-May-11	Not signed	14-Dec-12
Value of contract	£401,622,144	£413,668,000	£435,024,000	£458,422,000

**NORTHERN IRELAND AMBULANCE SERVICE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST**

	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
Date HSCB issued SBA to Trust	23-Jul-09	28-Feb-11	20-Dec-11	13-Mar-13
Date SBA signed by Trust	21-Aug-09	09-Mar-11	03-Jan-12	20-Mar-13
Value of contract	£51,966,848	£53,607,769	£56,211,938	£55,996,355

\*Source: Health and Social Care Board.

Service and Budget Agreements are not legal contracts but are the vehicles through which the HSCB communicates the level of resources available to each Trust, the volumes and levels of activity expected for that funding, the quality and performance standards to which the Trust will be held in delivering its services and the governance frameworks to be used in performance management.

Whilst it is preferable that Trusts signal their acceptance of these undertakings through a formal signing off process, it is not considered to be an essential component of the overall financial planning and commissioning process and Trusts will still be monitored and held to account against the SBA values/volumes.

### **Medical Professionals' Representations**

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he is aware of the growing concern of GPs and other medical professionals at the lack of regard given to their representations by those conducting ATOS assessments; and what measures he has taken to ensure that medical professionals' representations are given due recognition by ATOS assessors.

**(AQW 22555/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I understand the position is as follows:

Responsibility for ATOS Healthcare, who took over the Social Security Agency's Medical Support Service in June 2011, rests with the Department for Social Development. ATOS provide independent medical advice to the Social Security Agency and conduct disability assessment for people claiming a range of benefits. ATOS consider all representations received from GPs and/or other medical professionals. The Social Security Agency has appointed a Health Assessment Advisor, whose role it is to monitor the quality and consistency of medical assessment and the quality of services provided by Atos.

ATOS are not responsible for determining entitlement to benefit; this remains the responsibility of a Social Security Agency Decision Maker, who considers all available evidence in relation to a claimants' claim before making a decision to entitlement. This will include information from the medical questionnaire, the healthcare professional's assessment, and any other relevant information provided by GPs and/or other medical professionals.

Concerns regarding the consideration of medical reports as part of a benefit claim or appeal should be addressed to the Department for Social Development, the Department responsible for providing the Medical Support Service, and the contracting body for ATOS Healthcare.

### **Foot and Ankle Surgery Services**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what impact changes to foot and ankle surgery services may have on the future viability of the training programme in orthopaedics.

**(AQW 22565/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is not envisaged that the proposed new podiatric surgical service will have any impact on the future viability of the orthopaedic training programme. The Health and Social Care Board has advised that the proposed new service will focus on the gap between the demand for foot and ankle surgery and the capacity to meet that demand i.e. it will deal with foot and ankle referrals which Trusts are currently unable to provide within existing capacity. I understand that similar podiatric services have been operating in other parts of the UK for some years without any detriment to the training of orthopaedic consultants.

The Health and Social Care Board has advised that the proposed new podiatric surgical service will be commissioned in an open and transparent manner involving all relevant stakeholders.

### **Thackeray Day Centre, Limavady**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services are currently provided at Thackeray Day Centre, Limavady.

**(AQW 22582/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Thackeray Day Care Centre provides a wide range of structured, varied and educational activities for clients with varying medical problems and disabilities, inclusive of depression and loneliness. The Day Centre offers clients the opportunity to integrate with a group who have common

problems, create new friendships and participate in various activities. Clients also receive meals supplied by the adjacent Thackeray residential home.

The Day Centre allows older people to remain in their own homes within the community and also provides respite services to family and friends who prefer to look after their loved ones at home. Ten places are offered on a Wednesday for older people with dementia.

Activities include: bread making; knitting; patchwork quilting; glass painting; gardening; flower arranging; reminiscence therapy, poetry, storytelling; crossword puzzles and bingo. There is also a computer suite available for use by the clients.

### **Proposed Children's Heart Surgery Facility, Dublin**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether his Department will provide any funds towards the proposed children's heart surgery facility in Dublin.

**(AQW 22604/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I assume this question relates to the recommendation from the Health and Social Care (HSCB) Board to commission paediatric congenital cardiac surgery services primarily from Dublin. I have received the recommendation from the HSC Board and once I make a decision on the preferred way forward for the future commissioning of Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Surgery and Interventional Cardiology for the population of Northern Ireland it will be for the commissioner, in discussion with the provider, to agree on the funding requirements for the service.

### **Closure of Residential Care Homes**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he first became aware that the Northern Health and Social Care Trust intended to close all of its residential care homes; and what action he took in response and when.

**(AQW 22618/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I was contacted and informed on Wednesday 24th April of the Northern Trust's detailed proposals and the intention that these would come before its Board on Thursday 25th April. It was not clear to me, nor to the Department, at that point, that most mainstream elderly statutory homes were likely to be under consultation for closure. This was only apparent as other Trusts came forward with proposals in the days immediately following.

On 3rd May 2013, I called a halt to the Trust consultation proposal process. I have asked the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB) to lead on a new, regionalised process of consultation, which will place at its core the principle of sensitivity to the needs and wishes of older people.

I have written to the residents in all the affected care homes including those residential care homes in the Northern Trust.

### **Residential Care Homes: Respite Beds and Intermediate Care Beds**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the extent of the use of (i) respite beds; and (ii) intermediate care beds in each residential care home, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22621/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not held centrally therefore it was requested from each of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts. Their responses are provided in Tables 1-5 overleaf.

Tables 1-5: Admissions to respite and intermediate care beds in residential care homes from 2008-2013

**TABLE 1****BELFAST HSC TRUST**

Residential Home	2012/13		2011/12		2010/11		2009/10		2008/09	
	Respite	Intermediate								
Chestnut Grove	11	132	16	69	29	43	41	28	-	-
Grovetree	0	0	13	67	32	89	17	92	-	-
Pine Lodge	9	123	8	76	13	83	6	70	-	-

Belfast HSC Trust also has 5 residential care homes for people with dementia; they provide mainly long term care with a small amount of respite. These homes are unaffected by change and are therefore not included.

**TABLE 2****NORTHERN HSC TRUST**

Residential Home	2012/13		2011/12		2010/11		2009/10		2008/09	
	Respite	Intermediate								
Clonmore	48	94	43	90	45	88	50	53	46	0
Lisgarel	102	37	75	32	61	48	40	73	53	0
Joymount	95	24	66	15	52	4	67	0	51	0
Rosedale	79	55	90	54	101	29	72	26	74	0
Pinewood	13	149	34	125	66	101	15	78	48	0
Roddens	87	43	44	33	39	5	24	0	21	0
Greenisland	52	0	41	0	45	0	36	0	36	0

Residential Home	2012/13		2011/12		2010/11		2009/10		2008/09	
	Respite	Intermediate								
Westlands	34	62	35	48	36	39	48	28	47	0
Rathmoyle	25	0	17	0	5	0	14	0	11	0

TABLE 3

## SOUTH EASTERN HSC TRUST

Residential Home	2012/13		2011/12		2010/11		2009/10		2008/09	
	Temporary Admissions									
Ardview House	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Drumlough House	129	104	125	125	125	125	125	125	96	96
Laurelhill House	33	30	25	25	25	25	25	21	20	20
Mount Alexander	42	60	60	76	76	76	61	61	52	52
Newcroft Lodge	33	38	49	49	44	44	44	44	44	44
Northfield House	123	99	115	115	181	181	181	181	192	192
Ravara House	91	264	184	184	185	185	185	185	136	136

South Eastern HSC Trust were unable to split the usage of respite and intermediate care beds as figures were recorded as either permanent or temporary admissions.

**TABLE 4****SOUTHERN HSC TRUST**

		2012/13	
Residential Home	Intermediate Care / Memory / Respite beds provided	Intermediate Care / Memory / Respite beds provided	Average occupancy (%)
Slieve Roe	5	5	50.3
Cloughreagh	5	5	62.6
Roxborough	6	6	38.9
Crozier	9	9	61.7
Skeagh	6	6	35

Southern HSC Trust were unable to provide the information requested for each of the last 5 years in the timeframe required.

**TABLE 5****WESTERN HSC TRUST**

Residential Home	2012/13		2011/12		2010/11		2009/10		2008/09	
	Respite	Intermediate								
Thackeray Place	45	13	61	3	53	4	32	7	60	10
Rectory Field	15	10	50	17	39	13	47	8	69	3
William Street	9	5	3	2	20	2	22	4	19	4
Greenfield	19	12	21	8	27	5	24	2	28	10
Seymour Gardens	46	-	43	-	40	-	51	-	51	-

Western HSC Trust only able to provide breakdown for care homes under the remit of Primary care and Older People's Services

" - " Indicates that figures were unavailable

## Residential Care Homes

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number of admissions to; and (ii) capacity of each residential care home, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22622/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not held centrally therefore it was requested from each of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts. Their responses are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Capacity and number of Admissions to each Residential Care Home

Residential Home	Capacity	No. of admissions				
		2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
<b>Belfast HSC Trust</b>						
Chestnut Grove	44	143	85	72	69	-
Grovetree	44	0	80	121	109	-
Pine Lodge	40	132	84	96	76	-
Belfast HSC Trust also has 11 residential care homes for which they have not provided information.						
<b>Northern HSC Trust</b>						
Clonmore	40	142	140	141	114	61
Lisgarel	40	139	109	122	117	60
Joymount	40	119	91	67	72	70
Rosedale	36	134	146	135	111	86
Pinewood	36	162	159	167	93	48
Roddens	29	130	80	47	26	27
Greenisland	30	52	49	54	50	48
Westlands	29	96	87	80	78	52
Rathmoyle	39	25	20	12	20	20
Northern HSC Trust also has 4 residential care homes for which they have not provided information.						
<b>South Eastern HSC Trust</b>						
Struell Lodge	7	2	3	0	1	1
Ardview House	39	6	3	4	5	8
Drumlough House	39	136	107	132	134	111
Laurelhill House	30	42	45	33	31	33
Mount Alexander	37	52	68	86	75	60
Newcroft Lodge	32	41	46	61	56	62
Northfield House	41	123	100	117	182	194
Ravara House	40	91	266	184	187	138
South Eastern HSC Trust also has 2 residential care homes for which they have not provided information.						

Residential Home	Capacity	No. of admissions				
		2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09
<b>Southern HSC Trust</b>						
Slieve Roe	17	-	-	-	-	-
Cloughreagh	23	-	-	-	-	-
Roxborough	30	-	-	-	-	-
Crozier	27	-	-	-	-	-
Skeagh	24	-	-	-	-	-
Southern HSC Trust unable to supply admissions figures broken down by individual care home.						
<b>Western HSC Trust</b>						
Thackeray Place	32	71	76	65	48	81
Rectory Field	35	38	91	78	74	92
William Street	27	19	6	27	29	30
Greenfield	34	41	43	43	36	53
Seymour Gardens	26	57	51	43	56	56
Ralph's Close	16	0	1	16	-	-
Creamery House	11	0	1	0	0	1
Mantlin Court	17	1	1	0	2	0
Respite Cottage	8	-	-	-	-	-
Beltany House	3	-	-	-	-	-

" - " Indicates that figures were unavailable

### Closure of Statutory Residential Homes

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, following the announcements by Health and Social Care Trusts of the closure of statutory residential homes, whether there have been any complaints lodged regarding the methods used by some staff in relaying the news of the Trust's intention to residents and relatives.

**(AQW 22631/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** At 20 May 2013, no formal complaints have been identified by the Western, Northern or Southern Trusts.

You will be aware that on 3 May 2013, I called a halt to the local Trusts' processes for closure of statutory residential homes for older people. The HSC Board will now lead a new process for consultation and engagement. I have recently written to residents in affected homes explaining to them what is now going to happen. I want the new process to be clear and not rushed.

### Western Health and Social Care Trust's Annual Budget

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the Western Health and Social Care Trust's annual budget.

**(AQW 22640/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The 2012/13 annual revenue budget for the Northern Health and Social Care Trust was £601.6m. In addition, the capital allocation for the same year was £35.4m.

### **Donaghadee Health Centre: Average Waiting Time**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the average waiting time for a GP appointment in Donaghadee Health Centre.

**(AQW 22643/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** GPs as independent contractors are responsible under the terms of the GMS Contract for the day to day management of their Practice, including the arrangement of appointments for their patients.

I understand that the average waiting time for a GP appointment in Donaghadee Health Centre is 4 days; the average waiting time for a specific GP is up to 2 weeks, however, an appointment will always be given on the same day for medical emergencies.

### **Cancellation of Appointments**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, pursuant to AQW 21799/11-15, why Health and Social Care Trusts do not compile information on the cancellation of appointments; and whether there are any plans for Trusts to compile this information in future to ensure better understanding, and better management of the costs associated with cancellations.

**(AQW 22665/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There was no consistent regional method for capturing information concerning the cancellation of surgical appointments through no fault of the patient over the period specified in AQW 21799/11-15. This is because individual Health and Social Care Trusts have been using different data recording methods. However, following the introduction of the regional Theatre Management System (TMS) and the establishment of clear and definitive guidance for all Trusts; consistent regional information, starting from 1 April 2013, on the reason for cancellation of all surgical procedures cancelled within 24 hours prior to the procedure will be available during Autumn 2013. This work will allow a better understanding of the impact of hospital cancelled surgical appointments.

### **Health and Social Care Trusts: Community Care Workers**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the changes to the fuel allowance and vehicle wear and tear rate received by community care workers in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last three years.

**(AQW 22684/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There have been no changes to the fuel allowance and vehicle wear and tear rates in the last three years. The same rates of reimbursement apply to all Agenda for Change staff across all Health and Social Care Trusts.

### **Community Care Workers: Fuel Allowance and Vehicle Wear and Tear**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the process in each Health and Social Care Trust for determining the rate received by community care workers for fuel allowance and vehicle wear and tear, including how any decision is agreed with stakeholders.

**(AQW 22687/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Community care workers are employed under Agenda for Change terms and conditions. HSC staff on Agenda for Change terms and conditions are paid business travel expenses in accordance with arrangements set out within Section 17 of the Agenda for Change Handbook. The current reimbursement system has different rates for infrequent ("standard") users or frequent ("regular") users. It also takes into account engine size, with an additional fixed lump sum payment for frequent users. These rates have remained unchanged since 2000.

From 1 July 2013 new mileage arrangements will be introduced. Under these new arrangements the rates will allow for increases in fuel costs and all the costs of keeping a car on the road, including petrol, repairs, insurance and road tax. A consistent rate will apply for frequent users and regular users and lump sum payments will no longer be payable.

This new National Agenda for Change Agreement was negotiated with the Main National Health Service Trade Unions. This included a four country wide consultation process in which HSC Organisations in partnership with local TUS leads participated.

### **Crozier House, Banbridge**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail his (i) short-term; and (ii) long-term plans for the future of Crozier House, Banbridge.

**(AQW 22689/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** On 3 May 2013 I called a halt to the local Trusts' processes for closure of statutory residential homes for older people. The HSC Board will now lead a new process for consultation and engagement. I have recently written to residents in Crozier House explaining to them what is now going to happen. I want the new process to be clear and not rushed.

Therefore, I'm sure you will appreciate that it would not be appropriate for me to comment further on an individual home at this stage.

### **Skeagh House, Dromore**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail his (i) short-term; and (ii) long-term plans for the future of Skeagh House, Dromore.

**(AQW 22690/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** On 3 May 2013, I called a halt to the local Trusts' processes for closure of statutory residential homes for older people. The HSC Board will now lead a new process for consultation and engagement. I have recently written to residents in Skeagh House explaining to them what is now going to happen. I want the new process to be clear and not rushed.

Therefore, I'm sure you will appreciate that it would not be appropriate for me to comment further on an individual home at this stage.

### **Statutory Care Home Staff**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many statutory care home staff have received, or been offered, redundancy packages in each of the last five years; and for what reason.

**(AQW 22694/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number of statutory care home staff who have received, or been offered, redundancy packages in each of the last five years is set out in the table below.

Year	Number of statutory care home staff who received, or have been offered, redundancy packages		Reason
	Offered	Received	
2008/2009	2	2	Reduced staff following public consultation on closure of two statutory homes for older people

Year	Number of statutory care home staff who received, or have been offered, redundancy packages		Reason
	Offered	Received	
2009/2010	11	11	-Re-organisation. -Number of permanent residents decreased which resulted in the need for a reduced staff compliment.
2010/2011	31	28	-Closure of 2 Homes. Number of permanent residents has decreased which has resulted in the need for a reduced staff compliment. -Re-organisation
2011/2012	75	15	-Closure of 1 home. The developments under supported living allowed for staff to be considered for VER/VR. -Re-organisation
2012/2013	69	39	Closure of 1 home. The developments under supported living allowed for staff to be considered for VER/VR.
<b>Total</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>95</b>	

### Health and Social Care Trusts: Chairperson and Chief Executive

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the primary legal duty of the (i) Chairperson; and (ii) Chief Executive of each of the Health and Social Care Trusts.

**(AQW 22707/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The roles and responsibilities of HSC Trust Chairpersons and Chief Executives are set out in each Trust's Management Statement. In addition they are also required to comply with the Code of Conduct and Code of Accountability issued by my Department in July 2012.

- (i) Health and Social Care Trust Chairpersons are Ministerial appointments to bring an independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance and executive appointments within the HSC Trusts. Their primary responsibility is to lead HSC Trusts in the strategic development of health and personal social services. In conjunction with their boards, Trust Chairs must develop clear objectives to achieve this; communicate these inside and outside the HSC Trust; and working, through the Trust management team, ensure the objectives are met. Ultimately a HSC Trust Chair should ensure their Trust performs its role efficiently and effectively.
- (ii) Chief Executives are appointed by each Health and Social Care Trust. In addition they are also designated as the Trust's Accounting Officer by my Department. As the Accounting Officer, they are personally responsible, through its Board, for safeguarding public funds of which they have charge; for ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds; and for the day-to-day operations and management of the Trust. In addition they must ensure that the Trust as a whole is run on the basis of the standards for governance, decision making and financial management set out in the Department of Finance and Personnel's guidance Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI).

## Paediatric Cardiac Surgeries

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to list the different types of paediatric cardiac surgeries that have taken place in Belfast, in the last three years; and to detail the cost of performing each of these surgeries.

**(AQW 22720/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The number and range of paediatric cardiac procedures undertaken by the Royal Victoria Hospital in 2010 to 2011 can be accessed from the National Institute for Cardiovascular Outcomes Research (NICOR) website via the following link:

[https://nicor4.nicor.org.uk/CHD/an\\_paeds.nsf/0/223262099644E89280257B330007A180?OpenDocument?Summary](https://nicor4.nicor.org.uk/CHD/an_paeds.nsf/0/223262099644E89280257B330007A180?OpenDocument?Summary)

Summary data for the 2011 to 2012 year can be accessed via the link below:

[https://nicor4.nicor.org.uk/CHD/an\\_paeds.nsf/0/AB848A64AF628BFA80257B330007A1E9?OpenDocument?Summary](https://nicor4.nicor.org.uk/CHD/an_paeds.nsf/0/AB848A64AF628BFA80257B330007A1E9?OpenDocument?Summary)

Preliminary unvalidated information for the 2012 to 2013 year indicates that there were 64 paediatric cardiac surgical procedures undertaken. These are listed at Annex A.

The latest available information (for the year 2011 to 2012) on the cost of paediatric cardiac surgery procedures carried out in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust would indicate an average cost of around £17,000 per procedure.

### ANNEX A

#### BELFAST HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST - PAEDIATRIC CARDIAC SURGICAL PROCEDURES UNDERTAKEN IN 2012 TO 2013 (AGED 15 YEARS AND UNDER) – PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Description	Number
Open correction of Patent Ductus Arteriosus	3
Repair of Defect of Atrioventricular Septum	36
Creation of Valved Cardiac Conduit	1
Plastic Repair of Aortic Valve	2
Revision of Plastic Repair of Valve of Heart	1
Open incision of Valve of Heart	1
Removal/Obstruction from Structure Adjacent/Valve Heart	1
Other Cardiac Pacemaker System	2
Creation of Shunt	1
Other Connection to Pulmonary Artery	2
Other Open Operations on Pulmonary Artery	2
Plastic Repair of Aorta	7
Other Operations on Chest Wall	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>

## Daycase Procedures

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number; and (ii) cost of daycase procedures conducted by (i) the Health Service; and (ii) an independent healthcare provider, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22753/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the number and cost of daycase procedures conducted by the Health Service in each of the last five years is detailed in the table below.

### (A) NUMBER AND COST OF DAYCASE PROCEDURES CONDUCTED BY THE HEALTH SERVICE

Financial Year	Total Number of Daycase Procedures	Total Spend (£m)
2007/08	152,074	89.3
2008/09	160,213	110.4
2009/10	151,989	107.2
2010/11	154,894	114.7
2011/12	169,970	114.6

**Source:** Hospital Inpatient System & Reference Cost Returns

It is not possible to detail the number and cost of daycase procedures conducted by an independent healthcare provider, in each of the last five years, as this would incur a disproportionate cost. Inpatient and daycase activity available from the Health and Social Care Board on independent healthcare providers is normally counted together as admitted care. However it is possible to provide information on the total activity and total spend on independent sector provision in each of the last five years and this is detailed in the following table.

### (B) NUMBER AND COST OF ALL ACTIVITY CONDUCTED BY INDEPENDENT HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Financial Year	Total Number of Inpatient & Day Cases	Number of Outpatients (New & Review)	Total Spend (£m)
2007/08	10,997	24,905	40.1
2008/09	23,693	42,758	60.0
2009/10	17,602	43,690	57.5
2010/11	7,496	27,780	24.7
2011/12	15,558	48,278	52.6

**Source:** HSC Board

## Statutory Care Home Admissions

**Mr Nesbitt** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the total number of new admissions to statutory care homes, in each Health and Social Care Trust, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22755/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not held centrally and was therefore requested from each of the five Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts. Their responses are contained in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1.**

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>No. of new admissions</b>				
	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2008/09</b>
Belfast	275	249	289	254	-
Northern	999	881	825	681	472
South Eastern*	40	40	43	53	64
Southern	-	-	-	-	-
Western	169	216	213	187	256

\* Permanent admissions only

" - " Indicates when a figure was not available.

The Southern HSC Trust were unable to verify the figures required for this response and have therefore not been included.

### **Fluoride in Water**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he has spoken to his Executive colleagues about adding fluoride to the water supplies; and to detail the range of feedback he has received.

**(AQW 22763/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am still considering my position on fluoridation of the water supply in Northern Ireland. This has included some early discussions with fellow Executive Ministers on the matter.

I recognise that, across the community, there are strongly held views on the issue of water fluoridation, both for and against. I am mindful that Northern Ireland children have the worst oral health in the United Kingdom and the majority have experienced dental decay, and I will continue to consider and discuss this issue.

### **Health and Social Care Trusts: Travel Allowances**

**Mr McGlone** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what Equality and Rural Proofing has been carried out on proposals to change travel allowances for employees of Health and Social Care Trusts.

**(AQW 22789/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** This is a change to the National Agenda for Change Agreement and consequently the Equality Impact assessment was carried out by the Mileage Sub-group of the NHS Staff Council.

### **Northern Health and Social Care Trust Papers**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail to when (i) he; (ii) his Special Advisor; (iii) senior members of the Health and Social Care Board; and (iv) senior officials in his Department, first became aware of Northern Health and Social Care Trust papers entitled (a) Trust Residential Homes for Older People Transforming Your Care; (b) Our plans for older people's services, and (iii) Proposal for the future of statutory residential care for older people.

**(AQW 22814/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I was contacted and informed on Wednesday 24th April of the Northern Trust's detailed proposals and the intention that these would come before its Board on Thursday 25th April. It was not clear to me, nor to the Department, at that point, that most mainstream elderly statutory homes were likely to be under consultation for closure. This was only apparent as other Trusts came forward with proposals in the days immediately following.

John Compton indicated at the Health Committee meeting held on 9 May, that the HSCB were informed in Mid-April about the NHSC's intention to seek approval at their Trust Board to embark on consultation about their proposals for statutory residential care for older people. Draft content of the paper "Proposal for the Future of Statutory Residential Care for Older People" was informally shared with the HSCB on 12 April 2013 and again on 17 April 2013.

On the afternoon of 19 April 2013, senior members of the Health and Social Care Board were formally informed, via an email from Sean Donaghy, former NHSC Chief Executive, about the intention to table the document "Proposal for the Future of Statutory Residential Care for Older People" at the NHSC Board on 25 April 2013.

The HSCB was provided final versions of the papers "Our plans for older people's services", and "Proposal for the future of statutory residential care for older people Consultation Document" on 24 April 2013.

Neither the Department nor the HSCB have any knowledge of a document entitled Trust Residential Homes for Older People Transforming Your Care.

### **Closure of Residential Care Homes**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what the financial cost will be of his decision to change the consultation process on the closure of residential care homes. **(AQW 22823/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** There is no doubt that delaying change can have financial consequences. By not changing the model of care within a reasonable timeframe less revenue resources can be moved from the statutory residential care home sector to improve services and support in the community.

However, as I have recently called a halt to the proposed consultation on the closure of local residential homes within certain Trusts, and asked the HSC Board to lead on a regional oversight process that adheres to best practice in consultation, engagement and change management, it is not possible at this stage to identify the financial cost of my decision.

### **Pinewood Residential Home, Ballymena**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when the Northern Health and Social Care Trust first decided to prevent or discourage admissions to Pinewood residential care home in Ballymena. **(AQW 22878/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Northern Trust has been refocusing the residential service in a number of homes for some years. This has been to allow the development of intermediate care beds. For Pinewood the process began in 2007. This has developed to the point that the home has currently 15 beds dedicated to intermediate care. In addition there are a further 2 respite beds.

### **Pinewood Residential Home, Ballymena**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety on what basis was it decided in May 2013 that television crews and journalists would not be allowed on the property of Pinewood residential care home in Ballymena. **(AQW 22879/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Health and social care facilities are for the support and treatment of frail or vulnerable people and as such are not public spaces. It is Northern Trust policy that journalists seek permission to enter, interview or film on Trust premises. The Trust always tries to facilitate such requests in a way that protects patient and staff confidentiality, while supporting the media.

In line with the Trust's policy on 'Making Information available to the Public', enquiries from journalists/reporters should be directed through the Corporate Communications Department.

## Pinewood Residential Home, Ballymena

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the number of referrals to the Pinewood residential home in Ballymena, in each of the last ten years.

**(AQW 22880/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not collected centrally and was requested from the Northern Health and Social Care (HSC) Trust. Their response is provided below.

Information on the number of referrals to Pinewood residential home is not available however information on the number of admissions is provided in Table 1 below.

**TABLE 1: TOTAL ADMISSIONS TO PINEWOOD RESIDENTIAL HOME**

Year	Total Admissions
1st April 2008 – 31st March 2009	48
1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010	93
1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011	167
1st April 2011 – 31st March 2012	159
1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013	162
<b>Total</b>	<b>629</b>

**Source:** Northern HSC Trust

Information prior to 2008 could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

## Pinewood Residential Home, Ballymena

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether members of staff at Pinewood residential home in Ballymena were prevented from speaking to the media on the premises in May 2013; and to outline the reasons for this.

**(AQW 22881/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Staff at Pinewood Residential Home were advised that they could do media interviews but that these should take place outside of the unit in order to minimise disruption to services and any stress and anxiety which may be caused to residents and others within the unit itself.

In line with the Northern Trust's policy on 'Making Information Available to the Public', enquiries from journalists/reporters should be directed through the Corporate Communications Department. Media representatives cannot film within Trust facilities without prior permission from the Corporate Communications Department.

## Pinewood Residential Home, Ballymena

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety when he plans to meet with the residents and their relatives in Pinewood residential home, Ballymena.

**(AQW 22882/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have asked the HSC Board to lead on a regional oversight process that adheres to best practice in consultation and change management. I am confident that the oversight arrangements which I am putting in place will assure us that residents views and wishes are being heard and accommodated where reasonably possible.

Thus, I have no plans to meet, at this time, to discuss any of the statutory homes which may be subject to this process until any consultation has run its course and the responses have been analysed.

## Suicide and Self Harm in Newry and Armagh

**Ms Fearon** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what services and resources are in place to tackle suicide and self harm in Newry and Armagh, particularly age-appropriate facilities for young people.

**(AQW 22951/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Suicide is an issue for all age groups. Those at greatest risk of suicide are men between 35 and 54; however, self-harm is more prevalent amongst young people.

Residents and groups in the Newry and Armagh area have access to suicide prevention services that are regionally available. These include: Lifeline; Card Before You Leave (CBYL); CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services); bereavement support and self-harm counselling and support.

In addition, the following range of suicide and self harm prevention resources and services are available in the Southern area:

- Suicide Prevention Co-ordinator;
- Training for “gatekeepers” such as teachers, youth workers, primary care staff, and sports coaches;
- Counselling and complementary therapies;
- Crisis response;
- Support programmes for vulnerable groups;
- Self-help materials.

Local organisation such as: Action Mental Health, PIPS Newry and Mourne, Rainbow, Magnet Centre, Opportunity Youth, Zest and Contact NI deliver specific initiatives to address the needs of young people. These include:

- Drugs, alcohol and sexual health awareness sessions
- School-based counselling
- A One Stop Shop – health and wellbeing service
- Youth Mentoring Services
- A Nurse led clinic in Newry FE College.

## Slievemore Nursing Home, Derry

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he will meet urgently with the residents of Slievemore Nursing Home, Derry.

**(AQW 22953/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I have arranged to meet relatives of the residents of Slievemore nursing unit on Monday 20th May in Parliament Buildings.

## Protection of Elderly and Vulnerable People

**Ms Maeve McLaughlin** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether he plans to review the legislation relating to the protection of elderly and vulnerable people in care facilities.

**(AQW 22954/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My department, in conjunction with other agencies, continues to develop a range of measures aimed at improving safeguards for all vulnerable adults, including elderly and vulnerable people in care facilities.

Jointly, with the Department of Justice, my department is leading the development of an overarching adult safeguarding policy framework. Subject to the outcome of consultation on the policy framework, we will consider to what extent the policy will need to be underpinned by legislation, similar to that in place or proposed in other parts of the UK.

There are a range of legislative safeguards already in place, which are aimed at providing improved protections for those who are resident in, or attend, care facilities. The Residential Care Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, the Nursing Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 and the Day Care Setting Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 require criminal record checks to be carried out on staff working in care facilities, including a check of the list of those barred from working in specified activities with adults by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, the DBS makes barring decisions based on information provided to it by employers and a range of other bodies. Individuals found to have harmed a child or vulnerable adult, or placed them at risk of harm, will be considered by the DBS for inclusion in its barred lists. This includes individuals working in care facilities, found to have engaged in harmful behaviours.

We are in the process of implementing the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, which was amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, following a review of the safeguarding scheme established by the 2007 Order. At this stage, we have no further plans to review existing legislation.

### **Accident and Emergency Department Referrals**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail, for each Accident and Emergency department (A & E), the (i) longest wait by a patient between referral from A & E to admission to a ward; (ii) the average wait between referral from A & E to admission to a ward; and (iii) the number of patients who had to wait longer than the target waiting time for admission to a ward in (a) December 2012; (b) January 2013; (iii) February 2013; and (iv) March 2013.

**(AQW 23029/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** It is assumed that this question refers to the time patients spend waiting in emergency care departments to be admitted to a ward after a decision to admit has been made.

Information on the time between a decision to admit a patient and their admission to a ward is not routinely collected by the Department and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

My Department does not have a separate waiting time target for the period between the decision to admit a patient and their admission to a ward, but has a Ministerial target for emergency care waiting times stating that “95% of patients attending any Type 1, 2 or 3 departments are either treated and discharged home, or admitted, within four hours of their arrival in the department, and; no patient attending any A&E department should wait longer than 12 hours either to be treated and discharged home, or admitted.”

Information on the performance by each emergency care department against the Ministerial target is published on a quarterly basis, and is available to view or download from:

[http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats\\_research/hospital-stats/emergency\\_care-3.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats/emergency_care-3.htm)

### **Accident and Emergency Department Referrals**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what is the target time a patient should wait for admission to a ward after a referral from an Accident and Emergency department.

**(AQW 23030/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Department has not set a separate target waiting time for the period between the decision to admit a patient and their admission to a ward. The Department’s target for emergency care is that 95% of patients attending any Type 1, 2 or 3 Emergency Department are either treated

and discharged home, or admitted, within 4 hours of their arrival in the department; and no patient attending any Emergency Department should wait longer than 12 hours.

### **Temporary or Agency Staff**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) number of temporary or agency staff employed by the (a) Northern Health and Social Care Trust; and (b) Western Health and Social Care Trust at each grade; and (ii) length of time these temporary staff have been employed.

**(AQW 23035/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested in relation to temporary staff is provided in the tables below. This has been obtained from the Northern and Western HSC Trusts and has not been validated by the Department. The same information in relation to agency staff is not available.

**(A) NORTHERN TRUST – NUMBER OF TEMPORARY STAFF AND LENGTH OF TIME EMPLOYED AT MAY 2013**

Length of time employed	0 and up to 3 months		Over 3 and up to 6 months		Over 6 and up to 9 months		Over 9 and up to 12 months		Over 1 year and up to 18 months		Over 18 months and up to 2 years		Over 2 years	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Occupational Family														
Admin & Clerical	21	16.32	29	23.45	28	22.45	21	18.13	60	53.44	21	17.25	70	56.28
Estates Services	1	1.00	0	0	0	0	2	2.00	0	0	0	0	0	0
Support Services	0	0	0	0	2	1.53	2	1.20	0	0	4	2.09	5	2.97
Qualified Nursing	21	18.22	40	32.39	6	5.24	6	4.87	10	7.93	4	2.55	15	10.54
Nursing Support	3	3.00	7	6.32	3	2.28	1	0.60	5	4.54	2	2.00	0	0
Qualified Social Work	2	2.00	4	4.00	4	3.50	4	3.00	4	3.40	1	1.00	7	6.50
Social Work Support/ Social Care	15	12.34	16	14.24	13	10.80	6	4.59	10	7.34	10	6.85	48	36.04
Professional & Technical	31	27.09	29	26.39	21	17.38	8	6.74	21	19.31	7	4.84	7	5.57
Medical & Dental	4	2.80	1	1.00	4	4.00	0	0	5	1.60	1	0.40	5	1.89

**Source:** Northern HSC Trust

**(B) NORTHERN TRUST NOTE: ROTATIONAL DOCTORS IN TRAINING AND BANK STAFF ARE EXCLUDED.(B) WESTERN TRUST – NUMBER OF TEMPORARY STAFF AND LENGTH OF TIME EMPLOYED AT MAY 2013**

Length of time employed	0 and up to 3 months		Over 3 and up to 6 months		Over 6 and up to 9 months		Over 9 and up to 12 months		Over 1 year and up to 18 months		Over 18 months and up to 2 years		Over 2 years	
	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE	HC	WTE
Occupational Family														
Admin & Clerical	21	19.46	23	22.30	26	25.14	8	8.00	41	38.53	25	21.88	40	35.71
Estates Services	13	13.00	1	1.00	3	3.00	0	0	0	0	1	1.00	0	0
Support Services	3	2.20	5	4.78	4	3.18	6	4.02	4	1.86	3	1.93	16	12.58
Qualified Nursing	37	32.08	14	13.17	40	38.53	8	8.00	21	18.28	18	15.46	23	20.48
Nursing Support	9	8.07	10	9.22	0	0	4	3.43	3	2.80	0	0	10	9.15
Qualified Social Work	2	1.50	2	2.00	3	3.00	3	3.00	2	2.00	10	10.00	18	16.76
Social Work Support/ Social Care	8	6.00	10	9.14	9	6.75	2	1.80	11	7.94	8	5.30	21	17.15
Professional & Technical	10	9.60	19	18.19	17	17.00	6	6.00	16	15.38	7	6.50	11	10.84
Medical & Dental	1	1.00	5	4.70	3	2.10	5	3.75	4	3.20	10	10.00	4	4.00

**Source:** Western HSC Trust

Western Trust Notes:

- 1 Rotational doctors in training and bank staff are excluded.
- 2 Western Trust has noted that individuals on waiting lists for particular permanent posts may have transferred between more than one temporary post within the Trust (where appropriate) until the waiting lists expire.

### Hospital 'Never Events'

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the 'never events' that have occurred in each hospital, in each of the last five years, including the nature of the event.

**(AQW 23038/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Incidents such as those defined by the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) as 'Never Events' are captured in Northern Ireland under the Health and Social Care Board's Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) Reporting System criteria.

The information requested is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

### Cancelled Hospital Appointments

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many hospital appointments in the Western Health and Social Care Trust have been cancelled by consultants in each of the last three years; and to detail the cost to the Trust of these cancellations.

**(AQW 23044/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Quarterly Outpatient Activity Return (QOAR), which is the present methodology for the collection of consultant-led outpatient activity, was introduced by my Department's Hospital Information Branch from the beginning of 2008/09, as a direct result of a comprehensive review of collection of outpatient activity undertaken in 2007/08. Primarily the methodology changed from the reporting of the number of clinics held and cancelled to the reporting of the number of appointments held and cancelled.

Information on the number of hospital cancellations, in HSC Trusts in Northern Ireland, is collected and published broken down by reason for cancellation.

The variable on the Patient Administration System (PAS) that provides the breakdown of the variable 'reason for cancellation' was not a mandatory field until March 2013 and as such the rate of coverage varies across Trusts.

It is advised that when looking at the figures associated with 'reason for cancellation' that they should add together the categories of 'consultant not available', 'medical staff not available' and 'consultant cancelled appointment' to allow for variances in recording practices.

The number of appointments cancelled by hospitals in each of the requested years is shown in the tables below, broken down by reason for cancellation.

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by Western Trust		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Consultant not available <sup>1</sup>	10,621	7,690	9,258
Medical staff not available <sup>1</sup>	1,506	1,720	1,249
Patient treated elsewhere	4,380	2,069	537
Consultant cancelled appointment <sup>1</sup>	9,314	9,430	8,333

Reason for cancellation	Number of consultant led outpatient appointments cancelled by Western Trust		
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Appointment brought forward	3,145	1,613	1,744
Appointment put back	7,539	3,124	3,087
Cancelled following validation/audit	20	3	4
Administrative error by hospital/GP	3,363	1,682	2,240
Hospital transport not available	19	31	27
Cancelled by hospital in order to rebook as alternative booking method	N/A	17	111
No reason or incorrect reason recorded	3,050	2,193	1,976
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,957</b>	<b>29,572</b>	<b>28,566</b>

1 It is advisable to add these categories together when using the data.

N/A – Information not available prior to 2011/12

The cost to the Western Trust of providing an outpatient consultant-led appointment in 2011/12 ranges from £63 to £477. It is not advisable to multiply the total number of hospital cancellations by the range in cost. Even if a hospital cancels an appointment, resources may be reallocated elsewhere, therefore it may not result in a loss of the full unit cost.

## Northern Health and Social Care Trust

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety why the Northern Health and Social Care Trust does not have a recruitment campaign for carers centred on unemployed people within this area.

**(AQW 23046/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Recruitment matters are for individual Trusts to address based on service needs and available resources. The Northern Health and Social Care Trust has advised me that a Trust wide recruitment drive for Homecare workers took place in April 2013.

Advertisements were placed in all local papers across the Trust area including the East Antrim Times, resulting in 81 applications being received from across the Trust, with 11 of these from the East Antrim area.

A previous recruitment drive was carried out in November 2012 when the same advertisement procedures were followed and 92 applications were received with 7 of these from the East Antrim area.

## Glenmona Resource Centre, Cushendall

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety whether the Northern Health and Social Care Trust has any plans to use the Glenmona Resource Centre, Cushendall as a day centre for people who attended the Rathmoyle Day Centre.

**(AQW 23047/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** I am advised that Rathmoyle Resource (Day) Centre and Residential Home are situated on the same site at Mary Street in Ballycastle. There is a proposal to replace the Rathmoyle residential unit with a new- build supported living complex.

You will be aware that I called a halt to the previous consultation process in the Trusts on the closure of statutory residential care homes for older people. The HSC Board will now lead on the coordination of a new process for consultation, communication and engagement at local level.

I expect The Trust will continue to engage with all service users, their families and carers to ensure that the daily and long term care needs of the service users are met.

### **Rathmoyle Residential and Day Care Facility**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the closure of the Rathmoyle Residential and Day Care facility; what assurances he can give that the centre's clients will have their assessments and forward work programmes for 2014 completed.

**(AQW 23048/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** You will be aware that I called a halt to the previous consultation process in the Trusts on the closure of statutory residential care homes for older people. The HSC Board will now lead on the coordination of a new process for consultation, communication and engagement at local level.

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust advise that it is aware of the importance of day care services to service users and their carers. It will ensure that the service users who attend Rathmoyle Resource Centre will continue to have their assessed needs for day care met, whatever may be proposed in the future.

The Trust will fully engage with all service users and their families to meet the future day care needs of each person.

### **Prostate Cancer Screenings**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people aged 60 years or over, in (i) the Glens; and (ii) East Antrim, were screened for prostate cancer in each year since 2009, broken down by electoral ward; and what percentage of the tests were positive.

**(AQW 23049/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** This information is not available as there is currently no population based screening programme for Prostate cancer in Northern Ireland.

### **Cardiac Surgery: Dublin**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the projected costs of cardiac surgery for children treated in Dublin, including accommodation costs for parents.

**(AQW 23109/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The projected costs of providing paediatric cardiac surgery in Dublin including accommodation arrangements and associated costs cannot be estimated at this time. Once I make a decision on the preferred way forward for the future commissioning of Paediatric Congenital Cardiac Surgery and Interventional Cardiology for the population of Northern Ireland it will be for the Health and Social Care Board, in discussion with the provider, to agree on the future funding requirements for the service whether it is to be located in Dublin or an alternative location

### **Cardiac Surgery: Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.**

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current costs of cardiac surgery for children treated in the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

**(AQW 23111/11-15)**

**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 the amount of funding allocated for paediatric cardiac surgery in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in 2011/12 (the latest information available) was £1.664 million.

## Ethnic Minority Backgrounds

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what support is in place for the families of employees of his Department from an ethnic minority background; and what qualifications are required by the people who provide this support.

**(AQW 23117/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Department utilises a range of central NICS initiatives and related services which provide various types of support to staff and their families, regardless of ethnic background.

Such initiatives and services include:

Welfare Support Service- Welfare Officers provide a confidential consultation service to members of staff who experience problems of a personal, domestic or work-related nature. They are also involved in helping staff return to work following sickness absence.

Employee Support Programme - Carecall is contracted to provide an independent and confidential counselling support service to all NICS staff as well as to their immediate family members and children. This service is freely available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Counsellors are professionally qualified through accreditation with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Work-Life Balance - The Department recognises that a significant number of employees have (or are likely to have) caring responsibilities towards one or more members of their family and is supportive of the range of NICS corporate policies and provisions which aim to help employees, balance those commitments with the demands of work. Examples include flexible working options and special leave provisions.

Salary Sacrifice Scheme- In addition, the Northern Ireland Civil Service operates a Salary Sacrifice Childcare Voucher Scheme to assist staff with the costs of registered childcare. Under this arrangement staff agree to sacrifice a proportion of their salary in order to receive vouchers that are used to pay for registered childcare.

The Charity for Civil Servants - This charity provides support, advice and direct financial assistance to all current, former and retired Civil Servants and their financial dependants.

Workplace Health Improvement Programme

The Department delivers a widely regarded health improvement programme available to all staff, offering support and advice on many items which in turn can be transferred back into the home environment.

## People Diagnosed with Dementia

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what plans his Department has to cater for an increase in the number of people diagnosed with dementia.

**(AQW 23128/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As you will be aware I published a Dementia Strategy for Northern Ireland in November 2011. The HSC Board and Public Health Agency jointly lead a regional group, which includes people with dementia and their carers, to oversee implementation of the Dementia Strategy and its recommendations across NI. The group has drawn up an Action Plan which is used to report progress in the implementation of the strategy to the Department. The action plan contains 45 initiatives which are being progressed under various headings such as Reducing the Risk or Delaying the Onset of Dementia, Raising Awareness, Promoting Early Assessment and Diagnosis, Supporting People with Dementia and Supporting Carers.

The HSCB has allocated £1m recurrent funding to help with the implementation.

## Epilepsy

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many residents in the Foyle constituency are diagnosed with epilepsy.

**(AQW 23166/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Under the Quality & Outcomes Framework (QOF), GPs maintain a register of the number of patients aged 18 and over who are currently on drug treatment for epilepsy. As at 31 March 2013, there were 1,018 patients on the epilepsy registers of GPs located in Foyle constituency.

This figure has been determined based on the constituency in which the GP practice is located; it should be noted that patients may not reside in the constituency in which their practice is located.

## Fluoride in Water

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what consideration is being given to increasing the number of areas in which fluoride is added to water.

**(AQW 23188/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Fluoride is not currently added to the water supplies in Northern Ireland.

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.

## Use of Electronic Cigarettes

**Mr Elliott** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for his assessment of the need for legislation on the use of electronic cigarettes to prevent nicotine addiction among young people.

**(AQW 23202/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The use of electronic cigarettes has been growing and, as these products are currently unregulated, there are justifiable concerns around their safety.

In 2010, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) sought views on whether to bring all nicotine containing products, including electronic cigarettes, within the medicines licensing regime. MHRA recently undertook further scientific and market research to explore levels of nicotine with significant physiological effect and to gain a better understanding of the impact of potential regulation of these products on public health and on business. A final decision on how electronic cigarettes should be regulated is expected to be announced by MHRA later this year.

I can confirm that there are currently no plans to introduce legislation on the use of electronic cigarettes and I intend to await the results of the MHRA research before determining my Department's policy on these products, both in terms of their potential to contribute to smoking cessation, and their safety.

## Smoking Cessation Courses

**Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the (i) 4 week; and (ii) 52 week success rates of the smoking cessation courses, broken down by (a) Health and Social Care Trust area; (b) type of service provider; and (c) type of medication prescribed.

**(AQW 23208/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on smoking cessation courses is supplied to the Department by the Public Health Agency from the Stop Smoking Services Electronic Monitoring System. The latest year where both 4-week and 52-week quit rates are available is 2010/11.

**(A) 4-WEEK AND 52-WEEK SUCCESS RATES OF SMOKING CESSATION COURSES BY HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST – 2010/11 REGISTRATIONS**

<b>Health and Social Care Trust Area</b>	<b>Service uptake</b>	<b>4-week success rate (%)</b>	<b>52-week success rate (expressed as % of those that quit at 4 weeks)</b>
Belfast	8,644	49.0	29.7
Northern	9,254	51.8	27.7
Southern Eastern	5,009	50.5	28.0
Southern	5,583	54.9	38.3
Western	6,118	57.7	40.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,608</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>32.4</b>

**(B) 4-WEEK AND 52-WEEK SUCCESS RATES OF SMOKING CESSATION COURSES BY TYPE OF SERVICE PROVIDER – 2010/11 REGISTRATIONS**

<b>Type of Service Provider</b>	<b>Service uptake</b>	<b>4-week success rate (%)</b>	<b>52-week success rate (expressed as % of those that quit at 4 weeks)</b>
Pharmacy	23,107	50.6	29.1
GP	7,017	49.6	31.1
Community & other	1,765	63.0	36.2
Hospital	2,719	69.0	53.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,608</b>	<b>52.5</b>	<b>32.4</b>

**(C) 4-WEEK AND 52-WEEK SUCCESS RATES OF SMOKING CESSATION COURSES BY TYPE OF MEDICATION PRESCRIBED – 2010/11 REGISTRATIONS**

<b>Type of Medication Prescribed</b>	<b>Service uptake</b>	<b>4-week success rate (%)</b>	<b>52-week success rate (expressed as % of those that quit at 4 weeks)</b>
Nicotine Replacement Therapy	25,652	61.6	31.6
Varenicline	3,114	73.6	34.7
Bupropion	116	56.9	24.2

**Source:** Public Health Agency – Stop Smoking Services Electronic Monitoring System.

**Notes:**

- 1 Service uptake, 4-week and 52-week quit rates for 2010/11 registrations are taken from a data download during the period July-August 2012.

- 2 4-week quit rates for each HSC Trust are calculated using a baseline of service uptake for the relevant HSC Trust area.
- 3 52-week quit rates for each HSC Trust are calculated using a baseline of only those clients applicable for 52-week review (i.e. only those clients who quit at 4 weeks and continue being assessed within the Stop Smoking Services) for the relevant HSCT area.
- 4 The Stop Smoking Services electronic monitoring system asks providers to record whether specific medications (i.e. NRT, Varenicline or Bupropion) were received by the client. While the successful 4-week and 52-week quit rates for each medication have been shown above, it should be noted that although a client may have received the indicated medication, it is not an indication of whether the client has used the medication. The use of data on medication prescribed in relation to quit rates is therefore cautioned.

## People Diagnosed with MS

**Mr A Maginness** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, in light of the fact that Northern Ireland has one of the highest rates of Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in the world, what (i) his Department; and (ii) health agencies are doing to ensure that all people diagnosed with MS are receiving up to date and effective treatment based on clinical need.

**(AQW 23225/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** My Department, the Health and Social Care Board, and HSC Trusts are committed to ensuring that patients with MS in Northern Ireland have timely access to a range of effective, evidence-based, specialist treatments.

Following diagnosis, patients have access to the full range of core community health and social care services across Northern Ireland, including physiotherapy, neurophysiotherapy, occupational therapy, community nursing, speech and language therapy, dietetics, social work/social care, domiciliary care, day care and day time opportunities and respite care, including specialist respite care.

Patients with MS have access to a range of specialist MS drugs from a significant budget allocation of over £9m and Northern Ireland has the highest uptake rate for specialist drugs in the UK, with over 1,350 people currently on active treatment.

The Health and Social Care Board works closely with MS clinicians to support effective planning and commissioning of new treatments, and investment in 2013/14 will be in line with needs identified through this process.

## Tourette's Syndrome

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in each constituency are diagnosed with Tourette's Syndrome.

**(AQW 23244/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Information on the number of people in each constituency diagnosed with Tourette's Syndrome is not available.

## People Diagnosed with MS

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many people in each Health and Social Care Trust area are diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis.

**(AQW 23247/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** 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.

Admissions and Individuals Admitted to HSC Hospitals in Northern Ireland in 2011/12 where a diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis was recorded are shown in the table below.

<b>HSC Trust</b>	<b>Admissions</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
Belfast	631	272
South Eastern	257	156
Northern	395	184
Southern	507	203
Western	311	156
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,101</b>	<b>971</b>

**Source:** Hospital Inpatient System

### **Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the investigations into irregularities at the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.

**(AQO 4083/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Significant progress has been made in taking forward the recommendations from the recent investigation reports which I published on 16 October 2012. The recommendations from the DSD Corporate Investigations Unit report of 16 April 2013 are also being considered. The PAC held an evidence session on NIFRS on 24 April 2013 and I await the finalisation of their report.

### **Emergency Departments: Belfast**

**Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the response to the Health and Social Care Board consultation on the future configuration of emergency services in Belfast.

**(AQO 4075/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Health and Social Care Board, working in collaboration with relevant Trusts, was asked to develop options for the configuration of emergency department services in the greater Belfast area, to lead on the consultation process and subsequent analysis of responses, and to develop a final proposal for consideration by my Department. The public consultation on the options ended on 10th May 2013. Forty responses were received by the closing date and the Health and Social Care Board is currently considering the responses. I expect an announcement to be made later this year on the outcome of the consultation and the decision on the future configuration of this service.

### **Transforming Your Care: Older People**

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the range of services and social care that will be available in the community for older people as a result of the implementation of Transforming Your Care.

**(AQO 4076/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The driving force behind Transforming Your Care is to make home into the “hub” of care for older people. Individuals will be supported to stay in their own homes and, where necessary, they will have access to local health and care facilities.

Services include a focus on healthy aging, prevention, and community based approaches to early intervention and long term condition management. For example, individuals may benefit from a falls prevention programme, or a short re-ablement programme following an acute hospital admission, to help them to regain their confidence and independence at home.

I envisage individuals having more control over their treatment, care and support and having more information available to them to assist them to make informed choices about their life. This will include a focus on self directed support; for example, through a greater focus on personal budgets for care services.

I recognise that some older people will need more intensive support but, where possible, I want this to be within a more socially inclusive model of a care. That is why having greater access to day opportunities, domiciliary care, short break/respite services, intermediate care, assistive technology, housing adaptations and supported living facilities are important for the independence of individuals, and for the wellbeing of carers.

I also want to emphasise that where older people require residential or nursing home care, this will be available to them to meet their assessed needs.

### **Psychiatric Intensive Care: Southern Health and Social Care Trust**

**Mr Anderson** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety what action is being taken to improve the facilities for psychiatric intensive care services in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area.

**(AQO 4077/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The Bluestone Unit at Craigavon Area Hospital opened in 2008 and included 74 inpatient beds and a 20 place day hospital. Two new 10 bed units at Bluestone have now been approved at a cost of £6.14 million. These units will be separate single storey stand-alone extensions: a 10 Bed Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit and a 10 Bed Adult Learning Disability Unit and will enable patients located at St Luke's to relocate to Bluestone. This will achieve the centralisation of all acute mental health inpatient beds on one site at Bluestone as envisaged for acute mental health inpatient services in the Bamford report.

### **Acute Mental Health Services: Omagh**

**Mr McElduff** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to outline the future of acute mental health services in Omagh.

**(AQO 4078/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** In the Transforming Your Care document 'Vision to Action', it was proposed to locate the second of two acute mental health units within the Western Trust area in either Omagh or Enniskillen. As the consultation regarding Transforming Your Care produced a mixed reaction to the siting of the second unit I asked that a business case be developed that will fully explore all options. I understand that the Health and Social Care Board will commission the options appraisal. Therefore, no decision has been reached regarding the future provision of acute mental health services in Omagh.

Meanwhile, the Western Trust has developed a range of acute mental health services in Omagh including acute inpatient services with an integrated psychiatric intensive care unit and a Crisis Response Home Treatment Team.

### **Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast: Building Project**

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for an update on the Phase 2 building project at the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast.

**(AQO 4079/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** As you are aware the handover of the Phase 2 Critical Care Building was delayed by the discovery of corrosion in the closed water systems, and that following an extensive testing process, the contractor has confirmed that all five closed water systems will be removed and replaced.

The contractor has commenced the removal of these installations and replacement of them with new pipe-work. Unfortunately this involves a considerable amount of work and the anticipated completion date remains at the end of February 2014.

## Nursing Homes

**Mrs D Kelly** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many statutory nursing homes will close in each Health and Social Care Trust area, within the next 12 months.

**(AQO 4081/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** HSC organisations do not deliver elderly nursing home provision “in house” in normal circumstances. Such provision is contracted from the independent and voluntary sector in accordance with client need.

However, there are a number of statutory elderly residential care homes in Northern Ireland. On 3rd May 2013, I called a halt to the proposed consultation on the closure of local residential homes within certain Trusts, and asked the HSC Board to lead on a regional oversight process that adheres to best practice in consultation, engagement and change management.

I want this new consultation process to be clear and not rushed so that individuals, families and staff can have their say, and be listened to. In such circumstances, it is not possible for me to say how many statutory residential homes will close.

It should be noted that there are three statutory nursing homes in the learning disability programme of care.

## Epilepsy

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how many children under the age of 18 years in the Western Health and Social Care Trust area are diagnosed with epilepsy.

**(AQW 23329/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** The information requested is not available.

## Health Service: Economy

**Mr Newton** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety how the Health Service can help to drive the local economy.

**(AQO 4082/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Health and Social Care has a significant role to play in supporting economic growth. It was in recognition of the important linkages between the health sector and the economy that the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Arlene Foster and I agreed a Memorandum of Understanding on Connected Health and Prosperity in December 2011. The MOU sets out a number of priority areas which have formed the basis for a significant programme of work between my Department and Invest NI over the past 18 months, focusing on research and development, the establishment of a Connected Health Ecosystem and international collaboration.

In February this year my colleague Minister Foster and I also established an Economy and Jobs Initiative Task and Finish Group to bring forward proposals which could potentially have a material impact on direct employment and business development through innovation and export-led growth. The Group published its report on 15 May. It concludes that Health should be viewed as a major driver for innovation and economic growth. The Group has made a total of 7 recommendations for strengthening the economy through Health and Social Care. These include:- development of a Health and Life Sciences Strategy; establishment of a Health Innovation Life Sciences Hub to coordinate and drive individual projects and programmes coming out of the strategy; and establish a Health Innovation Infrastructure around a number of economic attractors.

We will need to ensure that we exploit fully the opportunities for strengthening the economy as highlighted in the report.

## Electroencephalogram

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to detail the current waiting times for (i) children; and (ii) adults with epilepsy to receive an electroencephalogram.

**(AQW 23420/11-15)**

**Mr Poots:** Electroencephalogram (EEG) is only carried out in Belfast, Southern and Western HSC Trusts. Western HSC Trust introduced this service in March 2013 and is currently only performed on adults.

The waiting times to receive an EEG cannot be broken down for patients with epilepsy. The current waiting time for children and adults, as of week commencing 20th May 2013, to receive an EEG are shown in the table below.

**(I)**

HSC Trust	Number of Children (15 and under) waiting for EEG, by weeks waiting							Total
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-21	>21-26	>26-36	>36	
Belfast*	52	15	16	9	0	0	0	<b>92</b>
Southern	51	12	12	0	0	0	0	<b>75</b>

\* Figures for Belfast HSC Trust shown above include children of age 16 waiting for an EEG in the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children

**(II)**

HSC Trust	Number of Adults (16 and over) waiting for EEG, by weeks waiting							Total
	0-6	>6-9	>9-13	>13-21	>21-26	>26-36	>36	
Belfast	126	41	68	95	1	1	0	<b>332</b>
Southern	63	8	14	0	0	0	0	<b>85</b>
Western	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>22</b>

## Department of Justice

### G4S: Disciplinary Action

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21499/11-15 and AQW 15208/11-15, what representations he made to, or discussions has he had with, G4S over its disciplinary action taken against staff.

**(AQW 22584/11-15)**

**Mr Ford (The Minister of Justice ):** None.

### Suicides and Suicide Attempts in Prison

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, given the number of suicides and suicide attempts in prison and the apparent delay in mental health referrals and psychiatric appointments, whether he will consider offering vulnerable prisoners wider access to agencies, such as Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention, which provide specialised suicide counselling and coping skills.

**(AQW 22636/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Vulnerable prisoners have access to a number of specialist agencies who provide help with thoughts of suicide or self harm. The Prison Service maintains a strong partnership with the Samaritans in the provision of the peer support Listener Scheme – a confidential service available to

prisoners 24 hours a day. In the absence of a Listeners Scheme in Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre and Prison, Samaritans volunteers provide 'one to one' emotional support during their regular visits. A dedicated Samaritans helpline is also available 24 hours a day to prisoners in distress and in need of support. In addition, prisoners can access a number of free counselling services including Lifeline, the NI crisis response helpline.

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

### **Flying Flags at Courthouses**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21451/11-15, to provide the relevant section of the assignment instructions for contracted staff covering the requirements for flying flags at courthouses.

**(AQW 22637/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The requirement to raise and lower the Union flag on designated days is referenced in the contract with Group 4 Secure Solutions (G4S) as follows:

*"The Contractor must fly the Union flag at all Court premises from 8am until sunset the same day inclusive of weekends and public holidays."*

The contract is supplemented by assignment instructions and operational management instructions. The assignment instruction extract for the Union flag is as follows:

*"If the designated flag days fall at weekends or Public Holiday, G4S key holders will perform the task of raising and lowering the Union flag."*

Additionally, operational guidance is provided by G4S site supervisors at daily briefings at all courthouses.

### **Information Disclosure**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21450/11-15 and AQW 19382/11-15, to clarify, in terms of preventing disclosure of the information, on which Data Protection Principles of Schedule 1 of the 1998 Act were his answer based.

**(AQW 22638/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The responses provided to the Member's questions were based on the first principle outlined in Schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Probation Board for Northern Ireland Staff**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the progress that has been made in relation to a pay deal for staff at the Probation Board for Northern Ireland.

**(AQW 22659/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Work has been ongoing between Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to develop a new pay strategy for PBNI administration staff and to obtain the necessary approvals from the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) to implement it. Unfortunately the process involved to achieve this has proven to be particularly complex and as a result very time consuming.

DFP approved the business case relating to the administration staff in October 2012. PBNI was subsequently required to prepare and submit a number of pay remits to cover the period from 2010 for Department of Justice (DOJ) and DFP approval.

This process has been continuing, with a number of queries raised by DFP at various points on the documentation received. These have been addressed and revised pay remits forwarded to DFP for approval.

This matter is now in its final stages and every effort continues to be made by the Department, working closely with PBNI, to bring this issue to a satisfactory conclusion.

### Maghaberry Prison

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether consideration has been given to allocating an area in Maghaberry Prison to house prisoners specifically with drug dependency issues to ensure they receive appropriate addiction treatment.

**(AQW 22661/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I can confirm that consideration has not been given to allocating an area within Maghaberry to house prisoners specifically with drug dependency issues.

### Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21836/11-15, whether the additional payment of £6m addressed the arrears accrued by the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission in payments owed to legal representatives.

**(AQW 22662/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Department provided total additional Resource DEL funding of £16m to the Legal Services Commission during the 2012/13 year. This increased the Commission's Resource DEL budget to £101.5m.

2012/13 Resource DEL expenditure is expected to be £107.1m (2012/13 figures have not yet been subject to audit by the Northern Ireland Audit Office and are therefore subject to change).

The forecast overspend of £5.6m has been absorbed by other underspends across the Department.

### Court Hearings

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice to detail how many suspects (i) have failed to appear at their first court hearing after being granted bail; and (ii) of those, how many are still unaccounted for, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22664/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Suspects can be released on police bail pending being charged with an offence. Once charged, a defendant may be granted police bail to appear at court or may be granted court bail at his first or any subsequent court appearance. It is not possible to provide the specific information requested without incurring a disproportionate cost.

However, the table below details the number of defendants issued with at least one arrest (Magistrates' Court) or bench (Crown Court) warrant in each of the last five years who failed to surrender to court in accordance with their bail.

As at 10 May 2013, court records show that of the 8,725 defendants for which at least one arrest or bench warrant has been issued since 2008, 1,257 defendants currently have an outstanding arrest or bench warrant.

Year	Defendants on bail with an Arrest or Bench Warrant issued
2008	1,900
2009	1,932

<b>Year</b>	<b>Defendants on bail with an Arrest or Bench Warrant issued</b>
2010	1,684
2011	1,712
2012P	1,497
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,725</b>

**Source:** Integrated Court Operations System

P 2012 Data currently provisional.

### **RUC Reserve Gratuity Fund**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21617/11-15, what options his Department is considering regarding the residue from the RUC Reserve Gratuity Fund and how will it be allocated.

**(AQW 22688/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There is some £392,000 remaining of the £20m funding provided by HM 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 final decision is expected within a matter of weeks. Some of the options being considered include making the residue available to the NI Policing Fund, to the Police Museum, or to police related charities. Cognisance will be taken of the original terms for the scheme and any residue set out by the then Minister of State Paul Goggins MP.

### **Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice what is the current starting salary of (i) an Administrative Officer in the Northern Ireland Civil Service; and (ii) the equivalent grade in the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission; and to outline the reasons for any disparity.

**(AQW 22729/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The current starting salary for an Administrative Officer in the NICS is £18,298 per annum; applicable from 1 August 2012.

The equivalent grade in the NILSC is a Clerical Officer for which the current starting salary is £15,277 per annum; applicable from August 2009.

The NILSC is a discrete bargaining unit for pay purposes with pay remits approved through the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance and Personnel. There has been no pay award within the NILSC since 2009.

### **NI Legal Services Commission: Accountancy Allowance**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice whether there is an Accountancy Allowance available to staff within the NI Legal Services Commission and if the arrangements for obtaining the allowance are the same as in the NI Civil Service.

**(AQW 22733/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** There is currently no Accountancy Allowance available to staff within the NI Legal Services Commission. It does not currently pay any allowances to staff.

## **NI Legal Services Commission and Human Resources Department Staff**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) how many staff are employed within the NI Legal Services Commission; (ii) how many staff are employed in the Human Resources Department; and (iii) the reasons why HR Connect is not used.

**(AQW 22734/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As at 30 April 2013, 148 staff are employed by the NI Legal Services Commission (NILSC); of which six are employed in the Human Resources Department.

HR Connect is not used within the NILSC because staff are not on Northern Ireland Civil Service terms and conditions of employment.

## **Suicides and Attempted Suicides in Prisons**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to suicides and attempted suicides in prison, whether any similarities have been identified in cases involving (i) crimes or alleged crimes for which the person is in custody; and (ii) illegal drugs use either prior to entering, or whilst in custody, in the last ten years.

**(AQW 22742/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service has not identified any similarities in cases of suicides or attempted suicides.

## **Maghaberry Prison: Near Death of a Prisoner**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, in relation to the 44 issues of concern highlighted by the Prisoner Ombudsman in the case of the near death of a prisoner in custody at Maghaberry Prison in February 2012 and, given that a number of these concerns have previously been identified and reported (i) to explain why such issues have been permitted by the Northern Ireland Prison Service to recur on a regular basis; and (ii) to provide an assessment of the causes.

**(AQW 22744/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is committed to providing safe, secure and decent custody for all prisoners but recognises that a number of recommendations from external reports to help reduce self harm have yet to be fully implemented. All issues of concern are carefully considered by NIPS and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and every effort is being made to embed the changes recommended by the Prisoner Ombudsman.

The Governor of Maghaberry has a continuous improvement plan in place to ensure that shortcomings identified are being dealt with appropriately. A Prisoner Safety and Support Team has been established to monitor and review the implementation of local safer custody procedures.

Improved performance and cultural change are being taken forward as part of the wider Prison Reform programme. Effective and lasting reform will take time to implement.

## **DOJ: Paid and Unpaid Invoices**

**Mrs Cochrane** asked the Minister of Justice, for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, to detail (i) the total number of invoices paid by his Department and its Arm's-Length Bodies; (ii) the number of invoices paid within thirty calendar days of receipt; (iii) the number of invoices paid within ten working days of receipt; (iv) how each of her Department's Arm's-Length Bodies has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets; and (v) the number of invoices that, to date, remain unpaid.

**(AQW 22756/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Details on the number of invoices paid for the period 1 April 2012 to

31 March 2013 by the Department of Justice (DOJ) including its Agencies, and its Arm's-Length Bodies (ALBs); (i) in total; (ii) within 30 calendar days of receipt; (iii) within 10 working days of receipt; (iv)

how each ALB has performed against the 30 Day Payment Performance Targets and; (v) the number of invoices that remain unpaid to date are shown in the tables below:

<b>The Department of Justice (incl. agencies)</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid within 30 calendar days of receipt</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid within 10 working days of receipt</b>	<b>Number of Unpaid Invoices</b>
DOJ Core Department	4,384	4,229	3,899	110
Northern Ireland Prison Service	19,940	19,408	17,502	152
Compensation Agency	312	302	280	1
Forensic Science Northern Ireland	2,416	2,338	2,176	56
Youth Justice Agency	4,384	4,193	3,505	56
Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service	13,961	13,565	12,798	211

<b>Arm's-Length Bodies</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid within 30 calendar days of receipt</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid within 10 working days of receipt</b>	<b>% of Invoices Paid Within 30 calendar days of receipt</b>	<b>Number of Unpaid Invoices</b>
Police Service of Northern Ireland	94,082	92,877	87,688	98.72%	157
Northern Ireland Policing Board	1,949	1,949	1,884	100.00%	0
Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland	2,125	2,123	2,098	99.91%	0
Northern Ireland Police Fund	130	130	120	100.00%	0
RUC George Cross Foundation	202	202	202	100.00%	0
Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission	773	767	763	99.22%	8
Probation Board for Northern Ireland	5,222	5,014	4,148	96.02%	101
Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland	355	324	252	91.27%	1
Northern Ireland Law Commission	161	160	151	99.40%	4

<b>Arm's-Length Bodies</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid within 30 calendar days of receipt</b>	<b>Total Number of Invoices Paid within 10 working days of receipt</b>	<b>% of Invoices Paid Within 30 calendar days of receipt</b>	<b>Number of Unpaid Invoices</b>
Policing Rehabilitation and Retraining Trust	2,017	1,808	895	90.00%	49
Prisoner Ombudsman	216	213	178	98.60%	3
Independent Monitoring Boards	172	172	154	100.00%	9
Independent Assessor for PSNI Recruitment Applications	0	0	0	0	0

The figures provided for the number of invoices paid include invoices received in 2011-12 and paid in 2012-13. This explains why some bodies with a 100% payment record have invoices remaining unpaid.

### **Legal Aid for Appeals**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice whether he will restrict future legal aid for appeals brought by Gerry McGeough, given that Mr McGeough's appeal has been dismissed on all grounds by three senior judges, including the Lord Chief Justice.

**(AQW 22802/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** All applications for criminal legal aid are considered on their merits, by the Courts, in accordance with Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

### **Incentives and Earned Privileges Schemes**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice, with regard to the pending changes to the Incentives and Earned Privileges schemes in prisons in England and Wales, what plans he has to implement such changes.

**(AQW 22819/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The current Progressive Regime and Earned Privileges (PREPS) Policy used by the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS) is largely incentive based, with prisoners progressing through the regime levels who meet the identified standards. A comprehensive review of the policy is being taken forward and will examine prisoner payment structures for each regime level with the intention of making the PREPS system even more incentive and motivationally based.

NIPS will continue to monitor developments in neighbouring jurisdictions. However, it is intended to develop the best scheme for Northern Ireland. There are no plans to introduce changes to prisoner pay and privileges similar to changes announced for England and Wales.

### **NI Legal Services Commission Staff**

**Mr Allister** asked the Minister of Justice whether staff recruited at Deputy Principal Grade or above, to the NI Legal Services Commission, start at the mid-point on their salary scale and staff recruited to

a lower grade start at the bottom of their salary scale; and to outline the reasons for any disparity in approach.

**(AQW 22820/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The NI Legal Services Commission (NILSC) is a discrete bargaining unit for pay purposes with pay remits approved through the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The NILSC has provided the following information on how it appoints and promotes its staff.

The NILSC's procedure for making permanent appointments is as follows:

- (a) Clerical Officer grade following publicly advertised recruitment exercises;
- (b) Executive Officer and Staff Officer grades by way of internal promotion schemes (save for a few appointments to specialist posts which involve publicly advertised recruitment); and
- (c) Deputy Principal and above grades following publicly advertised recruitment exercises;

Staff recruited to the Clerical Officer grade are appointed to the band minimum of the relevant salary scale. As these appointments follow a publicly advertised process the NILSC has attracted a wide applicant pool.

The internal promotions for Executive Officers and Staff Officers follow well established rules for payment on promotion, namely a percentage increase on the successful applicant's current salary (currently 9%) or the band minimum of the higher grade – the higher value of these two options is applied. This also applies to all temporary promotions at all grades.

Permanent appointments to grades at Deputy Principal and Grade 7 are subject to the mid point of the salary as these appointments follow external recruitment. The NILSC has adopted this approach because there have been occasions when successful applicants were already on pay scales which were the same as, or higher than, the band minimum of the relevant pay scales.

As such this approach had to be adopted to ensure that the NILSC could appoint the best candidates. This approach also ensured that the NILSC was not susceptible to equal pay challenges for such appointments.

Appointment to Director posts with the NILSC are publicly advertised; the remuneration is determined by the recruitment panel, with the approval of the Board.

### **Maghaberry Prison: Near Death of a Prisoner**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, given the Prisoner Ombudsman's report into the near death in custody of a prisoner at Maghaberry in February 2012, whether he will instigate a review, particularly in respect of Supporting Prisoner at Risk procedures and have the procedures applied to all vulnerable prisoners as routine practice and introduce a traffic light grading system, which are never closed without there being a significant reduction of potential risk and being overseen by a consultant psychiatrist.

**(AQW 22901/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Prison Service's Suicide and Self Harm Prevention Policy is subject to ongoing review. I am satisfied the Supporting Prisoners At Risk procedures that are in place to care for and manage prisoners who are at risk of self harm or suicide are appropriate.

### **Northern Ireland Prison Service: Psychology Services**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21766/11-15, whether operational staff have access to psychology services as detailed in the Northern Ireland Prison Service responses at (27) and (18) to issues of concern arising from the deaths in custody of Samuel Carson and Frances McKeown at Hydebank Wood on 4 May 2011.

**(AQW 22908/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** NIPS staff can avail of the services of Carecall and if necessary, are referred for professional counselling.

As part of the NIPS contract with Carecall, Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, known as the Post Incident Care Protocol, is also available. This critical incident stress management model is designed to prevent and/or mitigate any adverse psychological reactions staff may experience post incident.

These arrangements were activated on Thursday 5 May 2011 following a request from the Governor Hydebank Wood.

### **Professional Standards Unit**

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 21771/11-15, whether he would consider suspending all disciplinary matters until the Professional Standards Unit is established in June 2013 to ensure parity for all those currently facing disciplinary action.

**(AQW 22910/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** It is important that all cases of alleged disciplinary misconduct are investigated as soon as possible. It would therefore not be appropriate to suspend the disciplinary process in the Northern Ireland Prison Service pending the establishment of the new Professional Standards Unit.

Both Management and Trade Union side are in agreement that the current Code of Conduct and Discipline should remain operational until the new disciplinary system is introduced.

### **Together: Building a United Community**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the proposals included in "Together: Building a United Community."

**(AQW 22922/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I have had no discussions with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister about these proposals.

However, my officials are now engaged in discussions with their counterparts in the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the proposals, and in particular the proposal relating to interfaces.

### **Legal Services Commission Staff**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Justice why staff in the Legal Services Commission are not paid the same rate as staff in his Department despite being graded in the same way.

**(AQW 22958/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) is a discrete bargaining unit for pay purposes with pay remits approved through the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The NILSC presently has three pay remits outstanding covering the periods 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. 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.

### **Legal Service Commission Staff**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Justice when staff in the Legal Service Commission will receive the same rate of pay as staff in his Department.

**(AQW 22959/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (NILSC) is a discrete bargaining unit for pay purposes with pay remits approved through the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance and Personnel.

The NILSC presently has three pay remits outstanding covering the periods 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. 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.

### **Ionizing Radiation Regulations: Scanners in Prison Estates**

**Mr P Ramsey** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22384/11-15, whether he will notify the Assembly immediately when, under 15(1) of The Justification of Practices Involving Ionising Radiation Regulations 2004, the Justifying Authority informs the Northern Ireland Prison Service of the period in which the application is to be determined.

**(AQW 22994/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I can confirm that I will notify the Assembly as soon as possible of the timescales by which the Northern Ireland Prison Service Justification Application will be determined.

### **Cyber Crime Directorate**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice what links the PSNI currently has with the Cyber Crime Directorate.

**(AQW 22996/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** This is a matter for PSNI. I understand, however, that it currently has significant engagement and working relationships with a number of law enforcement agencies engaged in combating cyber crime across the United Kingdom. That includes early engagement with the new National Cyber Crime Unit under the shadow National Crime Agency which will incorporate the former Police e-crime Unit (PeCU) and the Serious and Organised Crime Agency's SOCA Cyber.

### **Northern Ireland Police Fund**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice to detail (i) the funding provided to groups via the Northern Ireland Police Fund in the last three years; and (ii) how many people in each of the groups benefited from the funding.

**(AQW 23001/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Details of the funding provided to groups via Northern Ireland Police Fund in the last three years can be found in the table below:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>2010/11 £</b>	<b>2011/12 £</b>	<b>2012/13 £</b>
RUC GC Parents' Association	45,800.00	45,000.00	41,400.00
Disabled Police Officers' Association	55,500.00	43,000.00	42,000.00
Retired Police Officers' Association	7,500.00	0	0
RUC Benevolent Fund (including local voluntary welfare groups)	77,004.37	75,000.00	69,000.00
RUC GC Widows' Association	5,000.00	0	0
Forgotten Families	0	250.00	300.00
Carers' Association	18,000.00	0	5,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>208,804.37</b>	<b>163,250.00</b>	<b>157,700.00</b>

I am unable to detail how many people in each of these groups benefited from the funding over the last three years as the Northern Ireland Police Fund does not hold this information. However I can advise that the RUC GC Parents and Carers Association members are all clients of the Fund and 93 and 51 people respectively benefited in 2012/13.

### **People with Disabilities**

**Mr McMullan** asked the Minister of Justice whether assets from the proceeds of crime are used to supply equipment of support programmes for people with disabilities.

**(AQW 23042/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Assets Recovery Community Scheme was first launched at the end of 2011 following the passage of the Justice Act (NI) 2011. Two calls have been made for bids for projects. These must be aimed at tackling crime and the fear of crime. A wide range of projects have been supported. The details may be found at:

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/publications/publication-categories/pubs-policing-community-safety/asset-recovery-community-scheme-2012-13.pdf.pdf>

<http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/publications/publication-categories/pubs-criminal-justice/confiscation-of-criminal-assets-funding.pdf>

One of these, "Mentoring Scheme for Disabled Offenders", is specific to disabled persons.

It is hoped that the 2013/14 call for projects will issue soon.

### **Legal Services Commission Staff**

**Mr McKay** asked the Minister of Justice whether staff on the Legal Services Commission have had any salary revision or pay progression since 2009.

**(AQW 23060/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The NILSC is a discrete bargaining unit for pay purposes with pay remits approved through the Department of Justice and the Department of Finance and Personnel. There has been no pay award within the NILSC since 2009.

The last agreed pay settlement for the Commission period covered the period 2006/07 to 2008/09. As no agreement was reached for the 2009/10 pay settlement negotiations, in July 2011, the Commission imposed a 2.6% pay award for that period which resulted in the introduction of Commission specific pay scales.

The NILSC currently has three pay remits outstanding covering the periods 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13. 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.

### **Security Gates on Londonderry's Walls**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister of Justice, pursuant to AQW 22856/11-15, whether, in addition to seeking the views of residents, his Department will provide a commitment that the gates will not be removed if the majority of residents consulted were opposed to the suggestion.

**(AQW 23173/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Engagement is an essential part of the work my Department is undertaking on interfaces. I am sensitive to both the views and perceptions of residents and the responsibility to create the conditions within which division and segregation can be consigned to the past.

The issue of consent is complex and I would not want to be prescriptive.

## Prisoners: Non-Payment of Fines

**Miss M McIlveen** asked the Minister of Justice when legislation will be introduced to address the issues raised in the recent judicial review decision regarding the automatic imprisonment of people for the non-payment of fines.

**(AQO 4092/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** As I informed the Assembly on 29 April, on 22 March 2013 the Divisional Court found that the long established practice for dealing with non-payment of fines failed to fully comply with the relevant legislative provisions.

In particular, the Court held that there should be a further court hearing at which the defendant can attend and make representations before any enforcement action is taken.

The implications of the judgment are still being evaluated. It is my intention, however, to bring forward legislation which will create a new fine collection and enforcement regime and which will incorporate all necessary procedures.

In the meantime, my officials are liaising with the Magistrates' Courts Rules Committee in order to develop any suitable interim arrangements which may be required to address the findings of the Court.

## Bangor Courthouse

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister of Justice what action he has taken to secure an alternative use for Bangor Courthouse.

**(AQO 4090/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** The Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service is working with Land & Property Services to secure an alternative use for Bangor Courthouse. To date, no Government Department or Agency including North Down Borough Council, has expressed an interest in the building.

My officials are working with LPS to develop a marketing strategy for this property. I am happy to consider alternative community uses for Bangor Hearing Centre provided they are cost neutral for my Department.

## Legal Aid

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister of Justice to outline the Legal Aid bill for the 2012-13 financial year.

**(AQO 4095/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** Unaudited 2012-13 resource DEL expenditure is expected to be in the region of £107m; of which £51m relates to civil legal aid, £50m to criminal legal aid and £6m to running costs.

## Courts: Decisions

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister of Justice what discussions he has had with the judiciary regarding the explanation of decisions taken in courts.

**(AQO 4098/11-15)**

**Mr Ford:** I have not met with the judiciary to discuss the explanation of decisions taken in court.

However, in a recent interview the Lord Chief Justice recognised the issue of public confidence in relation to the debate over bail and wanted to take the necessary steps to ensure it was maintained. He has also discussed the issue at his recent appearance at the Justice Committee and outlined a range of measures he has taken to increase the general understanding of sentencing including the publication of a guide to bail applications.

# Department for Regional Development

## Illegal Monuments

**Mr Ross** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many illegal monuments have been removed by Roads Service, in each of the last two years.

**(AQW 22238/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy (The Minister for Regional Development):** My Department's policy, which has been approved by previous Ministers, is that it does not endorse, or support, the unauthorised use of departmental property for any purpose. The Department must also take into account the safety of those who are asked to undertake the removal and the risk of escalating the problem.

Department officials have not removed any illegal monuments in the last two years. In addition, during the terms of my predecessors Mr Conor Murphy, Mr Gregory Campbell and Mr Peter Robinson, I understand no illegal monuments were removed by officials.

## Lamp Posts and Other Street Furniture

**Mr Lyttle** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 22012/11-15, to detail (i) what constitutes agreement and/or support; (ii) why his officials remove illegally erected advertising without establishing agreement or support and recover costs but do not for legally erected flags; (iii) how he has contributed to the review of the Flags Protocol; and (iv) the timescale for the completion of a new Flags Protocol.

**(AQW 22529/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** In my answer to AQW 22012/11-15, I stated that I do not condone or support the unauthorised use of my Department's lamp posts, street furniture or other property, for any purpose.

I also explained that 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.

With regard to what constitutes agreement and/or support (for the removal of flags), it has its normal meaning and may include all interested parties, including the local community, elected representatives, groups, such as those who erected or supported the erection of flags in the area, and key protocol partners, such as the PSNI. However, depending on the situation, and in line with the Flags Protocol, it is generally the lead agency that advises if agreement has been reached.

It is a specific offence under Article 87 of the Roads (NI) Order 1993 to illegally erect advertising signs on street furniture. My Department arranges for the removal of such material and, in accordance with the provisions of the Roads Order, seeks to recover its costs so this work is not a drain on public funds.

In relation to the review of the flags protocol, my Department has contributed to the review of the Flags Protocol through officials' attendance and participation at all meetings to which they have been invited, and by responding to enquiries and correspondence relating to the review.

Finally, with regard to the timescale for the completion of a new Flags Protocol, this is a matter for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, since that Department initiated, and is leading the review.

## Unadopted Roads

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many roads, which service housing developments, are currently unadopted and the developer is being pursued because of (a) the incomplete nature of the roadway; or (b) the developer having ceased to operate as a business.  
**(AQW 22615/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department is currently pursuing 150 proceedings against developers under Article 11 of the Private Streets Order for non-completion of roads in developments. Of these, officials are aware that 69 involve developments where the developer has ceased to operate as a business.

I should also advise that in cases where the developer has gone into liquidation or administration, the appointed receiver or representative is expected to carry out all necessary ongoing maintenance and undertake work to bring the streets up to the standard required for adoption.

## Dualling of the A26

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development what progress has been made on the dualling of the A26 following his announcement regarding the delay in the A5 road scheme.  
**(AQW 22616/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** You may be aware that the Public Inquiry for the A26 scheme took place from 5-7 November 2012. My Department is now in receipt of the Inspector's report on the Public Inquiry and when this has been fully assessed, I will make a Departmental Statement outlining the way forward, which I anticipate will happen later this year.

With regard to funding, the Court ruling on the A5 Western Transport Corridor scheme, will add a significant delay to that project and will require adjustments to the capital budget, to be brought forward by the Finance Minister. In addressing the financial implications of this situation, I have set out spending proposals that my Department can deliver quickly and have provided options to the Finance Minister, which envisage other major road schemes commencing in 2014/15 including the A26. In the meantime, my Department continues to develop the A26 scheme to a procurement ready position. However, it cannot be progressed beyond this stage until a commitment of funding is made.

## 20mph Speed Limits

**Mr Spratt** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he will consider introducing 20mph speed limits in streets where people live, work and shop.  
**(AQW 22634/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's speed management policy encourages the further roll out of 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits in residential areas and locations, where high numbers of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, children and cyclists, are present. The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020 contains Action Measures which are consistent with my Department's policy.

When assessing the potential for a road to have a 20 mph speed limit introduced, many factors are taken into account, such as mean speed, collision history, streetscape, community support, function and demographics. Each road will likely be different in terms of its suitability to have a reduced limit applied and the normal solution has been to install engineering measures, such as road humps and central islands, so the reduced speed limit is, in effect, self enforcing.

The Road Safety Strategy also contains a commitment to pilot schemes for 20 mph limits without additional self-enforcing engineering measures. All these commitments are subject to the availability of funding. However, agreement has now been reached with the PSNI on enforcement for four pilot schemes and Roads Service is currently identifying suitable sites. Roads Service will, in due course, be monitoring the effectiveness of these schemes, along with similar pilots being undertaken in tandem by road authorities in Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, to inform the way forward on this issue.

## Maintenance of Bus Turning Circles

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development who has responsibility for the maintenance of bus turning circles.

**(AQW 22644/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department is responsible for the maintenance of bus turning circles where they form part of the adopted road network.

## Pedestrian Safety in Urban and Town Settings

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what steps his Department is taking to improve pedestrian safety in urban and town settings.

**(AQW 22657/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The safety of the most vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, has always been my Department's highest priority, especially with regard to children, the elderly and the disabled.

Both controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities are located as close as possible to desire lines, for people to cross safely. New Puffin Crossings currently being installed or retrofitted on roads across Northern Ireland monitor pedestrians until they are safely across, before allowing traffic to move again. Tactile paving and other facilities for the visually impaired are now provided at all crossing points.

Considerable investment in improving the streetscape in town centres in recent years has been targeted at improving access for pedestrians and cyclists. As well as providing pedestrian zones, the installation of engineering measures, such as traffic calming and reduced speed limits, all contribute to providing a safer and more amenable environment for pedestrians.

Although there is no room for complacency, there has been an encouraging downward trend in pedestrian fatalities over the last ten years to which my Department and its strategic partners in road safety have made a valuable contribution by continually striving to improve facilities, and making pedestrians more aware of the dangers on our roads.

## 20mph Speed Limits

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the proposal to reduce speed limits in certain areas to 20mph.

**(AQW 22658/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's speed management policy encourages the further roll out of 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits in residential areas and locations, where high numbers of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, children and cyclists, are present. The Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy to 2020 contains Action Measures which are consistent with my Department's policy.

When assessing the potential for a road to have a 20 mph speed limit introduced, many factors are taken into account, such as mean speed, collision history, streetscape, community support, function and demographics. Each road will likely be different in terms of its suitability to have a reduced limit applied and the normal solution has been to install engineering measures, such as road humps and central islands, so the reduced speed limit is, in effect, self enforcing.

The Road Safety Strategy also contains a commitment to pilot schemes for 20 mph limits without additional self-enforcing engineering measures. All these commitments are subject to the availability of funding. However, agreement has now been reached with the PSNI on enforcement for four pilot schemes and my officials are currently identifying suitable sites. They will, in due course, also be monitoring the effectiveness of these schemes, along with similar pilots being undertaken in tandem by road authorities in Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland, to inform the way forward on this issue.

### Utility Companies: Restore Footpaths or Roads

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what requirements are placed on utility companies to restore footpaths or roads to the same standard prior to carrying out works.

**(AQW 22667/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Utility companies are required to reinstate openings in footpaths or roads to the standards set out in the Specification for Reinstatement of Openings in Roads (2nd Edition), a code of practice approved by my Department in July 2006, which prescribes the materials and standards of workmanship required for each type of road and footpath.

### Utility Companies: Restore Footpaths or Roads

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development what monitoring is carried out to ensure that a footpath or road is restored to its previous state after work has been carried out by a utility provider.

**(AQW 22668/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department inspects one in ten utility openings, selected at random, within six months of the completion of the reinstatement to ensure the footpath or road has been restored to the specified standard. A further one in ten randomly selected openings are inspected during the final three months of the guarantee period to ensure the reinstatement has complied with the specified performance requirements. Officials also extract sample cores from one in every one hundred reinstatements to ensure the correct material is being used and to the required depth.

Should any of these inspections identify a defective reinstatement, the utility company responsible is notified and required to repair or replace the reinstatement. Additional inspections are carried out to ensure the defects have been corrected.

In addition, any surface defects which are identified outside of these inspection regimes, for example, those reported by members of the public, or as the result of Roads Service's routine maintenance inspections, will be notified to the relevant utility company for remedial work to be undertaken.

### Disabled Persons' Parking Spaces

**Mr Hamilton** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline what powers exist to legally enforce against the correct use of disabled persons' parking spaces.

**(AQW 22672/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department does not require powers to legally enforce against the correct use of disabled persons' parking spaces.

### Mains Rehabilitation Programme: Low Water Pressure

**Mrs McKeivitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail which areas with low water pressure, have benefited from the Mains Rehabilitation Programme, in each year since 2010, broken down by constituency.

**(AQW 22683/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that a total of 1,318 properties in areas with low water pressure have benefited directly from the Mains Rehabilitation Programme since 2009/10. This information has been allocated by constituency in the table below.

Constituency	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total
East Londonderry		100	6		106
Fermanagh and South Tyrone		8			8

Constituency	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Total
Foyle			6		6
Lagan Valley			40		40
Mid Ulster	20	60			80
Newry and Armagh	33				33
North Antrim	54	3	4		61
North Down	445			129	574
South Antrim		1	33		34
South Down	8		69	168	245
Strangford			62		62
Upper Bann		64	4		68
West Tyrone		1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>1,318</b>

### Mains Rehabilitation Programme: Low Water Pressure

**Mrs McKeivitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development which areas with low water pressure have not benefited from the Mains Rehabilitation Programme, broken down by constituency.

**(AQW 22685/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water that 1,366 properties in areas with low water pressure have not benefited from the Mains Rehabilitation Programme. This information has been allocated by constituency in the table below. NIW aims to address the low water pressure at these properties through further capital investment over the coming years.

Parliamentary Constituency	2010-2013	2013-2015	2015-2021	Total
Belfast East		56	1	57
Belfast North	4		9	13
Belfast South			29	29
Belfast West			3	3
East Antrim		7	12	19
East Londonderry		7	39	46
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	31	126	74	231
Foyle			2	2
Lagan Valley	1	35	10	46
Mid Ulster	42	43	29	114
Newry and Armagh	53		230	283
North Antrim		37	79	116
North Down			93	93
South Antrim	60	20	22	102

<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>2010-2013</b>	<b>2013-2015</b>	<b>2015-2021</b>	<b>Total</b>
South Down	1		71	72
Strangford		18	24	42
Upper Bann			22	22
West Tyrone		24	52	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>1,366</b>

### **Belfast to Dublin Enterprise Rail Service**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) what discussions have taken place at cross-border meetings to assess the eligibility for European funding to replace locomotives and rolling stock for the Belfast to Dublin Enterprise Rail Service; and (ii) the plans in place to provide a dedicated track for the service.

**(AQW 22701/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** No discussions have taken place at cross-border meetings to assess the eligibility of EU Funding for replacement of the Enterprise Train Sets. However, at a previous meeting of the North South Ministerial Council, I agreed with Minister Varadkar that longer term investment possibilities could be considered within the context of forthcoming EU decisions on the next TEN-T Programme.

Translink has no plans in place for a dedicated track for the Enterprise Service. The costs of such a dedicated track could be substantial. By way of comparison, the costs of construction and land acquisition for the recently announced High Speed Rail Lines between England and Scotland were estimated at £9.5 million per kilometre for a twin track running through a non-urban area.

Translink has made approaches to Irish Rail to participate in a joint feasibility study of options to reduce journey times on the Enterprise service to 90 minutes. These options would involve both track upgrades and replacement of rolling stock at costs for both rail companies estimated at up to £1 billion. EU support from the next TEN-T Programme is likely to be no more than 20% grant. Irish Rail is not in a position to jointly fund such a study before 2016.

### **Infrastructure Projects in South Down: Additional Funds**

**Mr Hazzard** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether any additional funds will be made available for infrastructure projects in South Down as a result of the outcome of the A5 road scheme.  
**(AQW 22738/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Court ruling on the A5 scheme will add a significant delay to the project and as a result I am now obliged to declare a reduced budget requirement in relation to the 2013/14 year.

In my view, it is essential we quickly redeploy this reduced requirement to provide support to the construction sector and the local economy at this most difficult time. I consider expenditure on roads to be a specific example of activity that improves vital infrastructure and facilitates economic growth, while at the same time providing much needed local employment.

Looking further ahead, there may be knock on implications for 2014-15, and thus I have provided options to the Finance Minister for other major road schemes.

Whereas there are no major road schemes in South Down sufficiently advanced to benefit from additional funding at this time, any additional funding for structural maintenance and highway improvements will be allocated in the normal way to all regions of Northern Ireland.

## A26 Dualling

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether consideration be given to the state of the current rural roads which serve the Ballymoney and Ballycastle areas when deciding on the timing of the duelling of the A26 to the Causeway Hospital.

**(AQW 22740/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Structural Maintenance work on the rural road network including the Ballymoney and Moyle Council areas is undertaken on an annual basis. These works are generally prioritised as a result of an assessment carried out independently of the Strategic Road Improvement Programme.

In 2012/2013 substantial resurfacing, surface dressing, patching and drainage works were carried out in the Moyle and Ballymoney Council areas at a cost in excess of £2.5 million and £2.2 million respectively.

In relation to the timing of the A26 Glarryford to Drones Road dual carriageway project, I would refer to Member to my answer to his recent Assembly Question AQW 22616/11-15.

In addressing the financial implications of the delay to the A5, I have set out spending proposals that my Department can deliver quickly and provided options to the Finance Minister which envisage other major road schemes commencing in 2014/15. The A26 Glarryford to Drones Road dual Carriageway is one of the schemes I have indicated could be advanced.

The section of the A26 between Ballymoney and Coleraine is also included in the Strategic Road Improvement Programme, however this is a longer term project which is likely to lie outside the current ISNI period.

## Expired Blue Badges

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister for Regional Development how long, on average, does the process for reallocating expired blue badges take and what is the target timeframe.

**(AQW 22749/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department does not re-allocate expired Blue Badges. However, the target timeframe for the renewal of blue badges is 15 days, except for those cases which require referral to a doctor.

## Disabled Parking Bays: Blue Badge

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister for Regional Development what procedures are in place to allow a person who has applied for a new blue badge following the expiry of an old badge, to continue using disabled parking bays.

**(AQW 22751/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** When a Blue Badge is issued, an enclosed information leaflet provides the badge holder with advice on how to use the badge, and how to apply for a new one when the expiry date approaches.

Whilst my Department will make every effort to ensure that badge holders receive an application form to renew a badge approximately four to six weeks prior to the expiry of their existing badge, it is the badge holder's responsibility to allow sufficient time to have the badge renewed before the current badge expires.

Traffic Attendants are instructed to allow a two week grace period following the expiry date displayed on a Blue Badge, to allow for any delays when applying for a new badge. A Penalty Charge Notice will not be issued to a vehicle displaying a Blue Badge during this two week grace period.

## Parking Tickets in Aughnacloy, Fivemiletown, Coalisland and Donaghmore

**Lord Morrow** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 21613/11-15, to provide the same information for (i) Aughnacloy; (ii) Coalisland; (iii) Donaghmore; and (iv) Fivemiletown for (a) 2010; and (b) 2011.

**(AQW 22800/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Details of the number of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued in Aughnacloy, Coalisland, Donaghmore and Fivemiletown during the 12 months, to end of February 2010 and 2011, are shown in the table below:

Town	PCNs Issued	
	2010	2011
Aughnacloy	41	28
Fivemiletown	87	58
Coalisland	Nil	Nil
Donaghmore	5	1

## Translink: Try the Train Advertising

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether Translink is planning any promotional material in addition to the Try the Train advertising.

**(AQW 22824/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I can advise that the following promotional activities are either in place or in progress:

- Promotion of "Great Railway Journey" via press and digital advertising and social media with NI Tourist Board.
- Joint marketing/PR for train services to events for the UK City of Culture 2013 e.g. Radio One Big Weekend; Live Theatre on-board the train event; Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann.
- On-going sponsorship/relationship with UK City of Culture including posters and banners to promote rail travel to Londonderry.
- 50% off single use voucher to incentivise travel. Valid until 28 June 2013.
- Translink 'Get Up and Go' Summer campaign promoting special bus and rail fares during July and August across the network
- Promotion of 1/3 off day return train fares.

## Park and Ride Scheme, Bangor

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans his Department has for the park and ride scheme which operates near the bus and train station in Bangor.

**(AQW 22855/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** In August 2011 I endorsed my Department's 'Strategic Review of Park & Ride' report and approved the proposed way forward. The report presented recommendations for the delivery and prioritisation of Park & Ride facilities.

My Department has established a Park & Ride Programme Board with responsibility for co-ordinating and prioritising the implementation of Park & Ride projects in line with the Departmental Strategy. The Programme Board has produced a 'Park & Ride Strategic Delivery Programme 2013-15' which is a schedule of Park & Ride projects, with clearly defined responsibilities for funding, implementation, maintenance and operation, to be taken forward by my Department's Transport Projects Division, Transport NI and Translink. Bangor is one of the priority locations included in the Programme.

I am aware that there is significant demand for Park & Ride facilities in Bangor and indeed the current Park & Ride site is operating at capacity levels. This demand highlights the success brought about by my Department's investment in the railway network in recent years and it is something that I would like to continue to build upon.

As a result, my Department is currently developing a business case which will consider a number of options for the provision of additional Park & Ride facilities in Bangor, to supplement those currently available at Abbey Street. The options being considered include the site of the former Bangor Leisure Centre, the Dufferin Avenue Car Park and the construction of a multi-storey car park on the existing Park & Ride site. It is anticipated that this business case process will be completed in June.

Subject to the identification of a suitable site and the satisfactory completion of the necessary processes, which may include land purchase and attaining planning permission, the new facilities could be provided in late 2014/2015.

### **A5 Western Transport Corridor**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Regional Development why his Department did not carry out a Habitats Directive Assessment for the proposed A5 Western Transport Corridor.

**(AQW 22867/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** As allowed by the Habitats Directive, an assessment involving a screening exercise was carried out on behalf of the Department for the proposed A5 Western Transport Corridor dualling project. The screening exercise concluded that it was unlikely that the proposed scheme would have an adverse effect on the integrity of the River Foyle and tributaries and River Finn Special Areas of Conservation and consequently that a full Appropriate Assessment was not required.

The findings and conclusion of the screening exercise were issued to the two relevant statutory bodies, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Republic of Ireland's National Parks and Wildlife Services. Both bodies agreed with the findings and conclusion. The Loughs Agency was also consulted but did not respond.

### **A5 Western Transport Corridor**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Regional Development what action his Department is taking to reinstate the farmland that was vested by Roads Service for the proposed A5 Western Transport Corridor.

**(AQW 22868/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Subsequent to the court decision in relation to the proposed A5 Western Transport Corridor coming into effect on 15 April 2013, my Department sent all affected landowners an update letter on 23 April 2013, providing them with details of the various options regarding reinstatement works. Where reinstatement works are required, landowners were given the option of carrying out reinstatement works themselves and being compensated accordingly or alternatively, asking the Department to arrange the reinstatement works.

The issuing of these letters was followed up with a scheduled round of meetings with all the affected landowners, which have now taken place. Reinstatement works are ongoing and consultation with affected land owners will continue until all reinstatement works have been completed.

### **A5 Western Transport Corridor**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Regional Development what contact his Department has had with the farming community affected by the A5 Western Transport Corridor since the court hearing which prohibited any further work on the project.

**(AQW 22869/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Subsequent to the court decision in relation to the proposed A5 Western Transport Corridor coming into effect on 15 April 2013, my Department sent all affected landowners an update letter on 23 April 2013, providing them with details of the various options in relation to reinstatement

works. This was followed up with a scheduled round of meetings with all affected parties, the vast majority of which have now taken place. Letters issued on 8 May 2013 to all landowners who had submitted 90% advance compensation claims, advising them of their options. Further letters issued to all landowners on 14 May 2013, advising of the processes for agreeing reinstatement works and the procedure for submitting and payment of compensation claims for occupation of the land.

I met with representatives from the Ulster Farmers Union on 24 April 2013, and my officials also attended a meeting with the Ulster Farmers Union and landowners on 7 May 2013. Consultation with affected landowners will continue until all reinstatement works issues have been satisfactorily resolved.

### **A5 Western Transport Corridor**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Regional Development what is his Department's position with regard to farmers on the A5 Western Transport Corridor who have received part payment from Roads Service for their farmland.

**(AQW 22870/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The quashing of the vesting order by the court effectively returned all vested lands and property to the original owners. Landowners, who received 90% advance payments for land or property which was vested, have been given the option of returning the payments or requesting the Department buys the affected land or property, by agreement, and complete the payment process. A letter has been sent to the land/property owners, who have received payments, explaining the option and individual meetings will be held with them, when they have had time to consider their position.

### **A5 Western Transport Corridor**

**Mr Buchanan** asked the Minister for Regional Development when his Department became aware that an Environmental Impact Assessment under the Habitats Directive was required for the A5 Western Transport Corridor.

**(AQW 22871/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the Habitats Directive's Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) are distinct processes. The HRA considers the need for an assessment of impacts on Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and provides for a screening exercise to determine the need, or otherwise, for an Appropriate Assessment.

In relation to the A5 Western Transport Corridor (A5WTC), screening exercises were carried out on four SACs and three SPAs. The conclusions of the screening exercises were that it was unlikely the proposed A5WTC scheme would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any of the SACs or SPAs and consequently that Appropriate Assessments were not required.

The findings and conclusions of the screening exercises were issued to two relevant statutory bodies, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and the Republic of Ireland's National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS). Both statutory bodies agreed with the findings and conclusions of the screening exercises. The Loughs Agency was also consulted but did not respond.

On 8 April 2013, while dismissing 11 of the 12 grounds of challenge, the court held that there was a need to carry out a fuller Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive in relation to the River Foyle and tributaries and River Finn SACs.

### **Oldpark Road/Manor Street Junction**

**Mr Humphrey** asked the Minister for Regional Development what assessment has been carried out on the safety for motorists on the Oldpark Road/Manor Street junction.

**(AQW 22891/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's officials are aware of three recorded collisions at the Oldpark Road/Manor Street junction since 2009.

A scheme has been recently carried out to amend the carriageway markings at this junction, in conjunction with the provision of a PUFFIN controlled crossing. This crossing will enhance the safety of pedestrians wishing to cross the road and the revised carriageway markings, improves conditions for motorists by providing a right-turn pocket for north bound vehicles wishing to enter Manor Street from the Oldpark Road.

Officials will continue to monitor road safety at this junction and will consider what, if any, further enhancements to the road layout are needed.

### **Blue Badge Holders**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many blue badge holders park in departmental car parks on average each year.

**(AQW 22902/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department does not maintain an analysis of the number of blue badge holders who park in departmental car parks.

### **Blue Badge Scheme**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an estimate of how many people will be newly eligible for the Blue Badge scheme under proposals for changes to the scheme.

**(AQW 22903/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** One of the current Blue Badge Scheme options that my Department is considering, as part of the current public consultation for dealing with the introduction of the Department for Social Development led Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in Northern Ireland, is to widen current automatic eligibility for a Blue Badge. This option would entitle some additional people of working age, with mental, cognitive and intellectual or sensory impairments, who have high non-physical mobility needs to a Blue Badge.

Although it is not possible to quantify how many people will attain the required highest score of 12 under PIP Activity 11 – ‘Planning and Following Journeys’, as outlined in the consultation document, this option would potentially increase the number of people who are eligible for a Blue Badge in Northern Ireland. Views on the number of people affected by this option are being sought as part of the public consultation exercise.

### **Blue Badge Holders**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many people currently hold a blue badge.

**(AQW 22905/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** As of 16 May 2013, there are 104,884 current Individual Blue Badges and 1,151 Support Organisation badges.

### **Newcastle Road, Kilkeel Bridge**

**Mr Rogers** asked the Minister for Regional Development why work has ceased on the construction of the bridge on the Newcastle Road, Kilkeel, between Wreck Road and Pat's Road, Ballymartin.

**(AQW 22927/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The work at Mullagh Bridge, Newcastle Road, Kilkeel is being carried out in two phases. The first phase involves work to the bridge structure and the stone work cladding. Unfortunately, the work to the stone cladding has been periodically interrupted due to adverse weather conditions but is now nearing completion.

The second phase involves the associated road works and work to the bridge embankments which is expected to start shortly, after completion of the first phase of works.

### **A37 Limavady to Coleraine Road: Climbing Lane**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he would consider redirecting some of the funding for the A5 road scheme for the provision of a climbing lane at Gortcorbies on the A37 Limavady to Coleraine Road.

**(AQW 22928/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department has received funding for the A5 dual carriageway project as a result of an Executive decision. Following the recent ruling on the scheme, I am obliged to declare a reduced budget requirement in relation to the 2013/14 year.

However, rather than await the June Monitoring round, I have already formally declared this reduced requirement to the Finance Minister, to allow the Executive to give urgent consideration as to how it can best be redeployed. I have set out spending proposals that my Department can deliver quickly and provided options to the Finance Minister, for other major road schemes which could commence in 2014/15.

In my view, it is essential we quickly redeploy this reduced requirement to provide support to the construction sector and the local economy at this most difficult time. I consider expenditure on roads to be a specific example of activity that improves vital infrastructure and facilitates economic growth, while at the same time providing much needed local employment.

Whereas Gortcorbies Climbing Lane is at an advanced stage of development, its delivery is dependent upon additional funding being received.

### **Park and Ride Car Parks: East Londonderry**

**Mr Campbell** asked the Minister for Regional Development how many Park and Ride car parks are in operation in the East Londonderry constituency.

**(AQW 22993/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I can advise you that Translink has confirmed that within the East Londonderry constituency, Park & Ride facilities are available at Coleraine Bus & Rail Station. Currently there are 26 Park & Ride spaces. My Department is providing funding of £317k to Translink to extend the facilities at Coleraine and provide a total of 71 spaces. This work is expected to be completed in June this year.

My Department also operates two car parks in Limavady with 'Park and Ride' and/or 'Park and Ride/Share' facilities. Details of these car parks are provided below:

- Bus Station car park - Park and Ride/Share (108 spaces)
- Rathmore Road car park (off the Limavady By-pass) - Park and Share (26 spaces)

### **G8 Summit**

**Mr Frew** asked the Minister for Regional Development (i) what agreements or discussions has he or his departmental officials had in connection with the G8 Summit and the placing of a moratorium on all road works and contracts over the period of the Summit; (ii) whether this moratorium will be confined to strategic areas and routes that may be used; and (iii) the length of time the moratorium will be in place and the rationale for this.

**(AQW 23056/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Departmental officials are part of the team supporting the Executive in its role in preparing for the G8 Summit. As such, they are fully engaged in discussions surrounding the preparations for the event.

At the request of the PSNI, a moratorium has been placed on all road and street works from Sunday 9 June to Wednesday 19 June 2013. The moratorium applies to all A and B class roads, orbital and radial routes in Belfast and Londonderry and routes around Bushmills. The PSNI has, however, on request,

been allowing exemptions for specific schemes. Work on the A2 and A8 schemes and any emergency works will not be affected.

### **Disability Action Transport Scheme**

**Mr Clarke** asked the Minister for Regional Development, pursuant to AQW 21880/11-15, to detail (i) how far in advance this service can be booked; and (ii) the method used to make payment.

**(AQW 23062/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Disability Action Transport Scheme is operated by Disability Action which has operational responsibility for the scheme. It has advised me that in regard to (i) the service can be booked up to seven days in advance, and (ii) the current method of payment is by paying cash to the driver.

### **Derry Train Station: Waiting Room**

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Regional Development why the waiting room at Derry Train Station closes at 6pm when there are departures at 7.33pm and 9.33pm.

**(AQW 23066/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I can advise you that Translink continually reviews station opening times and staffing levels across the railways network to try to ensure the best balance of customer service and efficiency with a need to work within available funding and ensure that resources are deployed to best benefit.

Translink has confirmed that Waterside Station is open from 06:45-18:00 Monday-Saturday and from 09:00-20:00 on Sunday. These times are in line with the peak passenger flows to and from Londonderry. Outside of these times, customer access is via the accessible night gate. Translink advises that currently there is a covered waiting area on the platform but it is reviewing these facilities. For a variety of health and safety reasons the station cannot be left open if unattended.

With the reopening of the line between Londonderry and Coleraine, Translink will continue to monitor the opening hours of the ticket office and station facilities in light of any changes in passenger numbers.

I can further advise that there is an ongoing public consultation to consider a future station in the city. Passengers are encouraged to respond to this consultation via Translink's website [www.translink.co.uk](http://www.translink.co.uk). The deadline for public responses is 24 May 2013.

### **Lease of Seaghan Dam by Armagh Fisheries**

**Mr Irwin** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail the annual fee for the lease of Seaghan Dam by Armagh Fisheries.

**(AQW 23099/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that the current lease for Seaghan Dam expires on 31 December 2013. As NIW intends to tender for the renewal of the lease in the near future it would not be appropriate to provide details of the annual fee as this information is considered to be commercially sensitive.

### **06:43 Train from Portrush to Coleraine**

**Mr G Robinson** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail (i) the reasons for the withdrawal of the 06:43 train from Portrush to Coleraine; and (ii) why passengers are unable to use their monthly Northern Ireland Railways ticket on a connecting 140 Ulsterbus service as happens on the 17:50 service from Coleraine to Londonderry.

**(AQW 23131/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I can advise you that Translink have confirmed that:

The number of services that can be provided are limited by the single track nature of the line. A new rail timetable was introduced on 24 March 2013 following extensive public consultation with rail customers and key stakeholders. The new timetable provides a through service from Portrush to Belfast at 06:05 and 07:05 hours arriving in Coleraine at 06.16 and 07.16 respectively. There is insufficient running time between these services to provide an additional train at 06:

- (i) 43 hours. A bus service from Portrush to Coleraine runs at 06.20.

Translink will make specific arrangements, including ticketing, for existing customers who wish to use the 140 bus service from Portrush to connect with the 06:

- (ii) 52 hours train departure from Coleraine to Belfast.

I remain determined to provide the best possible public transport service for all in Northern Ireland and I will continue to seek funding support to further improve the rail network.

### **Metro Bus Passengers**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Regional Development to detail to total number of metro bus passengers in (i) 2012/2013; (ii) 2011/2012; and (iii) 2010/2011.

**(AQW 23144/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** Translink have provided the following patronage information showing the progress made in increasing the number of Metro bus passenger journeys:

2012/13	26.198m
2011/12	25.934m
2010/11	25.843m

### **Door-to-Door Transport Service: Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus**

**Mr Dickson** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he is aware of the difficulties that users of the Door-to-Door Transport service in Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus are experiencing following the introduction of the Disability Action contract, and if so, what measures he has put in place to improve the service.

**(AQW 23234/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** The Disability Action Transport Scheme (DATS) which commenced on 1 April 2013 is operated by Disability Action. My officials were made aware that Disability Action wrote to all customers in the Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus areas at the end of March 2013 advising that due to operational issues in relation to the availability of accessible vehicles from Northern Ireland providers that there would be a limited service in April 2013.

However Disability Action has advised me that since then additional vehicles have been sourced and transport provision in that area has improved with a 43% increase in the number of trips undertaken since the end of April.

### **Unadopted Roads**

**Mr F McCann** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the progress made in relation to the recommendations in the Inquiry into Unadopted Roads, following his recent contact with stakeholders.

**(AQO 4099/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** As you will be aware, the Committee for Regional Development's Inquiry into Unadopted Roads made ten recommendations. In January this year, I met with representatives of the Law Society,

the Construction Employers Federation and the National House Building Council to discuss the report and its recommendations. Officials have been engaging further with stakeholders over recent months.

Progress has been made and I have indicated to the Committee I hope to be in a position to provide a further substantive response to its recommendations by the autumn of this year.

### **Railways: Belfast-Dublin Enterprise**

**Mr Dallat** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans are in place to upgrade or replace the locomotives and rolling stock on the Belfast-Dublin Enterprise line.

**(AQO 4100/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I welcome your continued interest in the railways which is a major success story. Passenger numbers on rail continue to grow, and last year over 11 million passenger journeys took place by rail. This is the highest level recorded since 1967. This trend was also evident on the Enterprise Service which saw passenger numbers of 827,000 in 2012/2013, an increase of over a tenth from the previous year.

Furthermore, at the end of March we re-opened the Coleraine to Londonderry railway line - this work was completed ahead of time and within budget.

In terms of the Enterprise rail service, this is, of course, of huge importance for both business and tourism. However, the service is run jointly between Northern Ireland Railways and Irish Rail and we therefore have to agree the arrangements and funding with Irish Rail before any upgrades or replacement of the rolling stock are undertaken.

An Economic Appraisal for the Enterprise Overhaul Programme was completed last year. The total cost of the project is estimated at £14m, shared equally North and South. While it will take a few years before the whole Overhaul Programme will be completed due to funding implications, I can confirm that both parties have committed to £2.4m (£1.2m each) to a first phase of this project which is now progressing and involves safety work to the 4 train sets. This is due to happen this year.

### **Craigantlet Crossroads**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the proposed road and roundabout development at the Craigantlet crossroads.

**(AQO 4103/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department lodged a planning application for this scheme in early 2012. In response, local residents proposed a number of alternative scheme layouts.

I have asked for all the alternative proposals to be fully evaluated – while I had hoped that this work would be completed by the end of January 2013, additional field and design work was required and, as a result, it is now anticipated this study, including an updated economic assessment, will be completed by the end of June 2013.

Although it goes without saying, I wish to make clear that no decisions will be taken before the outcome of this study is known.

### **Queens Avenue. Magherafelt**

**Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the resurfacing scheme for Queens Avenue, Magherafelt.

**(AQO 4108/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** In 2010, sections of Queens Avenue were resurfaced in conjunction with implementation of a traffic calming scheme.

I am pleased to advise the Member that my Department plans to commence a resurfacing scheme on Queens Avenue, Magherafelt on Monday 27 May 2013, at a cost in excess of £150,000.

This will complete the resurfacing of Queens Avenue. As part of this scheme, the adjacent Kirk Avenue and Kirk Lane will also be resurfaced. Temporary traffic management measures will be in place and local access will be accommodated.

### **Car Parks: Euro Exchange Rate**

**Ms Fearon** asked the Minister for Regional Development whether he has any plans to review the Pay and Display euro exchange rate in car parks in border areas.

**(AQO 4109/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department has recently completed a review of the Euro rate applicable to Pay and Display machines in car parks and I will very soon be in a position to announce details of the new rate.

In future, the rates will be subject to an annual review. The member will appreciate the need to balance the significant administrative cost of very regular adjustments to the rate, with the fairly minimal impact on the cost of parking for those paying in Euros.

I should also highlight this service is provided as an additional facility for drivers from the Republic of Ireland in the event that they do not have sterling change to pay for parking. Thus the approach both provides the motorist with an additional option at the point of service, and allows them to avoid incurring their own banking charges in respect of currency conversion.

I note that a reciprocal facility is not provided in the Republic of Ireland for motorists from Northern Ireland.

### **Sewerage: Castlemara, Carrickfergus**

**Mr Hilditch** asked the Minister for Regional Development for an update on the further investigations into the sewerage system in Castlemara, Carrickfergus.

**(AQO 4111/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I have been advised by Northern Ireland Water (NIW) that following further investigations into the sewerage system in Castlemara, Carrickfergus a defect was identified and repaired at the end of April 2013. The sewerage system in the area is now operating normally and NIW is confident that the sewerage issue has been resolved.

### **Roadside Shrines**

**Mr D McIlveen** asked the Minister for Regional Development what plans he has to dismantle illegal roadside shrines to terrorists.

**(AQO 4112/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** My Department's policy, which has been approved by previous Ministers, does not endorse, or support, the unauthorised use of departmental property for any purpose, including the erection of roadside shrines to terrorists. However, the Department must also take into account the safety of those who are asked to undertake the removal and the risk of escalating the problem.

Given these circumstances I, like my predecessors Mr Conor Murphy, Mr Gregory Campbell and Mr Peter Robinson, am not in a position to direct my officials to remove terrorist commemorations on departmental controlled or associated property, unless such structures pose a danger to road users, or there is a clear indication that removal would have the widespread support of the local community.

I should further advise that unauthorised memorials on the property of the Department's arms-length bodies are matters for the Boards of those organisations.

## Integrated Transport

**Mr McDevitt** asked the Minister for Regional Development to outline the time scale for implementing a policy on integrated transport.

**(AQO 4113/11-15)**

**Mr Kennedy:** I am determined to pursue a more integrated and sustainable approach to the development and future delivery of transport and, in March 2012, I launched a New Approach to Regional Transportation which sets High Level Aims and Strategic Objectives for transportation in Northern Ireland.

My Department is currently developing an integrated and sustainable transport delivery plan, which will feed into the Programme for Government 2015-19 budget process.

A cross-organisation Working Group is also currently considering the potential opportunities to integrate publicly funded passenger transport services on a pilot basis in the Dungannon/Cookstown area. This pilot will assist in determining the long-term approach to more integrated local public transport planning.

The Dungannon/Cookstown pilot is expected to begin on the ground in autumn 2013, with phased implementation continuing thereafter as problems are resolved. There will be ongoing evaluation of the pilot to determine what works and what refinements are needed with a view to wider roll-out in due course.

## Department for Social Development

### Ballyearl Estate, Newtownabbey

**Mr Girvan** asked the Minister for Social Development for an update on the Ballyearl estate, Newtownabbey.

**(AQW 22286/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland (The Minister for Social Development):** New Build

Following a period with little housing need within the New Mossley area, there is now a social housing requirement for the area. Based on the March 2012, waiting list there is a 5 year projected need for 45 homes.

The Housing Executive's initial proposals to meet this need were to transfer land on Carn Way to Connswater Housing Association for the building of social housing.

However, following a meeting on the 18 June 2012 between Housing Executive Planning & Feasibility and DOE Planning, and a further meeting with Connswater Housing Association on 25 June 2012, the decision was taken to develop part of the New Mossley Central Green site instead. It is understood that the community are fully in support of the new build moving to this site.

Connswater Housing Association is currently developing plans for submission to Planning Service and the scheme is programmed to commence this financial year (2013/14).

### Double Glazing Programme

A double glazing scheme that includes 224 dwellings in New Mossley is currently programmed to commence in January 2014.

### Public Footpath Adoption

A scheme for the Ballyearl Court area, which is designed to bring public footpaths up to adoption standards and then seek their adoption by the Roads Service, is also programmed for 2013/14.

## Boiler Replacement Scheme Applications

**Mr Flanagan** asked the Minister for Social Development (i) how many completed applications for the Boiler Replacement Scheme were received by his Department, in each month since September 2012; (ii) how many have been processed successfully; and (iii) how many are waiting to be processed for (a) the initial application forms; and (b) installer forms.

**(AQW 22523/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Northern Ireland Housing Executive who administers the scheme on my department's behalf are currently collating the detailed monthly information that you have asked for and I will write to you again once they provide me with the information. They have advised that they should have the information provided to me within the next three weeks.

However for the scheme in general to date there have been;

- 13,764 application forms received,
- 13,276 processed
- 488 unprocessed application forms
- 8,316 boiler installer application forms received,
- 7,281 boiler installer forms processed,
- 1,035 unprocessed installer forms.

In the context of 'unprocessed cases' reasons for these include;

- cases where there are errors or incomplete information on the forms,
- where corrections or amendments are required on the form,
- where inconsistencies are being investigated or where detailed checks are being carried out

The Housing Executive is continuing to action these cases to ensure that the relevant information is received so that the cases can be processed as quickly as possible.

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.

## Crisis Loans

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) target processing time for crisis loans; and (ii) current processing time for crisis loans in each of the 35 Jobs and Benefit and Social Security Offices.

**(AQW 22731/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The clearance time target for processing Crisis Loans is 2 days. The current processing time in each of the 35 Jobs and Benefits Offices and Social Security Offices against this target is shown in the table below:

Office	Processing Time (Days) *	Office	Processing Time (Days) *	Office	Processing Time (Days) *
Andersonstown	1.0	Downpatrick	1.0	Lurgan	1.0
Antrim	1.0	Dungannon	1.0	Magherafelt	1.0
Armagh	1.0	Enniskillen	1.0	Newcastle	1.0
Ballymena	1.0	Falls Road	1.0	Newry	1.0
Ballymoney	1.0	Foyle	1.1	Newtownabbey	1.0

Office	Processing Time (Days) *	Office	Processing Time (Days) *	Office	Processing Time (Days) *
Ballynahinch	1.0	Hollywood Road	1.0	Newtownards	1.0
Banbridge	1.0	Kilkeel	1.0	Omagh	1.0
Bangor	1.0	Knockbreda	1.0	Portadown	1.0
Carrickfergus	1.0	Larne	1.0	Shaftesbury Sq	1.0
Coleraine	1.0	Limavady	1.0	Shankill	1.0
Cookstown	1.0	Lisburn	1.0	Strabane	1.0
Corporation St	1.0	Lisnagelvin	1.0		

\*The latest processing times are for the month ended April 2013

### Community Care Grants and Community Care Crisis Grants

**Mr Eastwood** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the (i) target processing time for Community Care Grants; and (ii) current processing time for Community Care Crisis Grants in each of the 35 Jobs and Benefit and Social Security Offices.

**(AQW 22732/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The clearance time target for processing Community Care Grants is 12 days. Community Care Grants are processed in only eight of the Social Security Agency's Jobs and Benefits Offices and Social Security Offices and the current processing time in each office against this target is shown in the table below:

Office	Current Processing Time (Days) *
Antrim	10.9
Armagh	8.8
Downpatrick	8.6
Falls Road	3.7
Foyle	22.5
Knockbreda	10.5
Lisburn	7.0
Omagh	5.6

\*The latest processing times are for the month ended April 2013

### Housing Executive Properties: Prefabricated, Re-Locatable Extensions

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many prefabricated, re-locatable extensions have been constructed and attached to Housing Executive properties in each constituency, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22781/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Parliamentary constituency. However, to date there have been

twelve prefabricated re-locatable extensions installed in Housing Executive properties in the following areas:

Belfast	2
Bangor	1
Lisburn	2
Castlereagh	1
Newtownards	1
Carrickfergus	1
Londonderry	1
Limavady	1
Portadown	2

All twelve were constructed in the 2008/09 financial year following a recommendation from an Occupational Therapist.

### **Health and Social Care Trust Areas: Prefabricated, Re-Locatable Extensions**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many prefabricated, re-locatable extensions to homes have been constructed, in each Health and Social Care Trust area, in response to recommendations from his Department, in each of the last five years.

**(AQW 22783/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information is not available in the format requested as the Housing Executive does not routinely collate information by Health and Social Care Trust area. However, in 2008/09 twelve prefabricated re-locatable extensions were installed in Housing Executive properties in the following areas:-

Belfast	2
Bangor	1
Lisburn	2
Castlereagh	1
Newtownards	1
Carrickfergus	1
Londonderry	1
Limavady	1
Portadown	2

In addition, the Housing Executive has processed one Disabled Facilities Grant for a privately owned property in Strabane which included a prefabricated extension. This was completed in February 2013.

### **Employment and Support Allowance: Migration Process**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development for his assessment of the impact of the Employment and Support Allowance migration process on the health of people going through the process; and

whether he will ensure that the written confirmation of the assessment clearly states whether an applicant has been successful.

**(AQW 22832/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** There is no data currently held on the impact of the Employment and Support Allowance migration process (Incapacity Reassessment) on the health of claimants undergoing migration.

On completion of the Incapacity Benefit Reassessment process, where a telephone number is held, three attempts are initially made to contact the claimant to advise them that their Incapacity Benefit is being migrated to Employment and Support Allowance.

All successful applicants also receive written notification advising them that their benefit is changing to Employment and Support Allowance and that this will replace their Incapacity Benefit.

### **Employment and Support Allowance: Medical Assessment Process**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development how his Department monitors the Employment and Support Allowance medical assessment process for quality control purposes.

**(AQW 22833/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** In August 2011 the Department appointed an independent Health Assessment Adviser, a medical health professional, to be responsible for providing independent assurance on the quality of the medical processes and outcomes undertaken by the healthcare professionals employed to carry out medical assessments by Atos Healthcare

To date, all audits completed by the Health Assessment Adviser have indicated a high level of compliance with the agreed processes and a high quality of medical assessments.

### **Employment and Support Allowance: Medical Assessment Process**

**Ms Lo** asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department is apprised of complaints received by ATOS on the Employment and Support Allowance medical assessment process; and to detail the action taken by his Department to address any concerns raised.

**(AQW 22834/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department receives monthly reports in relation to complaints received by the service provider. These reports include complaints on the Employment and Support Allowance medical assessment process. The service provider also produces a quarterly complaints report detailing figures and trends. This report details the action the service provider has taken to address complaints. My Department monitors progress against the identified actions.

The Social Security Agency's Health Assessment Advisor independently monitors the quality of the service provider's medical performance and will discuss any medical assessment issues and areas for improvements with the provider.

### **Housing Waiting List in North Down**

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development how many people on the housing waiting list in North Down are eligible for (i) three; (ii) four; or (iii) five bedroom accommodation.

**(AQW 22839/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Housing Executive has calculated the requirements of applicants currently on the Housing Waiting List in their Bangor District Office area as follows:

<b>Minimum Bedrooms required</b>	<b>Number of Applicants</b>
3	234

Minimum Bedrooms required	Number of Applicants
4	77
5	16

### Housing Executive Properties in North Down

**Mr Weir** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the nature of any outstanding repairs and maintenance schemes required for Housing Executive properties in North Down.

**(AQW 22840/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The number of outstanding repairs can change on a daily basis. However, the Housing Executive has advised that at the 13 May 2013 there were 569 jobs for the Housing Executive's Bangor District Office area as follows:

Job Type	Number issued	Number overdue
Change of tenancy	25	0
Disabled adaptation	23	11
Routine	464	40
Urgent	46	2#
Emergency	2	1#
Immediate call out	9	8*
<b>Total</b>	<b>569</b>	

# Jobs already completed by 20 May 2013

\* The nine immediate call out jobs were all completed on time but eight appear on the Housing Executive's system as overdue as the invoice has not been finalised.

Contractor performance is monitored closely in the North Down area and there are always a small number of jobs overdue in any contract this size. The Local Office is in daily contact with the contractor and formal performance review meetings are held each month in addition to a weekly meeting held specifically to monitor performance on change of tenancy repairs.

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.

### Training for Young People

**Ms Fearon** asked the Minister for Social Development what funding is available in his Department for organisations which provide training for young people with a diverse range of needs.

**(AQW 22847/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Within my Department there is no specific funding programme for organisations which provide training for young people with a diverse range of needs.

However, my Department through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme supports a number of organisations that provide training for young people ranging from employability skills to awareness training in general health and wellbeing issues. Where a priority need has been identified in the Neighbourhood Renewal Area's local Action Plan and where resources can be made available, my Department will consider funding.

## **Newcastle, County Down: Town Centre Public Realms Work and Urban Regeneration**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development how much money was provided by his Department for town centre public realms work and urban regeneration in Newcastle, County Down between 2005 and 2009.

**(AQW 22851/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department provided funding of £3,519,103 for town centre works and urban regeneration in Newcastle town centre during the period 2005 and 2009. These improvements were undertaken to compliment the work carried out along the promenade by Down District Council and the overall scheme has won a number of design awards.

## **Queen's Parade, Bangor**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development whether his Department will have responsibility for the developing or regeneration of the seaward side of Queen's Parade, Bangor, along with the landward side.

**(AQW 22852/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is taking forward development plans for the Queen's Parade site as set out in the Bangor Town Centre Masterplan and the development boundary relates to the landward side of Queen's Parade. My Department may consider extending the development boundary to include the seaward side of Queen's Parade if Crown Estates and North Down Borough Council were in agreement and if this made the scheme more attractive and viable.

## **Queen's Parade, Bangor**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development whether there will be ongoing public involvement in the development of the Queen's Parade site in Bangor; and what stakeholders will be involved in this engagement.

**(AQW 22853/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is responsible for taking forward development plans for the Queen's Parade site and DSD will engage with interested stakeholders as part of this process. DSD intends establishing a community engagement partnership comprising representatives from local community groups, business representatives and members of North Down Borough Council to assist with the process

## **Queen's Parade, Bangor**

**Mr Agnew** asked the Minister for Social Development whether developers will be required to continue to work with local stakeholders to develop detailed plans for the Queen's Parade site in Bangor; and what stakeholders will be involved in this process.

**(AQW 22854/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department is responsible for taking forward development plans for the Queen's Parade site and DSD will engage with interested stakeholders as part of this process and this requirement will also be placed on the future developer. DSD intends establishing a community engagement partnership comprising representatives from local community groups, business representatives and members of North Down Borough Council to assist with the process.

## **Owner Occupied House: Oil to Gas**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the average cost for an owner occupied house to switch from oil to gas.

**(AQW 22860/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Based on Invoice Amounts submitted by installers under the Boiler Replacement Scheme, the average cost of converting from oil to gas is £2,145.92. However it is important to note that this figure may include additional works over and above boiler replacement.

The price range from the Warm homes Scheme schedule of rates for a gas conversion is £2,980 to £3,668 (Inclusive of VAT). The price range is due to variable work content which may not apply in every case eg: provision of additional radiators, vertical flues etc.

### **Boiler Replacement Scheme**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of applications received for the Boiler Replacement Scheme by Parliamentary constituency; and how many applications (i) were successful; (ii) were unsuccessful; and (iii) are awaiting a final decision.

**(AQW 22861/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Northern Ireland Housing Executive who administers the scheme on my department's behalf are currently collating the detailed information that you have asked for and I will write to you again once they provide me with the information. The information that you have requested by Parliamentary Constituency is not available as it is not collated in this format, however the Housing Executive will be able to provide details by District Council. They have advised that they should have the information provided to me within the next three weeks.

However for the scheme in general there have been;

- 13,764 application forms received,
- 13,276 processed
- 488 unprocessed application forms
- 8,316 boiler installer application forms received,
- 7,281 boiler installer forms processed,
- 1,035 unprocessed installer forms.

In the context of 'unprocessed cases' reasons for these include;

- cases where there are errors or incomplete information on the forms,
- where corrections or amendments are required on the form,
- where inconsistencies are being investigated or where detailed checks are being carried out

The Housing Executive is continuing to action these cases to ensure that the relevant information is received so that the cases can be processed as quickly as possible.

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### **Department Audit: Work Capability Assessments**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development in each year since 2008, (i) how many work capability assessments were included in his Department's audit; (ii) how this sample size was chosen; and (iii) where this sample was located, broken down by constituency area.

**(AQW 22862/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** In August 2011 the Department appointed an independent Health Assessment Adviser to monitor the quality of the medical outcomes from Atos Healthcare. As part of the Social Security Agency's Quality Assurance Framework, the Health Assessment Adviser began auditing work capability assessments and outcomes from December 2011.

- (i) The Health Assessment Advisor has undertaken a total of 1,329 audits during the period December 2011 until April 2013.

- (ii) The number of quarterly audits conducted is based on the random selection of a statistically valid sample.
- (iii) The information is not available in this format requested. The sample selected for audit is based on the total number of work capability assessment outcomes, it is not broken down by location or constituency area.

### **Employment and Support Allowance: Work Capability Assessment**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of (i) disallowances; (ii) appeals; (iii) successful appeals; and (iv) cases, in each year since 2008, that were included in the most recent audit of the work capability assessment in relation to Employment Support Allowance claims.

**(AQW 22863/11-15)**

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

The work capability assessment quality audits are conducted by the Social Security Agency's Health Assessment Advisor.

During the period December 2011 to April 2013 the Health Assessment Advisor completed a total of 1,329 audits, all of which indicated a very high level of compliance with the agreed processes and a very high quality of medical assessments.

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.

### **Work Capability Assessment Decisions**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of claimants in the Foyle Constituency who have (i) appealed their work capability assessment decision; and (ii) succeeded in their appeal, in each of the last six years.

**(AQW 22864/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information requested is not available in the format requested. However, details of all Employment and Support Allowance appeals found in both the claimants' favour and the Department's favour is set out in the table below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Appeals allowed in claimant favour</b>	<b>Appeals upheld in Department's favour</b>
2009-10	354	860
2010-11	1,410	3,374
2011-12	2,067	3,778
2012-13	2,770	5,181

Employment and Support Allowance was introduced in October 2008 and the first appeal outcomes were known in June 2009.

### **Employment Support Allowance: Foyle Constituency**

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of claimants in the Foyle Constituency that received Employment Support Allowance in each of the years since 2008.

**(AQW 22865/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** Employment and Support Allowance was introduced on 27 October 2008. Data prior to 2009 was unreliable and therefore information for 2008 cannot be provided. The table below shows

the number of Employment and Support Allowance claimants in the Foyle constituency from November 2009 to November 2012.

Year	Number of ESA Claimants
Nov-09	920
Nov-10	1,420
Nov-11	2,090
Nov-12	4,250

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### Work Capability Assessments

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development how many work capability assessments have been carried out in the last three years.

**(AQW 22866/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** There were 133,293 Work Capability Assessments conducted between April 2010 and March 2013.

### Social Housing in North Antrim

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 21837/11-15, to detail the areas of social housing in North Antrim that are yet to be fitted with double glazing; and the proposed start date for any window replacement schemes in these areas.

**(AQW 22875/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The information provided is based on the Housing Executive's District office areas of Ballymena, Ballymoney and Ballycastle. There are 268 properties included in the Ballymena double glazing Phase 2 which is currently programmed for February 2014. This scheme includes properties in:

- Ballymena town centre
- Dunclug
- Harryville
- Glarryford
- Slatt/Straid
- Kells
- Moorfields/Glenwherry
- Tullygarley
- Dunvale

In Ballymoney there are 104 properties included in the double glazing scheme which is currently programmed for December 2013. This scheme includes small numbers of properties in:

- Ballymoney town
- Balnamore
- Bendooragh
- Dervock
- Killrammer

- Dunloy
- Rasharkin
- Seacon
- Cloughmills
- Corkey
- Loughgiel
- Clintyfinnan

The Housing Executive double glazing programme within their Ballycastle district office area is complete.

### **Housing Schemes in North Antrim**

**Mr Swann** asked the Minister for Social Development to detail the number of supported housing schemes to be developed in the North Antrim area, in each of the next three years; and the number of units in each scheme.

**(AQW 22876/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The supported housing schemes currently programmed for North Antrim (i.e. Moyle, Ballymoney, Ballymena council areas) are detailed below:

- 2013/14 - Cushendall Road, Ballymena, 5 units for people with a learning disability, Triangle Housing Association,
- 2014/15 - Rathmoyle, Ballycastle, 28 units for older people, Clanmil Housing Association.

There are markers for 2015/16 for both learning disability and mental health resettlements in the Northern Health & Social Care Trust (NHSCT) area (each 20 units), however there is no indication at this stage as to where exactly they might be.

### **Child Maintenance Service Staff**

**Mrs Dobson** asked the Minister for Social Development what steps he is taking to reduce the delays created whilst Child Maintenance Service staff are addressing queries from clients which require them to liaise with staff in Bolton.

**(AQW 22899/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** I am currently introducing a new Child Maintenance System with supporting I.T. that should in time remove the need for any Northern Ireland cases to be managed in Bolton or elsewhere in Great Britain.

The new system is being introduced gradually on a 'Pathfinder' basis. In the meantime I recognise we still have a number of cases from the older child support systems that have to be managed clerically in Central Processing sites in Great Britain. My Child Maintenance Service has appointed a dedicated member of staff in their Belfast office to act as a single point of contact for Northern Ireland clients to facilitate any discussions necessary with staff in Great Britain processing those cases.

### **Together: Building a United Community**

**Mr Hussey** asked the Minister for Social Development what discussions he has had with the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the proposals included in "Together: Building a United Community."

**(AQW 22926/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** It is too early to make definitive decisions on the way forward. I will be bringing forward proposals as requested by OFMDFM within the given timeframe.

## Shared Neighbourhood Developments

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Social Development how the proposals for ten new Shared Neighbourhood Developments, announced in the Together: Building a United Community document, differ from existing policies, including the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's (i) Shared Future Housing Programme; and the (ii) Shared Neighbourhood Programme.

**(AQW 22935/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** It is too early to make definitive decisions on the way forward. Plans are being drawn up now and will be considered when completed.

## Shared Neighbourhood Developments

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Social Development whether the proposals for the ten new Shared Neighbourhood Developments, announced in the Together: Building a United Community document, will be funded through the existing Social Housing Development Programme; and when the projects will be (i) commenced; and (ii) completed.

**(AQW 22936/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** It is too early to make definitive decisions on the way forward. Plans are being drawn up now and will be considered when completed.

## Social Housing New Builds: Saintfield Area

**Mr Hamilton** asked the Minister for Social Development to outline any plans for social housing new builds in the Saintfield area.

**(AQW 23112/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) for 2013/14 includes the following schemes:

- Trinity Housing - Former PSNI site at 26 Crossgar Road, Saintfield -10 units for General Needs Housing; and
- Connswater Homes – Former PSNI site at 6 Saintfield Road, Crossgar -10 units for General Needs Housing.

Information relating to the SHDP is published on the Housing Executive's website and can be found at the following link: [http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/housing\\_need.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/services/housing_need.htm)

## Regional Infrastructure Support Programme

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development what action his Department has taken to ensure the delivery of the regional infrastructure support programme for the women's sector.

**(AQW 23167/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** My Department has put in place interim arrangements to ensure the continued delivery of regional infrastructure support for women in disadvantaged/rural areas, pending the development of new arrangements geared to ensure a more collaborative approach and better quality services, which are planned to come into effect in October 2013.

## Foyle Jobs and Benefits Office: MLA Visit

**Mr Durkan** asked the Minister for Social Development why a request from a local MLA to visit the Foyle Jobs and Benefits Office was declined.

**(AQW 23168/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:** The Social Security Agency received a request for a visit to be made to Foyle Jobs and Benefit Office for the purpose of meeting and greeting staff and providing an overview of how each of the sections within the office is functioning. The request was considered and taking account of the size

of the office and the multiple functions performed it was felt that a meeting with the Regional Manager would be more appropriate in the first instance, in order to facilitate a wider discussion on any service issues.

Should there be any subsequent requests to visit, arrangements may then be made for a visit to focus on specific sections where areas of concerns have been raised on the service provided.

### **‘The benefit system is changing – you need to know’ Information Leaflets**

**Mr Copeland** asked the Minister for Social Development, pursuant to AQW 22761/11-15, (i) which organisation was instructed to produce the information leaflets; (ii) how the tender process operated; and (iii) how many leaflets were produced.

**(AQW 23169/11-15)**

**Mr McCausland:**

- (i) Corporate Document Services was the organisation instructed to produce the information leaflets.
- (ii) The Social Security Agency currently has a contract with Corporate Document Services for the publication of documents and this provision was utilised. No tendering process was therefore required.
- (iii) 774,000 leaflets were produced.

## Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

### **Surplus Food Project**

**Mr McKay** asked the Assembly Commission whether it will explore the possibility of involving the Assembly in a surplus food project where food that is fit for purpose, but no longer has any commercial outlet, is redistributed.

**(AQW 22803/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** The current catering contractor, Compass-Eurest, has stated that they would not be able to participate in redistributing food fit for purpose, with no commercial value due to traceability and food safety issues. As a large catering organisation they are under strict legal obligations to account for how they transport, store and use all of their products. In order to comply with the legislation in this area, they have detailed procedures and policies to ensure that they can trace and account for all of their products up to its purchase and consumption.

Accordingly, Compass-Eurest cannot therefore provide products to end consumers without being in full control of them to ensure they are correctly dealt with in compliance with food and health and safety law. Should an issue arise with a particular product, Compass-Eurest will not be able to account for the period of time the products leave their care, are ultimately consumed and will not be able to identify the cause of any resulting issue.

The House of Commons and the Scottish Parliament or their catering contractors have also stated that they do not participate in redistributing food fit for purpose, with no commercial value due to traceability and Health & Safety risks.

### **Left Over Food from Functions**

**Mr McKay** asked the Assembly Commission for an estimate of the amount of left over food from functions and events in the Assembly that is wasted every year.

**(AQW 22804/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** In relation to Functions, food is prepared in accordance with the numbers as advised by the organiser. Compass-Eurest prepare food in accordance with the final numbers confirmed. The food wastage is therefore minimal except for food left on a customer's plate. On occasions, customers attending a function are less than those originally confirmed; therefore this can result in minor wastage.

An estimate of wastage for functions has been calculated by Compass-Eurest at being around 2% - 5%.

In terms of food for events, which is largely made-up refreshments such as tea, coffee, scones, sandwiches and light finger food, event organisers confirm orders for the exact number of guests. However, unlike functions it has become more common for the number of refreshments required/confirmed to be less than the expected total number of guests attending.

An estimate of wastage for events has been calculated by Compass-Eurest at being around 2%.

## **Ormiston House**

**Mr Kinahan** asked the Assembly Commission for an update on the sale of Ormiston House; and whether any alternative use of the site was considered before the decision to place it on the open market was taken.

**(AQW 22857/11-15)**

**Mr P Ramsey (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** Ormiston House has been for sale on the open market since January 2011 and there has been considerable interest in the property for a range of development opportunities.

In June 2012, the Commission successfully achieved planning approval for limited development of the site which includes for the restoration of the listed buildings (the house, the mews and the gate lodge).

Although some offers have been received for the property, to date the Commission has been unable to agree a sale with any of the interested parties.

Prior to agreeing to place the property for sale, the Commission considered a range of alternative uses for the site. The property was also placed on the government's surplus assets register but no interest was registered.

## **Defamation Proceedings**

**Mr Allister** asked the Assembly Commission, pursuant to AQW 22020/11-15, who makes the decision whether to grant indemnity.

**(AQW 23045/11-15)**

**Mr Weir (The Representative of the Assembly Commission):** Whether a claim is indemnified under the terms of the policy is a matter for the insurers. Each case is assessed by the insurers on an individual basis.



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